

The impact of creative initiatives on wellbeing: a literature review

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Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) Literature Reviews

These reports have been commissioned to introduce readers to the main principles, theories, research and debates in the field. They aim to introduce the major themes and writing pertaining to each area of study and to outline key trends and arguments.

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About the Creativity, Culture and Education Literature Review Series

Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) is a national charity with a vision for all children, regardless of their background, to experience and access the diverse range of cultural activities because these opportunities can enhance their aspirations, achievements and skills. We promote the value and impact of creative learning and cultural opportunities through our strong evidence base and policy analysis, stimulating debate among policy makers and opinion formers, and delivering front line high quality programmes.

Through our research and programmes, we promote a systemic approach to creative and cultural initiatives and one which builds on the excellent practice which already exists to make opportunity consistent, to ensure that all children and young people are included and to place quality at the core of any creative or cultural experience.

CCE's work has included:

- **Creative Partnerships** - England's flagship creative learning programme worked to foster long-term partnerships between schools and creative professionals to inspire, open minds and harness the potential of creative learning. <http://www.creative-partnerships.com/>
- **Find Your Talent** - worked in 10 areas across England to help children and young people to access arts and culture: www.findyourtalent.org

Fostering creativity is fundamentally important because creativity brings with it the ability to question, make connections, innovate, problem solve, communicate, collaborate and to reflect critically. These are all skills demanded by contemporary employers and will be vital for young people to play their part in a rapidly changing world.

Our programmes can have maximum impact if teachers, parents, children, young people and practitioners themselves learn from the experience and activities delivered through the programmes. For this reason, one of the most significant legacies is the product of our research and evaluation and how that is effectively communicated to stakeholders.

However, because CCE works by creating partnerships drawn from the widest fields of endeavour, the different stakeholders recognise that there is often a 'knowledge gap' between reflection, analysis, and learning. In addition, the wide focus of approach – which is fundamental to the nature of creativity – means that people are often working at the limit of their disciplines.

For these reasons we have commissioned a series of literature reviews exploring the key issues in current literature and summarising the history and latest developments in each subject. Each review is written by an experienced and respected author in their field. They aim to be accessible, clearly referenced and to act as 'stepping-stone' resources to underpin the research conducted by and for CCE.

Foreword

This review by Ros McLellan, Maurice Galton, Susan Steward and Charlotte Page provides a timely overview of an area that is growing in interest and relevance for educators.

The idea of wellbeing, and how a creative education might help such a concept to develop in young people, emerges at a time when many of the economic models that underpin the structures of social life are subject to increased scrutiny. The sense that purely economic factors are enough to justify particular policy decisions in education – future competitiveness, the fear of ‘falling behind’, that learning is merely a stepping stone on the path to working – are being questioned. This is particularly relevant at the time of writing as we witness, in the coalition government in the UK, another swing to so-called ‘back to basics’ approaches to education. This seems likely to involve heightened prescriptivism with regard to curriculum content, increased testing and teaching directly to such tests.

This review explores complex themes at the heart of wellbeing and raises questions around what the future purpose of education ought to be. If we are simply interested in concocting sets of positive education ‘results’ as a possible predictor for future economic prosperity, then it is likely wellbeing will be squeezed out of the picture. However, if we are interested in helping to develop future generations of flexible thinkers, who are resilient in the face of challenges, who can marshal a repertoire of skills and knowledge when moving between tasks of different types and complexity, then, as this review clearly demonstrates, the learner’s sense of wellbeing will be key

The range of educational initiatives touched on in the pages that follow all seek, in their own way, to inculcate a sense of pupil autonomy, self-regulation, ‘possibility thinking’ and the willingness to take risks while learning, particularly when tasks retain a high degree of ambiguity. These are, one might say, the polar opposite of ‘teaching to the test’.

Evaluations of such initiatives, including the work of Creative Partnerships, managed by CCE, share a common finding. We see that students' confidence grows, they begin to think better of themselves and recognise their own potential to improve. This, in turn, means they are able to work more effectively both individually and socially. This review shows how these dispositions and capabilities may be directly related to various aspects of what are described in greater detail as 'hedonic' and 'eudaimonic' wellbeing.

This points to there being a clear link between creative learning and wellbeing in young people. But it is a link we need to understand better. We hope that this review, offering as it does an original contribution to the education debate, might inspire further work in this area at a time when, at least in the UK, wellbeing and creativity in schools is increasingly at risk of being ignored by policy makers.

Dr David Parker, Creativity, Culture and Education

As will become apparent, there is no agreed definition of the term [wellbeing], which tends to be conceptualised in slightly different ways in different disciplinary areas. ...Wellbeing is often used interchangeably with other terms such as 'happiness', 'flourishing', 'enjoying a good life' and 'life satisfaction', and these all carry different underlying meanings and emphases.

1 Introduction

Interest in wellbeing has mushroomed in the past couple of decades, driven mainly by new thinking in the fields of economics and psychology but also with contributions from other fields including development studies and sociology. This review explores the literature in this relatively new area of study and then considers its links with creativity. Although there has been little theoretical work that directly links wellbeing and creativity we will suggest that there are synergies between these two distinct fields, which become more evident when the available empirical studies are reviewed.

In chapter two we will problematise ‘wellbeing’. As will become apparent, there is no agreed definition of the term which tends to be conceptualised in slightly different ways in different disciplinary areas. For instance sociological approaches tend to be more structural and objective, and psychological ones more based on subjective reports of personal feelings and emotions (Fegter, Machold, and Richter, 2010:7). Wellbeing is often used interchangeably with other terms such as ‘happiness’, ‘flourishing’, ‘enjoying a good life’ and ‘life satisfaction’, and these all carry different underlying meanings and emphases. In addition, studies into adult wellbeing, while themselves relatively new, cannot be applied uncritically to children and young people.

Without a commonly agreed definition of wellbeing, it is therefore unsurprising that there is also a lack of agreement as to how to assess it, hence different studies have tended to measure wellbeing in different ways, encapsulating different variables. In exploring these issues we hope to convey the complexity of the field and to offer a better understanding of what is meant by wellbeing, particularly when it refers to children and young people. Potential links to creativity will be signposted. We will also examine empirical studies assessing children and young people’s wellbeing to explore what is known about this, particularly in the school context.

In the third chapter we will focus on what is meant by creativity and creative learning. This creativity chapter is relatively brief, as the topic has been fully discussed in other contributions to this series, as well as in research reports from studies commissioned by CCE, while wellbeing has not and we wanted to use the space to explore the latter topic in all its complexity. However, we do have our own perspective on creative learning and this is expanded upon within this chapter. Specifically we argue that an understanding of creative learning can be developed by considering the

process through which expertise is acquired. This has implications for teachers in terms of how they should scaffold tasks to facilitate creativity and we draw on findings from studies commissioned by CCE which are pertinent to this discussion.

The fourth section reviews literature pertaining to interventions that have been undertaken to promote creativity and/or wellbeing. We cannot claim to have included all the available evidence on this topic, and studies that are included are intended to be illustrative of the types of work that have been done. These interventions have been targeted at specific populations or more generally, at young people and adults, and have been community or school-based. Most of the studies we examined do not attempt to draw a direct link between creativity and wellbeing. However we argue that these creativity interventions are typically associated with outcomes that our review of the literature indicates are 'wellbeing related', whilst interventions associated with facets of wellbeing we contend are often creative in nature. Although much of this evidence is correlational, and therefore does not, in itself, provide support for a causal link (i.e. that a creative intervention causes improvements in wellbeing), we suggest in our closing remarks that the accumulating body of evidence strengthens the view that creative interventions do have the potential to promote wellbeing, although we acknowledge further research specifically addressing this conclusion is needed.

Caring for children's wellbeing is about attending to their physical and emotional welfare. It is about inducting them into a life where they will be wholeheartedly engaged in all kinds of worthwhile activities and relationships, defined generously rather than narrowly. It is about maximising children's learning potential through good teaching and the proper application of evidence about how children develop and learn and how teachers most effectively teach. Fostering children's wellbeing requires us to attend to their future fulfilment as well as their present needs and capabilities. Wellbeing thus defined is both a precondition and an outcome of successful primary education. (Alexander, 2009:197)

2 Conceptualising wellbeing

Wellbeing is conceptualised in different ways both by researchers from different academic disciplines and by policymakers. In the sections that follow we attempt to convey something of the complexity of the field by considering how wellbeing is conceptualised within different disciplines and how these might apply to children and young people within the particular context of school. We explore what is known about children and young people's wellbeing, particularly in relation to the school context, which is of particular interest to the authors as educators. We also highlight potential links between the wellbeing and creativity literatures. We start by exploring why interest in wellbeing has grown in recent years by examining the economic argument for its importance.

2.1 The arrival of wellbeing on the political stage: inadequacies of the economic model

Up until recently, a country's development was measured in purely economic terms using indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP). But even as far back as two centuries ago economic philosophers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill introduced the notion of utilitarianism into public debate suggesting that governments should act to create the greatest good for the greatest number of people (the 'greatest happiness principle') rather than focus on economic wealth alone.

More recently researchers have begun to demonstrate that economic indicators alone cannot accurately reflect the progression and condition of societies. For instance, Myers (2000) demonstrated that whilst personal income had grown in real terms between the mid-1950s and 1998 in the USA, the percentage of people indicating that they were very happy had remained approximately constant. Analysis of data from other countries has produced a very similar picture (Easterlin, 1995) suggesting that personal wealth cannot be equated with wellbeing and that indicators such as GDP might not capture a country's level of development adequately.

The Beyond GDP conference in 2007, which brought together influential bodies including the European Commission, the European Parliament and the OECD, can be seen as a seminal event in raising this issue in policy circles. Nicolas Sarkozy subsequently hired the Nobel prize winning

economists, Joseph Stiglitz and Amartya Sen to lead a Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (Stiglitz, Sen, and Fitoussi, 2009), which made bold recommendations with substantial policy implications. In criticising indicators such as GDP as measures of quality of life, a key message was:

The time is ripe for our measurement system to shift emphasis from measuring economic production to measuring people's well-being. (2009:12)

And recommendation 10, noting that it was possible to collect valid data on subjective as well as objective (i.e. economic) indicators of wellbeing, states:

Quantitative measures of these subjective aspects hold the promise of delivering not just a good measure of quality of life per se, but also a better understanding of its determinants, reaching beyond people's income and material conditions. (2009:16)

In the UK the economist Richard Layard has been most vociferous in calling on governments to measure their citizens' subjective 'wellbeing' alongside GDP (e.g. Layard, 2005) and has popularised this in the minds of ordinary people through his writings on 'happiness'. Layard (2005) talks about happiness in terms of how one feels one's life is going, i.e. whether one is experiencing a 'good life'. Bailey (Bailey, 2009), claims that people do know how they feel on average about life and that they see this in terms of an average happiness level over time rather than in the here and now.

Layard has argued that there are seven factors central to happiness. Ranked in order of importance these are (2005:62-72) family relationships, financial situation, work, community and friends, health, and then personal freedom, and personal values (the ranking order for the latter two is as yet unclear). He has since collaborated with Judy Dunn (2009), a developmental psychologist, to produce *The Good Childhood Inquiry* – an investigation that looked at children's lives and experiences in the new millennium in relation to family, friends, lifestyle, values, schooling, mental health and inequality. Parents were found to be the most important influence on children's lives but schools also played a key role. We will return to this work later.

Anthony Seldon, head teacher of Wellington College (an independent public school), has been so persuaded by Layard's ideas that he has developed a

series of happiness lessons for students in his school, which he has promoted nationally and internationally. In a *Guardian* debate in 2008¹ he is clear that not only can people be taught to be happy but this is crucially important to ensure young people fulfil their potential. However, not all academics agree. In the same *Guardian* debate, Frank Furedi, a professor of sociology, suggests that such interventions that focus on 'wellbeing', 'emotional literacy' and 'self-esteem', particularly those that are 'therapeutic' in nature serve 'to distract pupils and teachers alike from getting on with the job of gaining a real education'.

However, in terms of wellbeing for all, a recent UK poll found 81 per cent of people supported the idea that the government's prime objective should be the 'greatest happiness' of its citizens rather than the 'greatest wealth' (Michaelson *et al.*, 2009). Perhaps not surprisingly therefore, wellbeing is beginning to be assessed at national level. There isn't space here to explore the different international surveys of wellbeing that have been carried out, except to note that capturing wellbeing through, in many instances, a small number of items, is extremely challenging. The UK government is currently in the process of developing a more sophisticated set of indicators. The Office for National Statistics has recommended that three broad types of subjective wellbeing measures should be used, tapping evaluation (global assessments), experience (feelings over short periods of time) and 'eudemonic' (reports of purpose and meaning, and worthwhile things in life) (Dolan, Layard, and Metcalfe, 2011). There is an on-going consultation about initial proposals of domains and headline measures of national wellbeing which have been suggested (Self and Beaumont, 2012). These domains and measures are wide-ranging and include individual wellbeing, relationships, health, work, neighbourhood, personal finances, education and skills, the economy, governance, and the natural environment.

This section has demonstrated the importance of wellbeing for society but has also revealed something of its complexity. A clear distinction has been made between objective wellbeing, assessed in terms of economic indicators, and subjective wellbeing which refers to people's perceptions of their wellbeing and these would both appear to be multi-faceted in nature as they encapsulate different aspects and domains. To understand why this is the case, we now turn to the contributions from different disciplinary traditions, starting with the influential work within the field of positive psychology.

¹ 'Can we teach people to be happy?' *The Guardian* 19 February 2008
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/feb/19/highereducation.uk1>

2.2 Conceptualising wellbeing: the contribution of positive psychology

The identification of ‘positive psychology’ as a distinct branch of psychology, is generally thought to have followed Martin Seligman’s inaugural address in 1999 as President to the American Psychological Association Annual Convention², although research that would now be considered as falling under this banner has been undertaken since the 1960s with the pioneering work of early humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers (see for instance Maslow, 1962; Rogers, 1961). Seligman used this address to put forward his agenda to ensure that psychology was not just ‘pathologically focused’. This was quickly followed in 2000 by a special edition of the journal, *American Psychologist*, devoted to positive psychology. It was edited by Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, who are now widely regarded as the founding fathers of the positive psychology movement. They provide a comprehensive rationale for the need for the field in their introduction (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000):

The aim of positive psychology is to begin to catalyse a change in the focus of psychology from preoccupation only with repairing the worst things in life to also building positive qualities (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000:5).

Inherent in this aim is a concern to understand issues such as what makes individuals satisfied with their lives, what brings them happiness, and how we can best conceptualise and hence influence their wellbeing. An increasing body of research is accumulating on constructs such as life satisfaction, happiness and subjective wellbeing, although, as this is a relatively new field, there is relatively little consensus about definitions, scope and operationalisation/measurement. However there is a shared agreement that *subjective experience*, rather than any form of objective indicator, must be captured, hence people need to be asked directly about what they are experiencing. For this reason, positive psychologists are primarily concerned with the concept of *subjective wellbeing* rather than objective wellbeing and it is to this we turn.

² Held in Boston, Massachusetts in August 1999

2.2.1 Subjective wellbeing

The conceptualisation of subjective wellbeing can be traced back to a review by Wilson in 1967 on the correlates of happiness (Wilson, 1967). Wilson noted that little progress had been made in understanding happiness since the Greek philosophers of antiquity had considered the matter and referred specifically to the work of Aristotle, who had given consideration to what it means to 'live a good life'. We will return to Aristotle's work in the next section; however it is important to note that philosophical thinking underpinned the earliest contemporary thinking on subjective wellbeing.

Research began to explore subjective wellbeing as an idea in the 1980s using the terms happiness and subjective wellbeing relatively interchangeably. However there was agreement that subjective wellbeing comprised more than just momentary moods or emotions (i.e. more than just feeling happy at any given moment in time) (Diener, Suh, Lucas, and Smith, 1999). Indeed, Diener and colleagues, who did much of the early work conceptualising subjective wellbeing, indicate that:

Subjective well-being [SWB] is a broad category of phenomena that includes people's emotional responses, domain satisfactions, and global judgments of life satisfaction... We define SWB as a general area of scientific interest rather than a single specific construct (Diener, *et al.*, 1999:277).

In this conceptualisation wellbeing comprises two main components, affect (i.e. feelings, emotions and mood) and life satisfaction, which were identified as distinct constructs using specialist statistical techniques (Lucas, Diener, and Suh, 1996). Affect is broken down into positive and negative emotions, with subjective wellbeing being experienced when there is a preponderance of positive over negative emotions (Diener, 1984). The life satisfaction component of subjective wellbeing is a cognitive evaluation of how satisfied an individual is with their life.

Research based on the conceptualisation of subjective wellbeing outlined above has generally been classified as taking a *hedonic* approach, as the focus is on considering what makes life pleasurable and makes people feel good (Kahneman, Diener, and Schwarz, 1999). Hedonic approaches to wellbeing depend on what the person themselves thinks would make their life 'better'

rather than any objective determination of what others think *ought* to make their life better. Recent research, however, has suggested that the pursuit of hedonic pleasures such as material goods ultimately does not make people happy (Kasser, Cohn, Kanner, and Ryan, 2007; Ryan, Huta, and Deci, 2008); i.e. what people think will make them happy ultimately may not bring happiness. This sets up a potential tension between young people and teachers in considering what is best to improve their lives and to ensure they reach their potential.

2.2.2 Eudaimonic approaches to wellbeing

As hedonic approaches to wellbeing have been seen to be limited (Vittersø, 2004), alternative conceptions as to what constitutes the 'good life' have been sought. Ancient philosophers had made a distinction between *hedonic* and *eudaimonic* wellbeing. According to Waterman (1993), Aristippus of Cyrene had posited that pleasure is the sole good in life (i.e. a hedonic perspective on wellbeing and resonant with the theoretical ideas discussed above) but Aristotle rejected this view in his book *Nicomachean Ethics*. Aristotle argued for eudaimonia as an ethical theory for living where eudaimonia is 'activity expressing virtue' (Aristotle, 1985:284, 1100b, cited in Waterman, 1993). Eudaimonia therefore provides a different basis for conceptualising wellbeing.

Contemporary philosophers have explored these ideas further, arguing that eudaimonism requires people to recognise and live in accordance with the daimon or 'true self' (Norton, 1976). The daimon refers to an individual's potentialities and as this represents an ideal of excellence or perfection, this provides meaning and direction in life, and clearly links to the ancient Greek notion of virtue and what is meant by pursuing a virtuous life. Waterman (1993), therefore, argues that eudaimonia is associated with personal expressiveness and self-realisation, and whilst these are likely to be correlated with hedonic enjoyment, he was able to demonstrate that these two different conceptions of happiness are distinct in empirical work.

A measure of the growing interest in eudaimonic approaches to wellbeing can be seen in the relatively recent special edition of the *Journal of Happiness Studies* devoted to this area (E. L. Deci and Ryan, 2008b). However, although work on subjective wellbeing has dominated, there has been a longstanding interest in eudaimonic approaches and we will now outline the key work that has been carried out.

Both Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi have done important work in this area. Seligman, in his influential book *Authentic Happiness: Using the new Positive Psychology to Realize your Potential for Lasting Fulfilment* (Seligman, 2002), talking, as the title suggests about *authentic happiness*, argues that there are three routes to happiness, namely living *the pleasant life* (which enables an individual to experience high levels of positive emotion and gratification – i.e. a hedonic conception of wellbeing), living *the good life* (which enables one to experience absorption in activities, engagement and flow, discussed further below), and finally living *the meaningful life* (where one deploys one's strengths in the pursuit of something greater than oneself). Developing this further, Peterson and Seligman (2004) have identified 24 character strengths organised into six virtues (wisdom and knowledge, courage, love, justice, temperance, and transcendence) that represent characteristics of positive functioning associated with authentic happiness.

Csikszentmihalyi is well-known for his work on Flow Theory (1975, 1990, 1992, 2002). His initial interest was in the intense concentration artists displayed when working, leading him to identify the phenomenon termed *flow* after the analogy of flowing water used by one artist in describing the passage of time. The state of flow is characterised by absorption in an activity to the exclusion of anything else representing an optimal state of intrinsic motivation where a person is functioning at their fullest capacity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). It is the notion that the individual is functioning optimally that reveals that this is a eudaimonic perspective on wellbeing and indeed Csikszentmihalyi not only equates 'flow' with happiness but also indicates that it is necessary to allow creativity to flourish. Flow can be achieved in undertaking structured activity where there is a balance between the challenge of the task and the level of skill needed to tackle it: individuals then feel in control of what they are doing, are able to completely concentrate and engage in the task autotelically (i.e. for the task's sake because they are interested in it and not for some external reason). Typically in these circumstances, people are not only intrinsically motivated but experience distortions in the passage of time (i.e. time flies). Many activities can induce flow, particularly those associated with leisure time which we engage in autotelically, such as the performing and creative arts, but these can include some aspects of work, so would have implications for the educational context. The fact that creative activities can induce flow, and flow is a manifestation of wellbeing is of particular interest as this demonstrates a link between creativity and wellbeing.

Building on this in an educational context, Ben-Shahar (2007) makes a case for ‘the lovemaking model’ in schools where not only are the fundamental ‘three Rs’ taught but also a fourth R, ‘revelry’, is included. Csikszentmihalyi also makes a case for more ‘positive’ schooling where students are taught to find pleasure, beauty, fun and adventure in their work (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997 in Bailey, 2009:798). The ‘Wow’ days and experiences described by McLellan *et al.* (2012) in their study of creative initiatives in schools appear to be a good example of putting these ideas into practice to promote eudaimonic wellbeing through flow experience.

A final eudaimonic approach to wellbeing is that brought to bear by Self-Determination theory (SDT) developed over the past thirty years by Ed Deci and Richard Ryan (Deci, 1975; Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2008a, 2002). We will spend some time outlining this, as we believe this well-developed and empirically supported theory of wellbeing provides the best bridge between conceptualisations of creativity and wellbeing.

2.2.3 Self-determination theory

At the heart of SDT lies the ontological belief that *‘all individuals have natural, innate, and constructive tendencies to develop an ever more elaborated and unified sense of self’* (Ryan and Deci, 2002:5). The theory is concerned with the development of self and because of a focus on self-actualisation has in recent times been conceptualised as a theory of psychological wellbeing (Deci and Ryan, 2008a; Ryan and Deci, 2000). However, it was originally conceived as a theory of motivation. We will argue in chapter 3 that creative learning can be seen as a process of developing expertise and that motivation to practice is crucial for developing expertise (Ericsson, 1996). SDT equates intrinsic motivation (which is contrasted with different forms of extrinsic motivation) and eudaimonic wellbeing, thus providing a link from creative learning to wellbeing.

The developmental process at the core of SDT is premised on the notion that humans have innate psychological needs. Deci and Ryan postulate that there are three universal psychological needs:

- *competence* (‘feeling effective in one’s on-going interactions with the social environment and experiencing opportunities to exercise and express one’s capacities’,

- *autonomy* ('being the perceived origin or source of one's own behaviour', and
- *relatedness* ('feeling connected to others, to caring for and being cared for by those others, to having a sense of belongingness both with other individuals and with one's community'.

(Ryan and Deci, 2002:7-8)

Healthy development, and the experience of intrinsic motivation, i.e. experiencing eudaimonic wellbeing, depends on the fulfilment of these needs and humans have the capacity or 'will' to choose how to do this (Deci, 1980). Self-determination is 'the process of utilising one's will' (Deci, 1980:26), i.e. choosing how to act to satisfy one's needs.

However it is not always possible to be self-determining to satisfy one's needs. By the early 1970s a number of studies (for instance the well-known study by Lepper, Greene, and Nisbett, 1973) had started to show that intrinsic motivation could be undermined by environmental contingencies. This led to the development of cognitive evaluation theory (CET) (Deci, 1975), which examines how social-contextual features such as rewards and feedback affect the core needs for competence and autonomy. If someone is acting to gain a reward this can undermine their sense of autonomy as they may feel to some extent that their behaviour is controlled by the external factor of wanting the reward (Deci and Ryan, 2008a), and this then undermines intrinsic motivation. Negative feedback can have a detrimental effect as it compromises the need for competence. Further research has shown that threats of punishment, deadlines, pressurised evaluation, imposed goals and surveillance can also reduce intrinsic motivation (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Conversely the provision of choice, acknowledgement of feelings and opportunities for self-direction can enhance intrinsic motivation as they facilitate autonomy, whilst positive feedback which is seen as informational enhances competence (Deci and Ryan, 2008a).

More recent research, which has increasingly been conducted in real-world settings, has focused on the effect of interpersonal climate on intrinsic motivation. An accumulating body of evidence dating back to the early 1980s (see for example, Deci, Schwartz, Sheinman, and Ryan, 1981) has demonstrated that climates that feel pressurising and controlling undermine intrinsic motivation, whilst those that feel supportive and informational have

the opposite effect. Interpersonal climate is influenced by other actors in the situation and this has inspired a large body of research focusing on the concept of autonomy support, described by Deci and Ryan as follows:

Autonomy support involves one individual (often an authority figure) relating to target individuals by taking their perspective, encouraging initiation, supporting a sense of choice, and being responsive to their thoughts, questions and initiatives. (Deci and Ryan, 2008a:18)

If an individual feels that another has offered this type of support they are more likely to believe that they can be self-determining in their behaviour and hence experience eudaimonic wellbeing. Hence, in educational contexts, research has focused on the role of the teacher in creating an autonomy supportive climate for students.

The issue of importance is individual's perceptions of autonomy support rather than actual support offered per se. Empirical research strongly indicates that positive perceptions of autonomy support correlate strongly with intrinsic motivation, engagement, learning and performance outcomes (see for instance, Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, and Barch, 2004; Vansteenkiste, Simons, Lens, Sheldon, and Deci, 2004). Findings from a number of such studies has lead Deci and Ryan to conclude that *'the importance of autonomy-supportive teachers and classrooms cannot be overstated'* (2008a:19).

This account of eudaimonic wellbeing is well-developed and directly applicable to classroom contexts. However, SDT is not without its critics. Elliot *et al.* (2002) argue for a reconsideration of the remit of the need for competence construct. They argue that Deci and Ryan's original conceptualisation, which is based on White's (1959) 'effectance motivation' construct, is too limiting and suggest that a broader conception that includes past-referential (i.e. comparing what we can do now compared to what we could do before) and other-referential (i.e. comparing what we can do against what others can do) competence as well as task-referential (effectance) competence (i.e. successful completion of the task in hand), would be more useful.

The role of the need for relatedness is also underdeveloped and it appears to play little role in CET. Papers in the 2008 special edition of *Canadian*

Psychology emphasise the importance of relatedness and relatedness support within therapeutic settings (La Guardia and Patrick, 2008; Ryan and Deci, 2008) but this is only beginning to be thought about within educational settings. However, an accumulating body of research outside SDT looking at school belonging suggests that this is important for wellbeing and academic outcomes (Goodenow, 1993; Goodenow and Grady, 1993; Juvonen, 2007; Smith, 2006). A recent SDT-based study suggests that peer-related belonging and teacher-related belonging operate in different ways in relation to engagement (Van Ryzin, Gravely, and Roseth, 2009), which clearly merits further investigation.

Questions have also been asked about the relationship and balance between the three core needs (competence, autonomy and relatedness). Sheldon and Niemiec (2006) showed that optimal wellbeing is experienced if needs are balanced, yet much of SDT appears to be premised on the particular importance of the need for autonomy, particularly within CET. Vallerand *et al.* (2008) note that little research has focused on the consequences of thwarting one or more needs, and if the need for autonomy does have a hierarchical relationship with the needs for competence and relatedness this needs further exploration. Hence, although SDT is very useful as a conceptualisation of wellbeing as it has clear educational implications, and via the bridge of motivation is tied to creative learning, there are areas that need further development.

2.2.4 Summing up eudaimonic approaches to wellbeing

There are a number of different approaches to wellbeing within the eudaimonic tradition, which share some similarities (for instance the role of intrinsic motivation, which is crucial for fostering creativity, in Flow Theory and SDT) however, there are also considerable differences. This means there is no one agreed definition or conceptualisation of eudaimonic wellbeing. Nevertheless we would argue that work in this field is crucial to understanding wellbeing, as accounts of subjective wellbeing alone do not capture the complexity of the construct. Elements of both subjective wellbeing (i.e. affect and cognitive evaluations of life satisfaction) and eudaimonic wellbeing (personal growth and development) are needed to present a composite picture of an individual's wellbeing and to identify

whether that person is flourishing or languishing (Keyes, 2002). Some recent work being done at policy level and by academic researchers with large scale databases (Huppert *et al.*, 2009; Huppert and So, 2011; Michaelson *et al.*, 2009) is beginning to take this stance.

However, what accounts of wellbeing from positive psychology tend to under-theorise, with their focus on individuals' feelings and functioning, is the social context. Even SDT, which claims to be an organismic-dialectical metatheory (Ryan and Deci, 2002:27) and hence is concerned with the development of an individual through their interaction with the environment, has a greater emphasis on the individual than the environment. We therefore need to turn to accounts from other disciplinary fields, such as sociology to put the social dimension to wellbeing into sharp relief.

2.3 Conceptualising social wellbeing: the contribution of sociology

National surveys of wellbeing reveal that the strength of relationships with others is one of the most important components of a 'good life' (for instance, Michaelson *et al.*, 2009). Layard's (2005) 'happiness' list discussed earlier highlights the importance of social relationships, whilst the need for relatedness is central to SDT. Emile Durkheim's classic study into suicide (1951) showed that rates were higher where individuals were less integrated and in societies where there were fewer societal norms regulating such behaviour (i.e. suicide is not merely a result of an individual's mental state). Hence the social context is crucially important.

Keyes (1998) suggested that there are five dimensions of social wellbeing: social integration, social contribution, social coherence, social actualisation and social acceptance. These clearly indicate different facets of belonging, participation and perception of others. Social wellbeing is strongly related to the concept of 'social capital', particularly the model developed by Robert Putnam, in his influential book *Bowling Alone* on the decline of social capital in America (Putnam, 2000), where the social networks that an individual possesses are valuable not only to that individual but also to the community and wider society to which that individual belongs.

The impact of social capital on an individual's wellbeing is most clearly demonstrated in terms of the levels of trust, reciprocity and honesty found in any community: a lack of 'social capital' can indicate communities where individuals do not know one another, do not interact with one another and fear each other, and actual crime levels tend to be higher (2000:313). This suggests that not only are individual indicators important for measuring wellbeing but that the more collective indicators of the extent of social ties within neighbourhoods, participation rates in community initiatives and how inclusive these are also need to be considered.

The communities that children and young people live in affect their social wellbeing. Although not always recognised by social capital theorists (Holland, Reynolds, and Weller, 2007), children and young people do play an active role in producing their own social capital and hence wellbeing but in some deprived areas they can be seen as part of the problem rather than the solution (Social Exclusion Unit, 2000). In such neighbourhoods it can often be down to schools to work with their local communities to promote social participation and therefore social wellbeing, not only for their own students but also for their parents as well as other stakeholders living and working in the local area. Pat Thomson (e.g. 2010), argues that schools in more disadvantaged areas in particular need to develop a 'place-based curriculum' that allows teachers to develop pupils' local identities and their sense of place in both school and the local area for the benefit of not only pupils themselves but the communities at large. Examples of this type of work can be seen in projects described in Thomson (2006) and McLellan *et al.* (2012), which not only enhance children and young people's sense of social wellbeing and community cohesion but also increase social capital and social wellbeing in the community as a whole.

Sociologists have also made a useful contribution in theorising the nature of work people do in social settings which is relevant to our consideration of wellbeing. White (2011) distinguishes between *autonomous work* where an individual engages in work (paid or not) because they have personally chosen to do so for self-fulfilment and '*heteronomous*' work in which most individuals engage because they have to. According to SDT the former should meet core needs and result in intrinsic motivation and hence wellbeing, whilst the latter would more likely foster extrinsic motivation. However most jobs and most time in school is spent engaged in heteronomous work (White,

2011: 69-72), which leaves young people few opportunities to engage in work in school of their choosing which would provide greater fulfilment and, therefore, wellbeing.

In addition, sociological research suggests that not only do the core needs identified by SDT have to be met but work also needs to be seen by individuals as 'worthwhile' i.e. having intrinsic meaning and value. Richard Sennett strongly argues that modern society is de-skilling people because it no longer values skills as 'craft' or working together. In the first book of a trio, Sennett puts forward the view that hand and head are intimately connected – 'every good craftsman conducts a dialogue between the concrete practices and thinking; this dialogue evolves into sustaining habits, and these habits establish a rhythm between problem solving and problem finding' (2008:9). In the second book he suggests that cooperation is a craft or skill that needs to be learnt so the individual can thrive in increasingly diverse societies (2012). An example is provided of a Greek bakery visited first in the 1970s and again in the 1990s. In the initial visit, although the bakers did not enjoy their work, they took pride in what they were doing which bound them together. This had been lost by the second visit where the introduction of automated machines meant workers lacked control over their working environment, found their work undemanding, had lost their sense of teamwork and felt indifferent towards work. His account demonstrates the importance of work in shaping personal identity, in providing meaning and value to individuals, and therefore in supporting their general wellbeing in eudaimonic terms.

The importance of value can also be seen in students' attitudes towards schoolwork. Pell *et al.* (2007) found that pupils only attached any importance to the marks that got them on to the next level in the education system. Furthermore, issues of 'quiet disaffection', caused in part by de-contextualised and tedious tasks as well as pedagogical approaches that do not value collaboration (Nardi and Steward, 2003) present themselves in many classrooms in many schools. Curriculum choices need to be valued by young people.

If we take Sennett's point about the need for hand and head to be connected in an integrated way, one implication is the need to attend seriously to the recommendations of Richard Pring and colleagues in their review of education and training for 14-19 year-olds that education for *all* should include, amongst other things, 'intellectual development' that is concerned with the development of the mind alongside 'practical capability' that combines theory

and practice together (Pring et al., 2009: 68-70). Trying to categorise courses and therefore young people into 'academic' and 'vocational' ignores the evidence that learners need both aspects for effective learning and to experience wellbeing.

This discussion has started to identify aspects of schooling that should be in place to promote their wellbeing. We now turn to the consideration by researchers within development studies on the notion of entitlement in relation to wellbeing.

2.4 The capabilities approach

The capabilities approach, first proposed by the philosopher economist Amartya Sen (see Sen, 1999) argues that we should be concerned with an individual's '*capability to function*' i.e. what a person can do or can be' (1999: ix) rather than looking at their '*opulence*' (material assets) or '*utility*' (an individual's own interpretations of happiness). Sen, in effect, is arguing that there is more to the 'good life' than just material goods and the satisfaction of desires as these fail to acknowledge intrinsic values such as positive freedoms and human rights.

The approach has been developed and extended by Martha Nussbaum (e.g. Nussbaum, 2000, 2003). She argues that inequality often obscures the situation of marginalised groups of people (in particular women in developing countries, although her arguments can also be applied to some children and young people) as these groups do not expect and demand basic elements of wellbeing because they are either not aware that these exist or they have been conditioned not to expect these for themselves. Nussbaum has therefore argued for a 'list' of capabilities that explicitly sets out basic human entitlements that people, particularly the less powerful and vulnerable, may not ask for themselves, which she justifies as '*central requirements of a life with dignity*' (2003:40).

Written in 2003 the list of ten Central Human Capabilities consists of:

1. life
2. bodily health
3. bodily integrity (being able to move without risk of violence)

4. senses, imagination and thought
5. emotions (being able to have attachments without being blighted by fear and anxiety)
6. practical reason
7. affiliation
8. other species
9. play
10. control over the environment (both politically and materially)

Nussbaum in effect is arguing that objective measures (e.g. good health, safety from crime etc.) as well as the more subjective measures (positive emotions, inclusion, dignity, etc.) need to be considered together to ensure proper '*flourishing*' rather than just 'existing' or being 'happy'.

Some of these capabilities seem particularly useful to consider in the context of young people in school to understand how school might promote or hinder their wellbeing. 'Play' in particular is a capability that receives less and less attention as children progress through the school system: teenagers are not encouraged to play because they are seen to be entering the adult world where play is not necessary (Nayak and Kehily, 2007) yet playfulness and being allowed to play has been shown to be crucial for stimulating creativity (Ekvall and Ryhammar, 1999). Similarly, within this capability is the idea of 'fun' and 'laughter' and these are important components of human existence that arguably schools do not pay enough attention to but have been argued for by positive psychologists such as Csikszentmihalyi.

Entitlements all children should have are enshrined in the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989), which, interestingly, amongst other things includes the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities (Article 31). Many of these rights have direct consequences for wellbeing. These principles were at the core of the *Every Child Matters* reforms in England (Department for Education and Skills, 2003) which will be discussed further in a later section.

We have now examined the main perspectives on wellbeing offered by different academic disciplines. It is clear that there is no one agreed definition of wellbeing but there are similarities in the accounts provided. The economists argue for the need to distinguish objective and subjective

indicators of wellbeing. Research in positive psychology has made a useful demarcation between hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives on wellbeing. Sociological work reveals the need to consider wellbeing in relation to the social context as well as in terms of the individual, whilst thinking in development studies reminds us of the importance of basic entitlements. Much of this work is premised on research with adults and whilst we have made connections with young people in school settings where relevant, there is a growing body of empirical research which has focussed specifically on school-aged students and it is this that we will now consider.

2.5 Children and young people's wellbeing

Modern thinkers view children and young people as a group in their own right with their own concerns and priorities, rather than just 'adults in the making' who need to be consulted about matters of importance to them (see James, Jencks, and Prout, 1998). The implication of this is that research into adult wellbeing cannot be extended uncritically to children and that children themselves need to say what issues affect their wellbeing directly and what matters most to them. This poses a conundrum, as although policy documents put the consultation of young people at their core, questions must be raised about who in these documents decides what constitutes a 'good life' for young people. However, notwithstanding this issue and the implications this has for creating a valid measure of young people's wellbeing, governments around the world have become increasingly interested in monitoring and measuring children's wellbeing to inform policy (Ben-Arieh, 2005).

At an international level the creation of an index of child wellbeing is particularly difficult not only in terms of definition but also because of different approaches to the collection of data and the inevitable gaps that researchers face across different national contexts (Ben-Arieh, 2008). One of the main international approaches to measuring children and young people's wellbeing is the UNICEF Index of Children's Wellbeing (based around the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* and carried out in 21 industrialised countries) (see United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007). This recorded each country's score across six domains: material wellbeing, educational wellbeing, health and safety, family and peer relationships, behaviours and risks, and subjective wellbeing. The report has been criticised because of the limitations of data at

its disposal and the assumption of a causal relationship between the factors listed and their effect on wellbeing (Statham and Chase, 2010). A follow-on study was done in 2009 across all OECD countries (OECD, 2009). In this study the domains were altered to include housing, environment and quality of school life but subjective wellbeing was removed; this was done in part to have influence on government policies. Hence, we would argue it is not providing a comprehensive picture of young people's wellbeing.

Another large-scale international survey is the *Health Behaviour in School-Aged Children* (HBSC), carried out for the World Health Organisation (WHO). This employed global measures of wellbeing such as 'life satisfaction' and attempted to relate this to other general perceptions, such as 'liking of school' (Currie *et al.*, 2008). This very general measure of wellbeing fails to capture the complexity of the construct we have already outlined in this chapter so far.

Other international studies have been informed by the differing theoretical perspectives on wellbeing discussed earlier. For instance, The University of Oxford's longitudinal study of children growing up in developing countries, informed by work in development studies, emphasises the need to understand children's lives in different cultural contexts, particularly to understand how poverty affects wellbeing. Children and their carers are surveyed every three years but in addition more in-depth qualitative approaches are involved (see Statham and Chase, 2010:7-8 for this and other examples).

At national level in the UK, existing longitudinal surveys such as the British Household Panel Survey, the Families and Children Study, as well as The International HBSC discussed above, have asked young people about subjective wellbeing but this has not been done very comprehensively. The Social Policy Research Unit at the University of York, funded by The Children's Society (and in the past by the charity Save the Children), however, has undertaken a lot of work in this area developing an overall 'index of children's subjective wellbeing in England' through consulting young people (e.g. Gwyther Rees, Goswami, and Bradshaw, 2010). The index measures wellbeing across a range of domains identified as important to happiness with life as a whole, and these are (ranked) - Family, Choice, Health, Time use, Friends, Appearance, The Future, Money and possessions, Home, and School. Safety and Local Area were also included but not seen by young people as significant to wellbeing.

The York-based researchers have also created a database of children's wellbeing at small area level (Lower Super Output Area level, LSOA) for The Department for Communities and Local Government to allow for better planning of local services for children and their families (Bradshaw *et al.*, 2009). This is based on the LSOA index of multiple deprivation and is a purely objective measurement of children's wellbeing. It enables policy makers to see maps of relative child deprivation across the country.

Having outlined some of the large-scale surveys of young people's wellbeing and acknowledging some of their shortcomings, we now turn to some of the main findings they have revealed about young people's wellbeing in the UK.

2.5.1 Young people's wellbeing in the UK

'Britain's children: unhappy, neglected and poorly educated' (*The Independent*, 14 February 2007)

This headline followed publication of the UNICEF survey revealing UK children's particularly low scores on the 'family and peer relationships', 'behaviours and risk' and 'subjective wellbeing' domains (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007). One of the authors of the report, Jonathan Bradshaw, speaking about it to the BBC in 2007, put the UK's dismal position down to 'long term under-investment and a "dog-eat-dog" society'³.

In an in-depth follow-up study comparing the lives of children and young people in the UK, Spain and Sweden, children were 'unanimous' as to what enhanced their wellbeing:

...time with a happy family whose interactions are consistent and secure; having good friends; and having plenty of things to do, especially outdoors. (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and IPSOS Mori, 2011)

The major difference found between the UK and the other two countries was the lack of quality time that UK parents spent with their children. The report also noted that secondary school age children in the UK spent less time on 'active and creative pursuits' than their European counterparts. In the context of our interest in the role of creativity in promoting wellbeing, this finding is of great concern.

³ 'UK is accused of failing children' BBC Website News, 14 February 2007 <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/6359363.stm>

The most recent report using the University of York team's index of wellbeing is *The Good Childhood Report 2012*, (G. Rees *et al.*, 2012). More than 30,000 children aged 8-16 were interviewed and the researchers found that whilst 'most children are happy with their lives as a whole around one in 11 (9%) is not' (2012:3). The report makes the following points which echo those of Layard and Dunn (2009) three years earlier:

- Choice and family have the biggest impact on children's happiness.
- The quality of children's relationships with their families is far more important than the structure of the family that they live in.
- Low wellbeing increases dramatically with age – doubling from the age of 10 (7%) to the age of 15 (14%).
- Children in families who have experienced a reduction in income are more likely to have low wellbeing.
- Children who do not have clothes to 'fit in' with peers are more than three times as likely to be unhappy with their appearance. In turn such children are also much more likely to experience frequent bullying.⁴

These overall results show that wellbeing is better than might be expected given the UNICEF findings in the UK, however there is great variation in children and young people's experiences. Children from poor households (no adults in paid work or receiving free school meals) were less happy about their home and possessions, less likely to hope to go to university, felt more pessimistic about the future, more likely to be bullied, less likely to feel they were doing well at school and less likely to report good health.

However deprivation alone does not appear to fully account for differences in subjective wellbeing. A recent longitudinal survey of young people in families did not find any correlation between household or child material deprivation indices and young people's life satisfaction once other variables had been controlled for (McFall and Garrington, 2011). However inequality in income rather than objective deprivation may provide part of the explanation. Richard Sennett, citing a UNICEF report on wellbeing⁵, points out

... 'there is no obvious relationship between levels of well-being and GDP per capita'... once social conditions rise above basic deprivation, increasing

⁴ The report and summary are available online with the press release at: <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/news-views/press-release/key-childrens-happiness-revealed-charity-calls-radical-new-approach-childho>

⁵ UNICEF Innocenti Report Card 7: An Overview of Child Well-being in Rich Countries. (2007) <http://www.unicef-irc.org/media-centre/press-kit/reportcard7/>

affluence does not translate into social benefit. Under these conditions, inequality of a particular sort enters the picture. (2012:138-9)

The UNICEF and IPSOS MORI study (2011) notes links between unequal income levels and the outcomes on a number of social indicators including wellbeing. Furthermore, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett's book *The Spirit Level* (2010) presents empirical evidence demonstrating a correlation between income inequality and different indices of wellbeing in OECD countries. In countries such as the UK, where there is a high level of income inequality (i.e. a big gap between the rich and poor), levels of wellbeing overall are lower. This suggests that children's wellbeing in the UK might be improved by investing to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. Going back to Jonathan Bradshaw's comments to the BBC, linked to investment is a need to tackle excessive individualism. As Layard and Dunn (2009) note:

Of course, some degree of individualism is necessary for survival, and individual choice and self-determination of a good life. But individuals will never lead satisfying lives except in a society where people care for each other and promote each other's good as well as their own. The pursuit of personal success relative to others cannot create a happy society, since one person's success necessarily involves another's failure. (2009:6)

Thus young people's wellbeing in the UK is of concern, particularly when viewed in an international context. We now consider their wellbeing specifically in the context of school, as this is of particular interest to educators.

2.5.2 Wellbeing and schooling in the UK context

In order to understand student wellbeing in the school context, it is necessary first of all to briefly outline government policies that have a direct bearing on student wellbeing in school.

There have been major policy changes in schooling over the last decade or so, particularly during the era of New Labour governments. The reasons for these are varied but the death of a young girl, Victoria Climbié, in 2000 due to the failure of services (including not only social workers but also her school) that should have protected her did much to put children and young people's

wellbeing at the forefront of policy initiatives. The Government brought together Children's Social Services and Education within each local authority within the *Children's Plan* and introduced the *Every Child Matters* (ECM) initiative in 2003, wellbeing which had five outcomes for young people, related to their wellbeing (Department for Education and Skills, 2003):

1. Being healthy
2. Staying safe
3. Enjoying and achieving
4. Making a positive contribution
5. Economic wellbeing

Schools, therefore, are critical sites for ensuring that the five *Every Child Matters* outcomes are met for all children yet perhaps only the final three (enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution, and achieving economic wellbeing) relate directly to children's lives as 'learners'. The first two principles (being healthy and staying safe) arguably relate more to the work of social services than schools. The government followed up the ECM agenda with the SEAL programme (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning in 2005) to promote more positive attitudes to school and enhanced emotional literacy for all young people.

However, alongside this concern for children's welfare was a concern for academic standards. The initiative Excellence and Enjoyment, first introduced into primary schools in 2003 and later extended to secondary schools, was based on the premise that if children enjoyed their learning more then not only would their attitudes improve but also their attainment. David Hartley (2006) has described the two aims of this strategy as a 'contradiction' because one deals with the knowledge economy and competitiveness while the other is an emotion dealing with feelings rather than thoughts. In some quarters therefore there was a scepticism as to whether children's wellbeing was seen as an end in itself or as a means to a very different end.

The current coalition government has brought a different perspective. As reported in the *Guardian* (16 January, 2012) all mention of wellbeing has been removed from the revised Ofsted framework to allow the inspectors, according to the Secretary of State for Education, Michael Gove, 'to concentrate on what matters and forget the peripherals'⁶.

⁶ Northern, S. (2012). 'Schools strive for pupils' happiness', *The Guardian* 16 January 2012 <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2012/jan/16/children-wellbeing-schools-ofsted>

Thus wellbeing has been a focus in UK schools in recent times so children's wellbeing in school might be expected to have improved. Indeed, according to an analysis by Wyatt (2008), Ofsted has graded 90% of primary schools 'good or better' on aspects of general wellbeing and while grades for secondary schools are lower there are still very few deemed 'unsatisfactory' and less than 30% failing to achieve 'good or better'. However, current government policy together with the international evidence of young people's wellbeing in the UK reviewed above suggests that wellbeing in school may continue to be problematic. We now consider the relevant empirical evidence.

In their review of the literature for the Nuffield Foundation's *Changing Adolescence Programme*, Gray *et al.* (2011) argue that previous studies pose a number of challenges when attempting to establish links between wellbeing and schooling. As might be expected given the different conceptualisations of wellbeing explored earlier, researchers have tended to use different measures to assess similar concepts thus making it difficult to make inferences about overall trends over time. However, more importantly researchers have generally used a global rather than school specific measure of wellbeing. For example, Layard and Dunn (2009) in a survey of 8,000 14-16 year olds, from across the UK, reported that having good teachers, being able to 'direct their own learning' and 'learning by doing rather than listening' were judged as very important for 'the good life'. Gray *et al.* (2011) found no studies linking aspects of schooling to specific aspects of wellbeing as set out in the *Every Child Matters* agenda. Wellbeing in school, therefore, appears to be under-researched.

Some studies have attempted to establish the contribution school makes to general wellbeing. Quantitative comparisons across schools have generally looked at variations in exam results rather than wellbeing and have demonstrated that much of the variability is down to differences between students (i.e. their individual characteristics) rather than schools, with the school contribution only being in the order of 8-15% (Teddle and Reynolds, 2000). Gray *et al.*'s (2011) review found only a handful of research studies which looked at differences in wellbeing between schools and most of these focused on mental health issues rather than wellbeing for all. One, undertaken in the Flanders' region of Belgium, found variations attributable to a school effect in the order of 5-11% (Opdenakker and Van Damme, 2000), the percentage varying according to the measure of wellbeing deployed. This

study supports the conclusion of Sellström and Bremberg (2006) that specific health behaviours have a greater impact than general wellbeing measures when it comes to school differences. The only English study, involving 10-14 year olds, demonstrated that school differences explained around 3% of the variation in health and behavioural wellbeing but the corresponding figures for mathematics and literacy attainment (Key Stage 2 SAT scores) were 7% and 10% respectively (Gutman and Feinstein, 2008). Students' experiences within the same school and hence their wellbeing varies considerably, possibly because they may interact differently with their teachers and their peers. This is certainly the conclusion reached by Gutman and Feinstein (2008) who suggest the key to satisfactory wellbeing is the 'child school' fit.

The recently published *Good Childhood Report, 2012* (Rees *et al.*, 2012) has examined wellbeing in the school directly, as young people identified this as an important domain affecting their wellbeing. While there are still a minority of children who are very unhappy in school there is some indication that children and young people's attitudes to and experiences of school have slightly improved in recent years.

In 2012 the researchers increased the school section of the survey, that had previously just probed children's general satisfaction and engagement with school, by adding additional questions around perceived achievement, safety and other school-related events. They found more variability in children's experiences of school than in other aspects of their lives, such as family and friends. Almost half (49%) said that there were aspects of school that they did not like and over a quarter would prefer not to go to school at all. But despite these negative feelings many children were also committed to learning within it: 80% of children thought good marks were very important and only 3% said that marks were not important at all; from this very small second group, that the authors call 'disengaged', overall wellbeing was much more likely to be lower. Another aspect of schooling where there is cause for concern is around relationships with teachers; around 25% of children who felt that they had been unfairly treated by teachers on more than one occasion also felt unhappy at school.

Children's wellbeing in school, compared to other domains assessed, declines the most rapidly with age, with 'relationships with teachers' and 'feeling they are listened to' reducing the most; whereas relationships with peers shows less of a decline. There are also gender differences with boys having lower wellbeing in relation to school work and relationships with teachers. These

declines in early adolescence are particularly concerning and suggest that young people's wellbeing in school is an area that merits much more investigation.

2.6 Concluding comments

Throughout this section we have outlined how different academic disciplines have contributed to our conception of wellbeing and how these might be understood in the context of young people and schooling. We would agree with Robin Alexander's recommendations from the Primary Review (2009) as to how wellbeing should be understood:

Happiness, a strong sense of self and a positive outlook on life are not only desirable in themselves: they are also conducive to engagement and learning. But well-being goes much further than this, and happiness on its own looks self-indulgent. Caring for children's well-being is about attending to their physical and emotional welfare. It is about inducting them into a life where they will be wholeheartedly engaged in all kinds of worthwhile activities and relationships, defined generously rather than narrowly. It is about maximising children's learning potential through good teaching and the proper application of evidence about how children develop and learn and how teachers most effectively teach. Fostering children's well-being requires us to attend to their future fulfilment as well as their present needs and capabilities. Well-being thus defined is both a precondition and an outcome of successful primary education. (2009:197)

Clearly this is a view of wellbeing in school that *all* children should be entitled to.

We have started to build links between creativity and wellbeing from a conceptual point of view, and in particular have discussed the importance of SDT as a bridge between eudaimonic wellbeing and creativity. We have also reviewed empirical work to see what is known about children and young people's wellbeing, particularly in relation to schooling. In the next section we will briefly consider what is meant by creativity and creative learning before going on in the fourth section to look at the empirical evidence in detail linking interventions that are creative in nature and/or have been implemented to promote wellbeing and wellbeing outcomes.

Creative people are likely to be those who differ from their peers in various personal qualities such as persistence, ambition, resilience and a desire to leave their mark on the world rather than being entirely dependent on intellectual capacity as in the case of intelligence. (Gardner, 1998).

Gardner's approach leads to the kinds of definition of creativity put forward for example ... in the All our Futures report as being 'imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value'

(NACCCE, 1999:30).

3 Creative learning

Much of the earlier work on creativity was summarised in an edited volume by Vernon (1970). Key strands included examining the life histories of eminent practitioners; for example Roe's (1952) study of sixty-four outstanding scientists, in seeking to identify educational and family backgrounds constitutes one strand while attempts to uncover common personality traits associated with certain creative individuals (MacKinnon, 1962) is another. In these studies the judgement of who was and who was not creative was generally decided by a jury of peers. Much of this early effort, however, went into the attempt to create, so called, divergent thinking inventories, which could be distinguished from more common convergent problem solving items employed in intelligence tests. It was hoped that this would provide an objective means of identifying potentially creative individuals. Although subsequent factor analysis afforded a measure of *construct* validity (Guilford, 1956), attempts to establish *predictive* validity by comparing the divergent test scores of 'gifted' arts-based pupils with other highly intelligent groups of young adolescents were relatively unsuccessful (Vernon, 1964), nevertheless Haddon and Lytton (1968) were to claim such tests distinguished between eleven year old children attending a matched sample of informal and formal primary schools. The selection criteria of these schools, however, was entirely dependent on the judgements of college lecturers and local inspectors and subsequent research by Bennett (1976) led to the conclusion that such 'emotionally laden catch-all terms' were unlikely to identify the particular teaching strategies which could promote such desired outcomes as creativity (Wragg, 1976).

3.1 Howard Gardner's *Frames of Mind*

Although attempts to use tests to establish an individual's creative capacity gradually petered out, one legacy was the reframing of our notions of intelligence by Howard Gardner (1993) in his seminal volume, *Frames of Mind*. In exploring the links between creativity and the 'three intelligences particularly notable in the arts', (musical, bodily-kinaesthetic and spatial) Gardner (1999) defines creativity as when people

can solve problems, create products, or raise issues *in a domain* in a way that is initially novel but is *eventually accepted in one or more cultural settings*. (1999:116)

For Gardner, therefore a creative person operates, at their best, in one or two specific domains and what that person does has to be recognised, initially, as novel and then, subsequently widely accepted as a significant contribution by others. Thus, to do something different is not necessarily to be creative. In making the distinction between creativity and intelligence Gardner draws on the ideas of Csikszentmihalyi (1996, 1998) who argues that creativity occurs when three distinct elements come together. First it requires an *individual* with both talent, ambition and, perhaps, certain personal idiosyncrasies. Second, the individual has to operate in a recognised *domain* that exists within a given culture and third, a *field* consisting of a set of individuals or institutions within that culture is available to judge the quality of the work produced. For Gardner while intelligence is the operation of the mind as a computer (or rather several computers representing different intelligences) creativity ‘essentially and inevitably represents a communal judgement’. Thus, the only way of arriving at an estimate of a person’s creativity ‘is by observing the fate of the work he or she has fashioned’ (Gardner, 1999:118) even if these judgements only occur posthumously. Creative people are likely to be those who differ from their peers in various personal qualities such as persistence, ambition, resilience and a desire to leave their mark on the world rather than being entirely dependent on intellectual capacity as in the case of intelligence.

Gardner’s approach led to the kinds of definition of creativity put forward, for example, by the National Advisory Committee for Cultural and Creative Education, led by Ken Robinson in the *All Our Futures* report as being ‘imaginative activity fashioned so as to produce outcomes that are both original and of value’ (NACCCE, 1999:30). Based on QCA’s translation of this definition in their publication *Creativity, Find it, Promote it* (2001), Ofsted indicates that pupils need to engage in forms of creative learning that encourages them ‘to question and challenge, make connections, see relationships, speculate, keep options open while pursuing a line of enquiry and reflect critically on ideas, actions and results’ (2010:5) .

3.2 ‘Creative learning’

Such terms are, however, not uncontested. As a contribution to this debate Creativity, Culture and Education commissioned a number of reports and a literature review series (which includes this review) covering aspects of both

creativity and learning. One contribution to these reports has been that by Sefton-Green (2008). In seeking to stimulate debate, he sets the ideas of the artistic community against the more general theories of learning which he classifies under the umbrella of either behaviourist or constructivist traditions, including socio-cultural elements which involves 'possession of a specialised discourse, together with a capacity to reflect and critique and to offer abstract analysis' (2008:18).

The same dichotomy leads Good and Brophy (2002) to distinguish between teaching for *transmission* and teaching for *understanding*, the former through direct instruction and the latter through 'thoughtful' discourse. Support for Sefton-Green's interpretation comes from Jones' (2009) historical analysis on the impact of culture on notions of creativity and by Pringle's (2008) study of the work of visual art practitioners. Sefton-Green draws on the work of Fleming (2008) to pose the question of whether there exists a singular arts-based theory of learning or whether there are several arts-based theories dependent on the individual domain and concludes that whatever the particular approach taken among the family of arts learning traditions there are 'generic connections with social cultural traditions of learning,' citing Eisner (2002) and Egan (1997) in support of this claim. This also accords with the theatre director, now overseer of the cultural promotions at the 2012 London Olympics, Jude Kelly's definition of creativity as *flexibility of the mind* when speaking at the 2002 NUT/NCA conference on the subject. This view is not too dissimilar from Craft's (2000) notion of creativity as *possibility thinking* allied to imagination. As such, this approach contrasts with the more frequently quoted definition from the NACCCE report (1999) with its emphasis on the creation of an original product which is perceived by others to be of value. Kelly's view of creating has been described elsewhere as '*aesthetic intelligence*' (Raney, 2003:149). Interviews conducted in West Midlands' secondary schools by Trotman (2008) suggested that what these Year 10 and 11 students most valued were opportunities to engage in possibility thinking that gave free rein to their imaginations rather than the entrepreneurial aspects to creativity inherent in the government's approach.

The distinction is important because it makes a difference how one goes about improving the capacity of individuals to develop as creative thinkers. This is clearly of crucial concern to programmes such as Creative Partnerships, one of whose three key aims has been to enable schools to

develop 'cutting edge creative practice'. Where the emphasis lies on the creation of unique and useful outcomes then there is a tendency to advocate specific programmes or drills, a skills based approach, designed to promote lateral (De Bono, 1990) or critical (Halpern, 1998) thinkers or even more popular, though controversial, packages such as *Brain Gym*. Where the emphasis is placed on developing 'flexible minds', there is less immediate concern with outcomes and greater emphasis is laid on teaching overarching, generic strategies which enable pupils to re-construct existing knowledge in ways which allows them to accommodate in fairly rapid fashion new information and ideas.

Banaji *et al.* (2010) regard such distinctions as an oversimplification because the strategic model of learning suggests that developing the capacity for reflective thinking will inevitably lead to creative outcomes. In its simplest form the model does not account for the differences between 'great' and 'pedestrian' forms of artistic expression. Craft (2000) attempts to solve this dilemma by introducing the notion of '*Big C*' and '*little c*' to contrast the differences between the creativity displayed by artistic genius and the general population. A school's task would be to develop the latter version of creativity. Negus and Pickering (2004:159) however worry that in cultivating 'little c' teachers may pay less attention to exceptionality and settle for the ordinary at the expense of the gifted child. Gardner (1999:117) also adopts the notion of '*Big C*' while acknowledging the possibility of mid and small-scale levels of creativity. He argues, however, that to understand the concepts involved in the operation of creativity one should focus on the actions and thoughts of the expert performers.

3.2.1 Creative learning as developing expertise

The literature relating to expert performance enables the definition of creative learning to be extended beyond Sefton-Green's dichotomy so that the knowledge and skills needed to create 'the extraordinary' also need to be part of a teachers' repertoire. For Ericsson (1996:43) individuals can be taught to 'circumvent basic information processing limits by enhanced anticipation.' Berliner (1994) using Dreyfus and Dreyfus' (1986) stage theory, based on their studies of expert musicians and chess grand masters, notes that expert teachers differ from competent ones mainly in the way they go

about solving unfamiliar problems. Whereas competent individuals work through their list of previously acquired maxims (rules) until they find one which meets the present circumstance, experts tend to be improvisational, rather like jazz musicians, and to address problems by seeking to uncover underlying meaningful patterns which suggest one kind of strategy rather than another.

This is not simply part of an intuitive process as suggested by Claxton (2000:40). According to Atkinson (2000:70) intuition operates at a tactical, moment by moment level and is mainly the product of experience, whereas expertise is strategic in that it involves not only the opportunity to put our intuitions into practice but incorporates a 'feedback' mechanism whereby evaluation of how things worked out and consideration of how things can be improved upon in future are key elements. This is very similar to Alexander (Patricia not Robin) *et al*'s. (1991) definition of metacognition as having knowledge of one's cognitive processes which involves both automaticity (the development of a range of thinking strategies such that the choice of the most appropriate one to meet a particular set of circumstances becomes automatic) and 'executive control' (self-regulation). The question that then arises concerns the extent to which expertise, when defined in this way can be taught. Gardner (1995) and Noice and Noice (1997) are of the opinion that inherited talent is the main ingredient of expertise so that geniuses are 'born not made'.

Ericsson (1996:43) rejects this view, citing numerous studies from various domains such as athletics, chess and music. He argues that the key determinants are motivation to practice for extended periods and a capacity to acquire from experience the ability 'to circumvent some basic information-processing limits' by enhanced 'anticipation based on predictive advanced cues'. Berliner (2001) takes up a position similar to Ericsson. He points out that even those like Howard Gardner who place greater emphasis on the role of talent still recognise the necessity for deliberative practice in developing expertise. Thus it is likely, Berliner argues, that the context and deliberative practice are more important than personal characteristics. Berliner cites in support of this view the fact that expert ice hockey players and their coaches each separately listed the desire to become an expert (motivation) followed by good coaching and practice as the main determinants of success. Talent was only rated sixth of the twelve nominated factors.

In a later paper Patricia Alexander (2004:12) argues that since students will rarely leave school as experts in any subject domain it is the process of transformation into experts through the stages of *acclimation*, *competence* and *proficiency* that are most relevant. At the acclimation stage pupils begin to grasp the elements of *strategic knowledge* (Shulman, 1986) which help constitute a domain (the forms of legitimate knowledge, what counts as evidence, ways of establishing the validity of a proposition in a particular knowledge domain). But because these pupils lack the ability to distinguish between accurate and inaccurate (or relevant and tangential) information they are hampered in their thinking which therefore operates at a surface level. At the competence stage pupils' domain knowledge is more comprehensive and principled and a mixture of surface and deep level strategies are used. The final transformation towards proficiency and expertise is marked by a shift away from these 'surface level' thinking strategies towards those which are of a 'deep processing kind' and a capacity to engage in *problem finding* as well as problem solving.

There is a large body of literature supporting the claims that the arts curriculum in school, with its potential for promoting creative thinking, can be an important means of fostering students' sense of self-efficacy and general wellbeing. The Qualifications and Curriculum Agency while arguing strongly that creativity is not to be viewed solely as arts-based, nevertheless suggest that the arts have a particularly important role to play in its development (Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA), 2009).

The idea that there is a set of pedagogic principles that are associated with specific subjects mainly derives from the work of Shulman (1986, 1987). In helping pupils to acquire strategic knowledge teachers must be able to recognise the common kinds of errors that lead to misunderstandings and also be able to draw upon the most suitable analogies for dealing with such misconceptions. Shulman refers to these two skills as *pedagogic content knowledge* in contrast to the kind of *generic* pedagogical knowledge advocated by Patricia Alexander (2004) when examining the teacher's role in helping children to think metacognitively. Metacognition for Shulman would, in part, be discipline-based in that pupils would come to an understanding of what it was to think like an artist, historian, scientist etc.

It is easier to see the force of Shulman's argument when dealing with subjects, such as science, where there is a linear progression from one

concept to another. In physics, for example, to grasp the concept of *density* one must first understand the difference between *mass* and *weight* in order to master the concept of *force* before moving on to the idea of *pressure* or *upthrust*. The process by which one seeks proof through scientific enquiry is also generally agreed. In dance or drama it is less clear what might constitute legitimate knowledge or what kinds of evidence might be used to distinguish between an excellent and competent outcome although in dance, for, example, there are ‘forms of knowing’ such as the nature of ‘mirrors’ and ‘canons’ which the performer uses when creating a complete routine. There is also considerable debate about the weight which should be given to technical competence when set against the emotionality in making such assessments.

Shulman’s notion of pedagogic content knowledge does carry with it undertones that it is most effective when the teacher controls the classroom discourse. The knowledge base of teaching (Shulman, 1987) requires teachers to ‘transform the knowledge s/he possesses into forms that are pedagogically powerful and yet adaptive to variations in ability and background presented by the students’. This is clearly easier to undertake when classes do not have too wide an ability range, and when pupils do not exercise too many choices with regard to subject matter and procedures. These, however, were not the conditions reflected in the work of the creative practitioners in the Creative Partnerships programmes, particularly at primary level, where for the most part, these artists, whatever their background, adopted a common approach in fostering mainly generic, strategic thinking skills (Galton, 2010; Hall, Thomson, and Russell, 2007). Specialist knowledge and techniques were kept to a minimum and only introduced when it enabled students to develop their own ideas.

3.2.2 Making students ‘metacognitively wise’: the importance of scaffolds

A key factor at this transformation stage is the ability of teachers to ‘scaffold’ tasks so that the gap between what a student can already do and what s/he will be expected to do in completing a given task is not too large. This idea is often expressed in the form of Vygotsky’s (1962:104) *zone of proximal development*. Scaffolding, according to Bruner (1966), amounts to ‘lowering

the degrees of freedom' associated with a problem solving situation. Brown (1997) argues that at the top end of the primary school, when children are beginning to acquire the capacity to regulate their own thinking in order to develop their metacognitive capacities, one of the key roles in this learning process is the provision of appropriate scaffolds.

An investigation by Rosenshine *et al.* (1996) looked at the use of different scaffolds in helping students become better questioners when conducting an investigation. They noted a preference in the teacher effectiveness literature for guided teacher discussion involving procedural prompts and modelling as the two main ways of providing support. These researchers contrast these teacher directed forms of scaffolding with other forms which are built into the task such as the use of cue cards and providing self-checking evaluative procedures. They suggest that while the former may be valuable in the case of direct instruction, which involves plan-do-review procedures, it is less helpful when teaching metacognitive skills. This is because in guided discussion, for example, the teacher increases the chances of success by providing clues as to the correct way to go about the task. This involves lowering the *ambiguity* of the task in order to ensure the *risk* of failure is reduced. Using Doyle's (1983:183) terminology, ambiguity refers to the 'extent to which a precise answer can be defined in advance or a precise formula for generating an answer is available', while risk concerns the 'stringency of the evaluative criteria a teacher uses'.

While therefore lowering the ambiguity through guided discussion makes it easier for pupils to get a correct answer the danger is that the weaker student becomes highly dependent on the teacher's support and, when this is not forthcoming, will exhibit *learned helplessness*. On the other hand, more able students may feel that the task has been reduced to a level where there is little satisfaction to be gained in attempting it (Galloway, Rogers, Armstrong, Leo, and Jackson, 2004). For this reason it would seem that when the aim of teaching is to develop metacognitive wisdom then it is preferable to build the scaffold into the task so that a degree of ambiguity and challenge can be maintained although the risk of failure is reduced.

In his study of ten successful creative practitioners Galton (2010) found that they frequently built scaffolds into the tasks they set pupils and unlike the teachers rarely employed modelling or guided discussion to make the tasks they set more manageable. Furthermore they often required members of a

class to reflect on their own and on other students' work in ways that promoted strategic thinking and self-regulation. In a more recent study, where teachers have been involved with Creative Partnerships over a longer period there was evidence that they as well as artists had begun to share a common vision of what is involved in teaching children to think creatively and that classroom practice increasingly reflected the pedagogic principles which have been set out in the previous paragraphs (McLellan, *et al.*, 2012). Similarly, Thomson *et al.* (2012) discovered that creative practitioners engaged in distinctive 'signature' pedagogies that involved a flexible combination of pedagogic platforms, purposes and practices that included for instance a concern with choice and agency and a use of open-ended challenge.

The evidence suggests that Creative Partnerships has the potential to transform young people's lives in ways that can impact on their sense of wellbeing as the very qualities that underpin the central aim of Creative Partnerships (to 'open [children's] minds and harness the potential of creative learning') is the kind of environment which according to Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self Determination Theory, improves intrinsic motivation and in so doing leads to increases in the way that pupils feel about themselves. Such feelings of self-confidence and increased self-esteem, in turn, lead to a greater sense of wellbeing both in hedonic and eudaimonic terms.

4 Intervention strategies linking creative initiatives and student wellbeing

In this section we look at some of the evidence connecting creative learning with wellbeing. In particular we will review strategies that can loosely be termed as creative in their approach and evaluate the impact these have had on wellbeing. Identifying ‘creative’ strategies is by no means straightforward, as many programmes do not identify themselves as creative as such, yet if their content and underpinning philosophy is examined, we would argue that these would be deemed not only to be creative in terms of how they are delivered (i.e. teaching creatively) but also in developing ‘possibility’ thinking (i.e. teaching for creativity, see Craft, 2005).

Similarly, many strategies that have a positive influence on wellbeing may not be written about in terms of wellbeing per se. However, given our conceptualisation of wellbeing as comprising both hedonic (affect and life satisfaction – i.e. feeling) and eudaimonic (personal growth, self-actualisation, meaning - i.e. functioning) aspects, it is evident that many intervention strategies can be classified under aspects of wellbeing. We have limited our scope to consider creative strategies that have targeted young people of school age, as our review of wellbeing suggested that the domains that are important to young people may be different to those that are important to adults, and given developmental issues, self-growth may manifest in slightly different ways for young people and adults (Erikson, 1980). Some intervention strategies that we feel are relevant are situated in out-of-school contexts and are included because of what might be learned from them. Our selection does not claim to be a systematic review of all available literature; rather we endeavour to present an overview of some of the main approaches with illustrative examples to distil the key issues that arise.

We start by examining therapeutic approaches as there is a considerable body of literature reviewing their efficacy. We then turn to approaches that are not just targeting small numbers of individuals and examine arts-based approaches in school, which might be curricular-based or cross- or extra-curricular in nature and consider the role of creativity in these approaches and the perceived influence they have had on facets of student wellbeing. We then turn to the Creative Partnerships Programme directly and draw upon the accumulating body of research that has examined the effect of

this programme on a number of outcomes including drawing on our recently completed project specifically evaluating the impact of Creative Partnerships on the Wellbeing of Young People (McLellan, *et al.*, 2012). We also briefly examine some school-based initiatives intended to improve wellbeing (in its broadest terms) which it can be argued also promote aspects of creativity.

4.1 Therapeutic approaches

There are many studies that show the rise in young people's emotional problems over the last few decades (Collishaw *et al.*, 2004; Collishaw *et al.*, 2010; Kosidou *et al.*, 2010; Schepman *et al.*, 2011; Sweeting, Young, and West, 2009) although there is some evidence that the level of mental health problems is no longer on the increase (Maughan *et al.*, 2008). Many of these studies have compared data using different measures of wellbeing and with different sample populations and so trends regarding mental health in young people need to be read with care (Collishaw, 2009; Costello, Erkanli, and Angold, 2006). Nevertheless, a number of countries have seen increases in service use for young people with depression (Kosidou, *et al.*, 2010; Ma, Lee and Stafford, 2005; Tick, van der Ende, and Verhulst, 2008) and there is also evidence of an increase in the use of antidepressants in adolescence (Vitiello, Zuvekas, and Norquist, 2006). Some studies highlight particular problems for adolescent girls with twice as many young people reporting frequent feelings of depression or anxiety in 2006 as in 1986 (Collishaw, *et al.*, 2010) and girls scoring significantly lower than boys for wellbeing associated with perceptions of competence and levels of anxiety (McLellan, *et al.*, 2012). Perhaps not surprisingly in this context, there has been a growth in the use of therapeutic approaches to treat 'problem' cases (i.e. where diagnosis has been made on medical / psychiatric grounds Gray, *et al.*, 2011). Of interest to this review are therapeutic approaches involving the arts, given the particular role the arts have in fostering creativity (Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA), 2009) and it is to this we now turn.

4.1.1 Arts therapy approaches

Art therapy approaches include a number of creative disciplines including Music Therapy (Heal and Wigram, 1993), Drama Therapy (Crimmins, 2006; McFarlane, 2005), Art Therapy (Bush, 1997) (Moriya, 2000) and Dance Therapy (Chaiklin and Wengrower, 2009) and within these broad therapies there are often further branches that are more specific such as Dance Movement Therapy (Ylonen and Cantell, 2009). An arts therapy approach in all these disciplines tends to concentrate on individual symptoms and needs, focussing on diagnosing and then treating a specific health or medical problem (Evans and Dubowski, 2001; Stein-Safran, 2002). Indeed, the majority of studies indicate that the arts therapy approaches used to support young people's health and wellbeing are firmly located in the health domain which differs somewhat from an Arts Education perspective (Karkou, 2010). Recently, therapeutic approaches are being used within the school environment where often specific groups of vulnerable young people are targeted and the process is managed and led by trained therapists.

Among examples are those using music to help reduce grief symptoms in bereaved children (Gaffney, 2002; Hilliard, 2001). Hilliard's (2001) study, in particular, shows how therapeutic approaches can support bereaved young people in building resilience and a range of coping strategies. In schools and the wider community Kelly (2011) and Ledger (2011) highlight the important role of music in tackling social exclusion and improving communication and engagement levels between parents and children. Art Therapy has been used with autistic children to improve nonverbal expression (Martin, 2009), while in Israel, Freilich and Shechtman (2010) describe an approach that raised levels of emotional awareness in children with learning disabilities. Both Ruthellen (2010) and Loesl (2010) see schools as ideal sites for student bereavement therapy but the latter warns that to be successful Art Therapy programmes need to be viewed as an essential part of the schools' plan.

Tortora (2009) describes how dance psychotherapy can provide a multisensory experience that supports young children through pain due to medical illness. Thom (2010) argues that through Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) children become more emotionally articulate. DMT also supports the development of group dynamics (Ylonen and Cantell, 2009) while Koshland (2010) describes how a 12 week intervention programme targeted at anger

management reduced levels of aggression and bullying behaviours. Drama Therapy has mostly been used to help groups of disaffected pupils (Quibell, 2010). Thus Christiansen (2010) employed drama in a learning support unit to help reintegrate a student at risk of exclusion back into mainstream classroom, while other studies (Anari, 2009) document how Drama Therapy significantly decreased pupils' loneliness and social dissatisfaction scores.

More general accounts of arts therapy approaches (Karkou, 2010; Landreth, 2001; Malchiodi, 2008) suggest certain conditions are necessary for the therapy to be effective. These include a child centred approach, non-threatening social settings that stimulate spontaneity and participation (Ginnot, 1994) and sufficient sessions to build adequate rapport between therapist and child. Gumaer (1984) suggests a minimum of ten sessions while others favour frequent intervention over a short period (Tyndall-Lind, 1999). Unsurprisingly, such conditions match those identified as important for school settings and arts education, as explored in 4.1.2.

4.1.2 Extending arts therapy approaches to promoting wellbeing for all students

The above examples, when situated in school settings, generally involve a specific group of targeted students working with a trained therapist. This might suggest that arts therapy is best used with small numbers of individuals who experience mental health or behaviour problems, and that it may not be appropriate for promoting wellbeing across the whole school. However, there have been a number of whole school interventions designed to support pupils' emotional and social development (Karkou, 1998; Karkou and Sanderson, 2004). One such collaborative project culminated in the development of a school mental health programme run by teachers in one local authority's secondary schools. Teachers reported that 'students were actively engaged and deeply committed in most cases, and that they appeared more confident and more able to communicate with others.' (Karkou and Glasman, 2004:64). Another earlier project used dance to encourage participants to explore issues that were very relevant to their lives such as racism, sexism, violence and school avoidance. The NACCCE (1999:6-7) report found that 'When individuals

find their creative strengths, it can have an enormous impact on self-esteem and on overall achievement’.

Karkou and Glasman (2004) list a number of key factors that contribute to successful interventions. These include active participation, a focus on the creative process rather than on outcomes and the development of a non-judgemental atmosphere in which creativity can flourish (Malchiodi, 2008). Just as in a health setting great significance is placed on the relationship between the therapist and individual client so too in a school context the focus for teachers is not to do with unearthing particular problems, but in developing a classroom climate where students develop self-esteem, confidence and a sense of belonging or ‘school connectedness’ (McLaughlin and Clarke, 2010).

4.2 Arts-based approaches in schools for promoting creativity and wellbeing

The major contribution supporting the proposition that arts based learning plays a special role in the development of a pupils’ capacity to think creatively is to be found in the extensive work of Elliot Eisner. In perhaps his best known book, *The Arts and the Creation of the Mind*, Eisner argues that aesthetic modes of knowing have the capacity to transform our consciousness, thereby improving cognitive functioning and promoting greater personal growth (Eisner, 2002). He notes that unlike many other discipline where ‘means’ are manipulated in order to achieve pre-determined ends, in arts ends follow means, since one’s actions may determine the ends. Eisner draws on Dewey’s (1938) concept of *flexible purposing* to describe this process where ‘one surrenders to what the work in progress suggests, thereby ‘shifting [one’s] aims while doing the work at hand’. He identifies several ‘visions’ of education in the arts including a discipline-based approach that, in part, reflects the ideas of Shulman (1986) by suggesting, for example, that ‘educational connoisseurship’ is the means by which we judge what counts as evidence of what is worth knowing (Eisner, 1998). Arts education also acts as a counter to the ‘technically rationalised industrial culture which Eisner argues has increasingly dominated our thinking since the time of Galileo and the birth of the ‘Enlightenment’. He thus offers a vision of the arts as an important

therapeutic process capable of enhancing an individual's freedom for self-expression and wellbeing (although Eisner doesn't use this latter term).

Fleming (2010), in reviewing the nature of arts education and its links to creativity, covers similar ground to Eisner when noting that the key controversies which have dominated the debate over the past hundred years have involved those who view arts education as a means of self-expression, personal growth and emotional development, and those that put an emphasis on tradition, craft and utility. Ultimately, Fleming makes the case that different art forms should be seen as distinct although they share a family resemblance (i.e. it would be dangerous to talk of generic arts-based learning) and that creativity, although important in the arts, is not its defining feature. Fleming suggests it would be more appropriate to subscribe to a relatively 'inclusive' view of what the arts are that takes into account the 'embedded socio-cultural context of art, conventionalism and the acceptance that the arts may be the means to extrinsic ends' rather than a 'separatist account' which 'emphasises art for art's sake, intrinsic ends, aesthetic formalism and cultural autonomy' (Fleming, 2010:61).

These contrasting views of art education appear to be shared by teachers. Some practitioners identified creativity with particular curriculum domains while others thought it could be found in every discipline. Some teachers held that creativity was restricted to certain talented pupils while others said it could be successfully developed in all pupils. Davies *et al.* (2008) found similar diverse views among a group of primary student teachers and a tendency to associate creativity with arts subjects. Earlier, a study designed to elicit the criteria which primary teachers used when assessing the extent of their pupils' creativity in music, poetry and visual art products found that unstructured work (more open-ended with fewer teacher directions) was rated most highly (Hargreaves, Galton, and Robinson, 1996) while Craft, Cremin, Burnard and Chappell (2007) found that the degree of risk-taking, the deployment of several skill components, and the originality of the product outcome was more generally favoured.

4.3 The arts, creativity, and social capital

There are several studies which have sought to establish links between exposure to the arts and a resulting increase in social capital arising from an individual's civic engagement with some aspect of community life. Such social networks have value both for the state and for the individuals (Halpern, 2005). In the United States Deasy (2002) provides a compendium of research, mainly undertaken in the 1990s, covering a range of arts. Most of the relationships investigated were associative and tended to show stronger correlations between participation in the arts and increased motivation and the development of various life skills rather than with academic performance or improved thinking skills.

One of the most lengthy of these investigations is that of Catterall and colleagues who have continued to follow a group of secondary students from the final years in High School until the age of 26. This sizeable cohort was questioned about its participation in 'arts rich' activities both at school and within the community. Catterall (2009) reported that an arts rich environment was particularly beneficial for pupils from low social economic status (SES) families. Over a third more of these pupils attending 'arts rich' High Schools went on to enter a post-secondary 4 year course compared to those who went to an 'arts poor' High School and double the number achieved a Bachelor degree. Moreover, these High School students from an 'arts rich' background not only believed that their employment offered good prospects of promotion but they also were more likely to engage with local voluntary organisations and take an active part in local politics. Burnard and Hennessy (2006) also support the claim that young people who attend schools which provide enhanced performing arts provision or who participate in after-school, informal arts education (Halpern, 2006) tend to have more positive attitudes to learning and a more fulfilling sense of personal identity. Similar traits emerged in a study by the Scottish Arts Council, involving seven local authorities, where teachers and artists jointly planned integrated curricular lessons (ICL) leading to improvements in pupils' confidence and the ability to work collaboratively with peers (Seagraves, Soden, and Coutts, 2008).

The above conclusions are corroborated by studies that have looked at the learners' perspectives when engaged in creative activities. Catterall and Peppler (2007) showed that pupils who attended an arts centre for upwards of 30 weeks and took part in a range of activities, including drawing, painting and sculpture, recorded higher gains in beliefs about their self-efficacy than a control group who did not participate in the programme. Jeffrey (2005) describes the results of a project involving 10 European countries. The evaluation suggested that working creatively had important consequences for the pupils' personal identity and their sense of inclusion.

A note of caution is expressed by Winner and Hetland (2003), particularly in relation to the summary of the findings in *Critical Links* by Deasy (2002) referred to earlier. Based on the work of REAP (Reviewing Education and the Arts Project) these authors, part of Harvard's Project Zero, criticise the lack of adequate control groups in many of the above studies and argue that the idea that

'a small dose of arts is all that is needed to improve pupils' thinking skills, social skills, school retention and academic self-concept.....is simply not scientifically based' (Winner and Hetland, 2003).

Project Zero, based in Harvard Graduate School of Education was originally set up by Nelson Goodman in 1967 on the basis that 'zero' was known about the field of arts education. Among its major contributions are the *Studio Thinking Project* (Hetland, Winner, Veenema, and Sheridan, 2007) and the *Arts PROPEL* project (Gardner, 1989; Zessoules and Gardner, 1991). PROPEL adopts a portfolio form of assessment based on students first learning basic skills of art production, then developing artistic perception by examining the kinds of choices artists need to take before going on to make connections with their own work, and then attempting to assess their own work 'according to personal goals and standards of excellence in the field'. In the Studio Thinking Project Hetland *et al.* (2007) have attempted to overcome the criticisms they made of earlier studies and have identified 'eight studio habits of mind' in 'high quality' arts programmes which can be transferred to other areas of the curriculum with the use of appropriate pedagogic strategies, and which are not dissimilar to those related to the generic skills of teaching pupils to be 'metacognitively wise' put forward by Alexander (2004).

Other initiatives have involved arts organisations working with schools. Turner *et al.* (2004) found that children who participated in the National Theatre drama programmes reported an increased enjoyment of school (compared to children in schools who had not taken part in the programme) and that children participating not only learned drama literacy but also the process boosted children's self-confidence and self-esteem and promoted children's sense of agency and engagement in the curriculum. Another study assessing the impact of The National Theatre's Transformation drama project on pupils' in two primary schools compared with two control schools found that the self-concept of the pupils in the Transformation group was significantly more positive than the pupils in the control group at the end of Year 4 (Fleming, Merrell and Tymms, 2004:195).

Neelands, Galloway and Lindsay (2009) have evaluated the success of the Royal Shakespeare Company who worked with over 250 schools during a four year period. The project concentrated on teacher professional development encouraging the replication of the RSC rehearsal room where students explored Shakespeare using drama techniques and active learning. The evaluation found that teachers taking part in the study not only used more active approaches to learning in the context of drama and Shakespeare but that such participatory approaches were transferred to other areas of the curriculum (2009:9). Teachers also reported that the programme has been of great value to pupils of all ages at all stages and across a very wide range of ability, particularly supporting the Every Child Matters Agenda and that the regional performance festivals, when many schools worked together with a common challenge and purpose, had a particularly positive effect on the self-esteem of young people and the sense of community belonging (2009:10). These theatrical initiatives seem therefore to have some impact on hedonic facets of wellbeing at both an individual and social level.

Evaluations of the musical initiative, Sing Up, also appear to show that it promoted similar outcomes. The Sing Up initiative sought to enable 'children to experience high-quality singing, both within and without their daily school curriculum, on a daily basis' so that 'every school has a teacher committed to facilitating high quality singing and vocal work for the whole school' (Sing Up, 2011:52). Specifically, the targets of the programme were that 100% of primary schools would be committed to singing, that

resources (in the region of 300-600 songs) should be made available to schools, that 35,000 singing leaders would be working regularly in primary schools and 17,500 young singing leaders (i.e. students less than 18 years of age) would be developed, and finally that Sing Up should work in partnership with other music providers and services in the community (such as Youth Music Action Zones, specialist music colleges etc.).

Several evaluation studies about Sing Up were commissioned and these provide some supportive evidence that the scheme had an impact on wellbeing. The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) identified a number of positive outcomes relating to wellbeing (2011), including enjoyment of singing sessions by both boys and girls; improved confidence and self-esteem (particularly for vulnerable and special needs children whose behaviour and performance in school generally also improved); children enjoyed coming to school more; development of pupils' social skills and greater social cohesion (vulnerable children in particular found security in singing in groups, enabling them to make new friends, share thoughts and life experiences, discover common ground and have fun together); pupils' improved confidence in performing and an appetite to get involved in future artistic activities, and finally clinical and therapeutic benefits for children with life limiting conditions in hospital. These outcomes thus encompass both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing.

Another evaluation by a team at the Institute of Education in London has published a number of reports, one of which focused on the impact on the programme on the young people involved (Welch, Himonides, Saunders, and Papageorgi, 2010). A self-report instrument was used to measure students' self-concept and sense of social inclusion. Results showed that children participating in the programme scored more highly on both sets of statements, suggesting that *Sing Up* had had a positive impact on eudaimonic wellbeing both in terms of individual functioning and social functioning.

Some reservations have been expressed about the above evaluations. Not only do many of these studies lack control groups making attributions of causal effects difficult as discussed previously, survey evidence may mask more complex processes in play. For instance, Hampshire and Matthijsse (2010) studied the experience of children in just three of the many Sing Up

choirs using as a framework Bourdieu's notions of social capital (1997 [1986]). Although the experience was generally positive, particularly for girls from relatively privileged backgrounds, as it enabled them to make new friends and build their self-confidence, it was more equivocal for students from more deprived areas. These children faced greater social risks for fear of friends branding them 'gay' because of their participation and thus disconnecting them from their existing social networks. The message to take from this study is that a more nuanced understanding of the impact of creative arts initiatives on wellbeing needs to recognise that participants are not necessarily a homogenous group and that their social circumstances and how these interact with the programmes in question should be considered.

4.4 The impact of creative partnerships in schools

In England, by far the largest recent initiative designed to promote creativity within the school curriculum has been that of Creative Partnerships. The implementation of partnerships between teachers, pupils and outsiders has not been without its difficulties (Pringle, 2008; Thomson, Hall, and Russell, 2006). An early evaluation of some 23 Creative Partnerships showed that there were challenges in both establishing and sustaining such arrangements (Doherty and Harland, 2002). Particular difficulties arose when attempting to extend creative activities across the whole curriculum, particularly in secondary schools, in sustaining the commitment of teachers and when seeking to establish a dialogue between the partners on the kinds of professional practices required to bring about creative learning. However, these authors conclude that where these difficulties could be surmounted these partnerships offered the potential for changing the aspirations of young people and, equally important, of changing teachers' perceptions of those they taught, and the pupils' perceptions of their teachers.

There are many examples on the Creative Partnerships' website where schools, either individually or in groups, provide accounts of their involvement in the various programmes. The evidence suggests that Creative Partnerships has the potential to transform young people's lives in ways that can impact on their sense of wellbeing as the very qualities that

underpin the central aim of Creative Partnerships (to 'open [children's] minds and harness the potential of creative learning') is the kind of environment which according to Deci and Ryan's (1985) Self Determination Theory, improves intrinsic motivation and in so doing leads to increases in the way that pupils feel about themselves. Such feelings of self-confidence and increased self-esteem, in turn, lead to a greater sense of wellbeing both in hedonic and eudaimonic terms.

Among more recent studies commissioned by Creativity, Culture and Education are three that provide clues as to how a sense of wellbeing can be fostered. The first of these has to do with the nature of the school ethos. Bragg and Manchester (2011) contrast the 'competitive' school ethos, the result of the 'market orientated' educational reforms, with a climate that promotes learning, active citizenship and which underpins democratic, participative structures. They characterise the role played by Creative Partnerships in this respect as one of '*additionality*' in that the various programmes have 'enhanced practice and helped it develop in ways that it might not otherwise have done' (2011:30).

The researchers identified three headings under which this additionality could be discussed – '*considerate*', '*convivial*' and '*capacious*'. They discussed the contribution of Creative Partnerships to '*considerate*' ethos, in terms of the care, discipline and relationships that exist within the school and go 'beyond "tolerance" in stressing more strongly the need to respect students' cultures and life experiences... and in seeing these as a potentially positive contribution to their learning or to a creative process, rather than as something to be ignored or supplanted' (2011:3). They then discuss Creative Partnerships contribution to '*convivial*' ethos, referring to schools' encouragement of a sense of fun and enjoyment within the learning process and 'legitimised' collegial working relationships between teachers, between pupils and between teachers and pupils. Finally, Creative Partnerships contributed to the *capacious* element of a school's ethos in promoting the idea of flexibility and diversity in both teaching and learning, what Bragg and Manchester describe as 'room for manoeuvre' (2011:45).

A second element in promoting wellbeing concerns the development of *Youth Voice* and, in particular, its impact on young people's roles in governance, in relationships and in the co-construction of learning. Bragg,

Manchester and Faulkner (2009) conclude that Creative Partnerships has helped raise the profile of young people's participation in schools by insisting from the outset on student involvement in all decision making concerning the choice of activities and the selection of creative practitioners. Typically, schools have adopted a 'cadre' approach by training small groups of students to take greater responsibility for planning and implementing projects. Where this approach has been successful it has led adults to raise their expectations about young people's capabilities (particularly those regarded as disaffected).

Finally Creative Partnerships have sought from the outset to promote shifts in classroom practice which allow greater pupil autonomy and which extend beyond the areas of the curriculum where creative practitioners have been deployed. The extent to which Creative Partnerships have achieved this goal has been the subject of investigation by Thomson *et al.* (2009). They identify 5 different kinds of pedagogy; *default* pedagogy, *creative approaches*, *creative skills*, *exploratory* pedagogy and *negotiated* pedagogy which they describe as general 'types' and not exact examples. Traces of default pedagogy were present in all schools studied. This approach tended to plan lessons around the achievement of specified outcomes, favoured the transmission mode of teaching, and mainly relied on tests to determine the extent to which the prescribed outcomes were achieved. Default pedagogy was mostly used in situations where schools were under external pressure to improve academic performance. Creative Partnerships schools also adopted more *creative approaches*. Although specified outcomes were still demanded, experiential learning was promoted and creative practitioners spent time extending students' background knowledge and raising issues through a mix of extended class discussion and outside visits. This contrasted with the *creative skills* approach where use was made of specific commercial packages or schemes which were said to promote 'creative thinking'.

Exploratory pedagogy was the dominant practice in early childhood settings where emphasis was placed on children's prior experiences when setting learning goals. Children were also often allowed to choose the activities they wished to undertake and time was set aside for the teacher and the pupil to reflect on the outcome. Finally *negotiated pedagogies* involved students and teachers working together to determine learning goals (derived from broad curriculum frameworks), and in determining the

'success' criteria for assessment purposes. Students could introduce their own ideas as long as these were related to the success criteria. This was the dominant approach in certain secondary subjects such as Art and Design and Technology.

Although, according to Deci and Ryan's (1985) SDT theory these shifts away from default pedagogy should promote a greater sense of wellbeing none of the previous studies have attempted to establish a direct link between wellbeing and the work of Creative Partnerships until that recently commissioned by Creativity, Culture and Education (McLellan, *et al.*, 2012). This latter project aimed to determine if longstanding involvement in Creative Partnerships' activities had affected student wellbeing and also sought to explore the degree to which creative approaches had become embedded in areas of the curriculum other than those directly involving creative practitioners.

The first phase of this project involved a survey of 5231 students in 20 primary and 20 secondary schools. Half of the schools were currently engaged in Creative Partnerships' programmes with the rest being matched to these as far as possible including those that had implemented interesting initiatives to promote creativity and/or wellbeing. Analysis of the data established that there were four distinct wellbeing dimensions. These were described as:

1. *Interpersonal* – encompassing the social aspects of wellbeing
2. *Life Satisfaction* – concerning how students feel about their life (i.e. largely hedonic in nature)
3. *Perceived Competence* – concerning how students perceive their effectiveness (a eudaimonic facet of wellbeing), and
4. *Negative Emotions* – concerning students' perceptions of levels of anxiety (a hedonic aspect of wellbeing).

Key Stage 1 (5-7 years old) students in Creative Partnerships schools had higher wellbeing scores on all four dimensions compared to the other schools but the reverse was true at Key Stage 2 (7-11). There were few differences in wellbeing between students attending Creative Partnerships and the other schools at secondary level but this may not be surprising as all schools had interesting initiatives in place.

In the second phase of the study, case studies were conducted in a number of schools whose students had responded particularly positively to the survey and these involved both Creative Partnerships and other schools. Creative Partnerships schools all tended to view creativity and creative learning as a way of developing student wellbeing – creativity was the process through which student wellbeing was enhanced. In contrast case study schools with no Creative Partnerships programme tended to see student wellbeing initiatives as tools to support students' learning (i.e. wellbeing was a means to an end), so students were often removed from the class to go to enrichment activities and then be reintroduced into the lesson. Creative Partnerships schools therefore tended to have a more inclusive approach, making no distinction between creativity and wellbeing and consequently creative learning tended to permeate the whole curriculum.

Another key theme emerging from successful Creative Partnerships activities was the nature of the relationships developed between teachers and creative practitioners. A joint approach was emphasised where teachers and creative practitioners worked alongside each other collaboratively. Creative practitioners commented on how they felt part of the school and that this allowed for in depth sustained exploration of the kinds of practice required to support creative learning. When Creative Partnerships activities were observed there was substantial evidence of students enjoying and engaging in what they were doing. Teachers frequently commented about how creative activities re-engaged those students who found a more structured classroom challenging. Students often said how working with creative practitioners was fun. When the notion of 'fun' was explored further during interviews with students there were three aspects that seemed particularly important; enjoying doing the activity, being able to make decisions and the relationship with the creative practitioner.

In secondary schools the well-developed pastoral systems, often run by non-teaching staff, made the assessment of the impact of Creative Partnerships work more difficult to judge. Subject cultures were very strong and teachers of different subjects not only had different definitions of what creativity meant but also felt different constraints around exercising creativity. Arts-based subject teachers did expect students to be more autonomous and independent as they got older. However, teachers

of more traditional academic subjects were strongly influenced by the performativity culture and felt prevented from experimenting with their exam classes. Nevertheless some subject teachers in Creative Partnerships schools found ways to work more openly with other departments on cross curricular topics which were less outcome based and there was evidence that such approaches did have a positive impact on hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing at an individualistic and social level. In the next section we describe some of the more common approaches currently in use in UK schools.

4.5 School-based interventions for promoting wellbeing that are creative in nature

Schools in the UK make use of a number of strategies which either directly or indirectly are designed to develop greater self-confidence and resilience among their students. In the following discussion we consider these under three headings: pedagogical initiatives designed to foster thinking, initiatives to foster student participation, and outside education interventions.

4.5.1 Pedagogical initiatives designed to promote thinking

Although schools use a variety of methods to promote students' creative thinking, we single out two approaches, in particular, which share some of the aims of Creative Partnerships. These are the *Mantle of the Expert* approach, based on the work by Dorothy Heathcote, and *Philosophy for Children*, developed initially by Matthew Lipman.

The Mantle of the Expert is a dramatic inquiry approach to teaching and learning and is grounded in the principle that young people learn best when their relationship to learning and teaching is more like that of experts than that of students. When children take on a mantle of expertise it means that they 'frame' their relationships with other people and with any area of study quite differently from when they see themselves as 'students' (Heathcote and Bolton, 1995). Over time, the Mantle of the Expert work develops students' intrinsic motivation (Abbot, with Taylor,

and Edmiston, 2006; Edmiston and Bigler-McCarthy, 2006) by transforming the types of more traditional classroom relationships between teacher and student whereby the latter exercise overall control while the teachers and other adults become co-learners.

Philosophy for Children (P4C) trains young people to think critically about issues and develop their reasoning and discussion skills. It was developed in the 1970's (Lipman, 2003; Lipman, Sharp, and Oscanyan, 1980) and is an intervention 'characterized by a verbal cognitive focus and highly self-regulated peer interactivity developing from initial teacher scaffolding' (Topping and Trickey, 2007). P4C is now practised in over 30 countries worldwide, using a wide variety of materials (Jenkins and Lyle, 2010).

In a typical P4C enquiry, a group of students are presented with a stimulus such as a text, image, picture book, or video clip. Some time is spent identifying the concepts raised by the stimulus, and then students spend time framing their own philosophical questions in response. Evidence suggests that when P4C is practised regularly, children's questions get deeper and more thoughtful and discussions become more disciplined and focused, yet at the same time imaginative (Topping and Trickey, 2004). Allowing students to choose questions that they are interested in is central to the enquiry process. P4C therefore shares some key characteristics with Mantle of the Expert as an approach, as both promote social aspects of wellbeing through working together collectively, as well as eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing (through the development of different elements of functioning).

4.5.2 Initiatives to foster wellbeing through student participation

There are many studies that show that when students have more of a participatory role in the teaching and learning process (their views are listened to, they feel respected and if their ideas are acted on, then they are more likely to become motivated and have a better learning experience (MacBeath, Demetriou, Rudduck, and Myers, 2003; Mitra, 2004; Rudduck, Arnot, Demetriou, Flutter, and MacBeath, 2004; Jean Rudduck and Flutter, 2004). Schools have increasingly attempted to enhance the level of

student participation in the life of the school organisation as well as in decisions about teaching and learning. However, although many schools canvas students' opinions, the influence they have over what and how they learn is questionable in many instances (Wisby and Whitty, 2006).

In England the formal embodiment of student voice can be found in the Citizenship curriculum which aims to develop students' sense of social and moral responsibility, community involvement and political literacy (taking account of local, national and international contexts) (Keating, Kerr, Benton, Mundy, and Lopes, 2010:3). Since its introduction, Citizenship education has extended its remit to address issues around identity and diversity culminating in a school's duty to promote community cohesion (Ajegbo, 2007). To develop greater student participation, schools were strongly encouraged to establish school councils (Wisby and Whitty, 2006) and there is now much more emphasis on 'student voice' with Ofsted routinely canvassing student views on the quality of teaching and learning. There are other initiatives designed to give pupils a greater say in their lives of which two may be singled out for further comment. *The Rights Respecting Schools Award* (RRSA), run by UNICEF⁷, explores and prioritises the rights of all people in the community starting with the school before extending the debate to local, national and international contexts. RRSA is modelled on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Crucial to the approach is that the school incorporates rights and respect in all its relationships whether between adults, adults and students or between students.

Sebba *et al.* (2010) carried out a three year evaluation study and concluded that for the majority of schools 'RRSA has had a significant and positive influence on the school ethos, relationships, inclusivity, understanding of the wider world and the wellbeing of the school community' (Sebba, *et al.*, 2010:3). In the majority of the 31 schools studied, students were involved in either governing bodies or staff appointments, or evaluating teaching and learning. However, only a few schools involved students in all three of these activities (2010:40) although there was a tendency for students to be excluded from important decisions about teaching and learning. Sebba *et al.* (2010:37) conclude that compared to the international comparative study of child wellbeing in developed countries (United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2007) where less than 20% of young people said that they

⁷ <http://www.unicef.org.uk/rrsa>

“liked school a lot”, with the UK ranked among the poorest in finding their peers kind and helpful, pupils in the RRSAs schools rated subjective wellbeing much more highly and almost all pupils felt respected by their peers. A smaller scale study by Covell *et al.* (2011) reported that students were more engaged in school, had fewer social problems, exhibited greater optimism and more positive self-concepts. There are also many other award schemes that schools have adopted to help raise student participation in and motivation for school such as Eco School Award and Healthy School Award.

A further extension of human rights education sees it linked to the idea of global citizenship (Department for Education and Skills, 2005). Schools have been encouraged to set up school partnerships with same-phase institutions in different countries to support collaboration between students in different parts of the world and to strengthen understanding of global issues and students’ sense of being a world citizen. The organisation Enabling Effective Support, South West (Hartshorn and Davies 2007) undertook a study of fourteen schools in the region that were identified as having a strong commitment to the global dimension. The report argues that the global citizenship made a positive impact on students’ attitudes and values and increased student participation in school and community life (2007:16). Students showed greater awareness of and empathy for social and cultural diversity. They exhibited positive behaviour, were able to make decisions, take action, lead initiatives, ask questions, show respect to others and their environment and believed they could make a difference (2007:22). Thus it would appear that global citizenship initiatives do have the potential to impact on wellbeing, particularly in relation to its social and eudaimonic facets.

4.5.3 Outside education interventions

There is research that substantiates the benefits children receive from unstructured play in nature (Kellert, 2005; Lester and Maudsley, 2006; Taylor and Kuo, 2006). This influenced the last UK government’s policy with the Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto (2006), which brought together a coalition of organisations to promote the opportunities schools provide for young people to learn away from the classroom. One of the

most popular initiatives is Forest Schools⁸. This approach derives from the European model of 'forest kindergartens', mixed-age schools where children are outside in a forest setting for some or all of the day. Forest kindergartens are well-established in Germany, where there are currently more than 700 such schools (de Quetteville, 2012) and they have also been significantly developed in Scandinavia (Fjørtoft, 2001) and the UK. Two schools have been started in the United States fairly recently (Leyden, 2009; Valdes, 2010).

The key features of a Forest School approach are using woodland as a learning space, having a high ratio of adults to pupils, exploring learning linked to curriculum areas (i.e. not an add on), pedagogical approaches that use all senses and the outside learning experience to be a regular feature for children over a prolonged period (O'Brien and Murray, 2006). Such an approach can be seen as a form of 'creative learning' in that students working in outside spaces are required to solve challenges with their peers using practical solutions and being encouraged to respond to the environment using all their senses – sight, sound, touch, smell and taste.

The few studies measuring the impact of Forest Schools tend to evaluate the effects of forest schools on low-income children who do not have access to natural settings outside of school (Borradaile, 2006; Murray, 2004; Murray and O'Brien, 2005). Parents report that children increase in confidence, social skills, physical skills, and environmental knowledge, and there are ripple effects on being outdoors with family. In the UK, O'Brien and Murray (2006) conclude that the approach impacted significantly on young people's confidence, social skills, language and communication, motivation and concentration, physical skills, and knowledge and understanding.

Another initiative that has encouraged students to take ownership and responsibility for the internal and external school space has been the Sustainable Schools Programme. The scheme incorporates eight pathways for schools to adopt a more sustainable approach including encouraging the whole school and local community to work together thereby 'developing citizenship through action and using the wider school environment to provide interesting and stimulating contexts for personal

⁸ <http://www.forestschools.com/>

development and pupil engagement' (Ofsted, 2003:5). A study looking at Leading Sustainable Schools found that 'where students are given opportunities to engage with issues that are relevant and real to them, there are real benefits such as higher levels of attainment, [and] higher levels of enthusiasm and interest' (Jackson, 2007:32). However, Jackson also points out that considerable rhetoric often surrounds such initiatives with many schools saying they considered the sustainable schools strategy to be important and yet doing little to promote it (2007:48).

What seems clear from the illustrated examples of outside education approaches is that they have the potential to motivate students as well as providing opportunities for working in partnership with organisations from outside school. According to Cheadle, Symons and Pitt (2004) teachers found it helpful to work with non-governmental organisations and to participate in 'events' such as UNICEF Day for Change and World Aids Day. Teachers appreciated the many external resources that could be accessed, both online and in print, and also materials that emphasised participatory pedagogy, that is students taking action and responsibility which it can be argued has the capacity to develop eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing at both the individual and social level.

Despite being near the top of the international performance league tables Hong Kong takes the view that economic success can only be maintained if more of its citizens become 'imaginative flexible' thinkers. This view has been adopted while in this country funding for Creative Partnerships has been withdrawn. The likelihood, therefore, is that in ten years, policy advisers will still be producing papers entitled, 'Lessons from the East', only the message will be the reverse of that currently being preached by the present occupants of the Department for Education.

5 Concluding thoughts: the relationship between creativity and wellbeing

In reviewing the literature around these two concepts – creativity and wellbeing – we have found that much of the literature and design of the examples of practice in school-based interventions have tended to reinforce the ideas advocated by Deci and Ryan (1985) in their development of self-determination theory (SDT). The range of initiatives described in the previous pages all seek, in one way or another, to foster pupil autonomy, self-regulation, ‘possibility thinking’ and the willingness to take risks in one’s learning when the tasks undertaken retain a high degree of ambiguity. Where evaluations of such initiatives have been undertaken a common finding is that the students’ confidence is increased, they think better of themselves and can function more effectively both individually and in a social context. Whilst some of these evaluations are correlational (which do not allow causal claims to be made) and are small-scale in scope, the overall consistent nature of the findings suggests there is an interesting phenomenon at their core. Specifically, these traits and capabilities can be related to various aspects of both hedonic and eudaimonic wellbeing. Thus there does appear to be a clear link between creative initiatives and wellbeing outcomes, although further research, particularly of a longitudinal nature gathering both quantitative and qualitative data and examining process and outcome is needed.

Our own research (McLellan *et al.*, 2012) found that a school’s conception of wellbeing tended to dictate the strategy for its implementation. Most schools, particularly at primary level, had come to recognise that a subject-based curriculum which emphasised outcomes rather than processes was demotivating. Although willing to embrace a more integrated approach many, because of the prominence given to English and mathematics by Ofsted when judging a school’s quality, tended to exclude (or place a minor emphasis on) these subjects within topic work and to maintain a default pedagogy as described by Thomson *et al.* (2009). In such schools, improving wellbeing was a means to an end, in that if pupils could be made to feel better about themselves they might feel more motivated in these core subjects with less disruption in lessons as a consequence. Two strategies for promoting wellbeing were typically in evidence. Public performance was encouraged (concerts, plays etc.) as a means of boosting self-esteem and various schemes introduced to minimise negative experiences such as bullying during non-class time. Thus in secondary schools staggered lunch times have

been reduced to a minimum and primary schools employ senior pupils as play leaders to keep everyone occupied. The emphasis therefore has tended to be on hedonic (feeling) aspects of wellbeing.

For schools embracing Creative Partnerships programmes and other initiatives such as Mantle of the Expert, Philosophy for Children, global citizenship and other human rights initiatives, wellbeing outcomes are seen as a by-product of more fundamental changes in pedagogy. Even if those outcomes are not fully realised in practice, the schools seek to transform relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils and their peers. It is not necessary to have special schemes to prevent bullying because in the course of this transformation pupils come to respect and care for each other as they grow in confidence in their ability to 'manage things for themselves'. Thus the result is an emphasis on eudaimonic (functioning aspects) of wellbeing. Thus we would argue that creative interventions particularly promote eudaimonic wellbeing.

Even in Creative Partnerships schools the effects of the 'performativity' culture could be discerned. Key Stage 1 pupils had higher wellbeing scores than their peers in the schools where no such programme operated. No such differences were in evidence at Key Stage 2 in Year 6 where pupils were preparing for the standard assessments. At secondary level wellbeing scores declined from Key Stage 3 to Key Stage 4.

Yet such are the present Secretary of State for Education's priorities that it would seem that issues of wellbeing are now to be ignored, despite the country's relative poor showing in international studies. All references to wellbeing and other related attitudinal and emotional aspects of learning have been excluded from the recently revised Inspection specification for Ofsted. Fellow ministers have described previous government initiatives such as Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) as a distraction from the main purpose of schooling.

Present educational policy is said to be based on lessons learned from successful Asian countries such as Singapore and the Chinese Special Autonomous Region (SAR) of Hong Kong. Yet in the latter's case a quiet revolution is taking place designed to improve the quality of life of all its young citizens by widening opportunities and reducing the negative effects of over-concentration on testing. At secondary level, for example, traditional

style GCSE and A levels examinations have been abandoned in favour of a diploma which all students take in Year 12 (aged 17). Students then spend four years in higher education either taking a foundation year at a University or a one-year diploma at other institutions (including arts colleges) before rejoining the degree route in the following year. Part of the secondary curriculum includes what are termed OLEs (Other Learning Experiences) where students have to take a number of options including community activities, environmental initiatives or other units which have similar intended outcomes to that of global citizenship or human rights education (Curriculum Development Institute, 2011).

At the centre of these various reforms is a desire to promote the kinds of 'creative learning' which lie at the centre of programmes such as Creative Partnerships and similar initiatives. Despite being near the top of the international performance league tables Hong Kong takes the view that economic success can only be maintained if more of its citizens become 'imaginative flexible' thinkers. This view has been adopted while in this country funding for Creative Partnerships has been withdrawn. The likelihood, therefore, is that in ten years, policy advisers will still be producing papers entitled, 'Lessons from the East', only the message will be the reverse of that currently being preached by the present occupants of the Department for Education.

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