The Cultural Education Challenge: a baseline of Local Cultural Education Partnerships

Contents

1] Introduction

1.1   This project ran from April to September 2016. Its key purpose was to offer Arts Council England a single overarching review of the emerging work of local Cultural Education Partnerships and an analysis of the salient concerns driving the wider ecology of educational provision across England.

1.2   It might be considered an early snap-shot or baseline, but in some respects and for reasons that will become clear in this report, a wholly quantitative baseline is beyond the scope of the Cultural Education Challenge. The challenge is a coherent and compelling, but nonetheless non-mandatory national call to action which acts as an umbrella for a series of locally driven partnerships which vary in scope and scale.

1.3   Much that is of value to the emergence and ongoing development of these partnerships is vested in professional perceptions and people-driven networks. Therefore, to understand how things are developing it quickly became apparent that seeking the insights of key individuals, understanding their local contexts and the intentions behind ambitious plans was likely to be the most effective way to characterise this early phase of activity, rather than search for sets of patchy and methodologically incomparable data sets.

1.4   The work and this report aims to explore and characterise the complexity of Cultural Education Partnerships, to quantify elements of them, and to produce an analysis of the motivations, scope, ambitions, strategies and future needs of these partnerships. We wanted to establish a sense of the following:

- What are the different statuses of the Cultural Education Partnerships and at what level are they currently operating?

- What attitudes/perceptions do they have of the Cultural Education Challenge so far?

- What arts and culture provision is currently available within their area, and to what extent is there demand for this provision?

- How well do they perceive it to be delivering?

- To what extent are schools/education services involved in Cultural Education Partnerships?

- What types of schools/education services are they? (Early years, primary, secondary, teaching schools, academies, private etc)

- What sorts of other partners are involved?

- How are these partnerships working together and to what extent do partners currently understand each other's needs?

- How are resources currently handled within these partnerships?

- What challenges do Cultural Education Partnerships commonly encounter in delivering cultural education work in their areas?

- What are the aims and aspirations of the partnerships, and how have these been identified?

- How are the partnerships responding to diversity needs in their local areas and offers?

- How are they planning to measure their progress and achievements?

1.5   This work is evaluative in scope and will undoubtedly connect to future work that is more impact focused. However, in order to gain insights into the types of partnerships that are developing, it has developed as a research and review project. In that sense, findings are not solely and exclusively questions of fact, impact or effect.

1.6   In general, researching Cultural Education Partnerships has been a very positive experience. The enthusiasm and commitment of a very wide range of the cultural sector workforce is impressive. Via the Bridge network, Arts Council England seems to have instigated an appropriate framework for the inception and development of Cultural Education Partnerships. Each partnership's lead organisation seems well qualified and carries out work very well.

1.7   Section 4 of this report addresses the key objectives set out above. It also describes, through a mixture of quotes from interviews and survey responses, a number of contexts that frame the development of the idea of Cultural Education Partnerships as a 'national' concept. A series of local examples combine to build a composite picture of the whole. They include the following key features:

1. **Partnership types**: This includes the range of partners, breadth and depth of themes and motivations, and the quality of connections and buy-in, from strategic through to delivery levels. This is about how the partnerships are constituted and how they function internally.

2. **Management requirements:** This includes work by the Bridge Organisation in initially helping to administer and support work by the separate partnerships and how the partnership observes and manages legal compliance for work with and in schools. It also includes how the relationship with schools is currently shifting in response to policy and structural changes, and the challenges of holding together partnerships once formed.

3. **Modes of delivery:** Most of the work of the Cultural Education Partnerships is about quality of knowledge (based on experience), along with the ability to turn this into interventions that offer added value to the lives of children and young people. While all partnerships share this, they arrange their offer differently according to their interpretation of the level and quality of supply of cultural education locally, and how informed and widespread demand is, either directly from children or indirectly from schools.

1.8   Section 4 also briefly summarises examples of early successes for partnerships, indicating that even during the early stages, before full blown delivery has begun, there are shifts and connections being made that lay strong foundations for future work.

1.9   The concluding section 5 looks at three structural tensions in the management and development of the Cultural Education Partnerships: the shifting education landscape; the ambivalences towards serving extrinsic outcomes; and the issues of opportunity and labour market variation. These are not exclusive to this field of work. Nevertheless, they impact on these partnerships, the day-to-day management work arising, the definitions of roles, the effectiveness of operation and the possible futures for this partnership model.

2] Executive summary

There are at least 64 Local Cultural Education Partnerships across England and that number continues to grow. Collectively they seek to make a positive contribution to the lives of all children and young people across the country. In doing so they will fulfil the ambitions of the national Cultural Education Challenge as set out by Arts Council England.

This research sought to understand perceptions about the cultural offer currently available to children and young people and its ambitions to improve under the auspices of these local partnerships.

In total 45 partnerships undertook an online survey, sharing their thoughts on attempts to engage children and young people with a high quality offer of events, projects, visits and learning opportunities. Of these, 29 were interviewed at length about the set up of their local offer and strategies for embedding work long term.

The majority of Cultural Education Partnerships report that they are making good progress, establishing their networks and building a shared vision for a future offer aimed at children and young people. They are working with limited and/or reducing funding in a landscape where educational offers and the forms of governance in schools are shifting more than ever before. The infrastructure and personnel used to bolster cultural partnerships, such as local authority staff, are also reducing in number and/or facing increasing demands on their time and capacity. Emerging from this complex mix of contextual factors and new dynamic partnerships we have seen the following headlines emerge:

- There is widespread acknowledgement that the cultural offer can and should be improved

- Local Cultural Education Partnerships are aiming to engage with large numbers of schools

- They are also beginning to target key out-of-school organisations

- Local Cultural Education Partnerships are working across the age ranges but targeting primary and secondary schools as priorities

- Local Cultural Education Partnerships are linking strategically to existing schemes and strong provision – Music Education Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award particularly stand out

- Local Cultural Education Partnerships are driven by a belief in partnerships but acknowledge that they do not always translate into effective delivery or high impacts; more work is needed to understand and improve this

- Sustaining delivery, covering core costs, developing new offers and so forth is a complex mix of developing new business models, strong funding applications and making existing funding work harder and go further

- There is a clear commitment to offer cross-artform provision

- There is an interest in and commitment to a broader set of child and young person focused agendas which are already beginning to emerge in some partnerships – including wellbeing, youth justice and employment

- Existing resources will be committed to Cultural Education Partnerships and strategies for generating additional funding are being formulated

Schools feature strongly in most Cultural Education Partnerships and this makes sense as they remain the most effective route to the majority children and young people. However, we have heard from stakeholders that there continues to be a measure of ambivalence across the education sector as to whether arts and cultural education can lead to improved schools, in ways that would be measured as successful by government or Ofsted, for example.

Given this risk-aversion by some schools, there will therefore be a challenge ahead to ensure all children and young people – not just a select few – are given the opportunity to work on a range of arts and cultural activities. This will require a subtle relationship management with schools and a nuanced understanding of the shifting education landscape.

Most partnerships reported strong buy-in by cultural organisations and professionals who understand the need to improve the offer and extend its reach. A minority of partnerships raised concerns about the arts and culture being used in instrumental ways to serve school improvement agendas, sometimes at the expense of more intrinsic outcomes. They suggested this 'trade off' was becoming established as a key dimension of all cultural work in the education sector. The implication was that in order to access the schools 'market' there needed to be an explicit drive towards improving standards generally or addressing themes related to the core curriculum. These improvements need not be related to arts or cultural outcomes.

At a local level, as one would expect, partnerships interpreted and applied the Cultural Education Challenge through the prism of their own experiences. The challenge is designed to be open to this kind of local interpretation. However, each partnership can only make the best of what is available to them, and so there was sometimes a variation in coverage or quality. This is simply a classic tension between local variation in labour markets and centralised 'interventions', programme development or, as in this case, a looser but coherent call to action. Another way this tension may express itself is a growing demand for localised training or mobility of resources in order to meet growing demand. At such points funding becomes an issue, but so do the values that bind the challenge. Will it be easier or more difficult to sustain the coherence of the challenge as inception and consolidation of partnerships moves into growth and delivery of opportunities?

3] Background

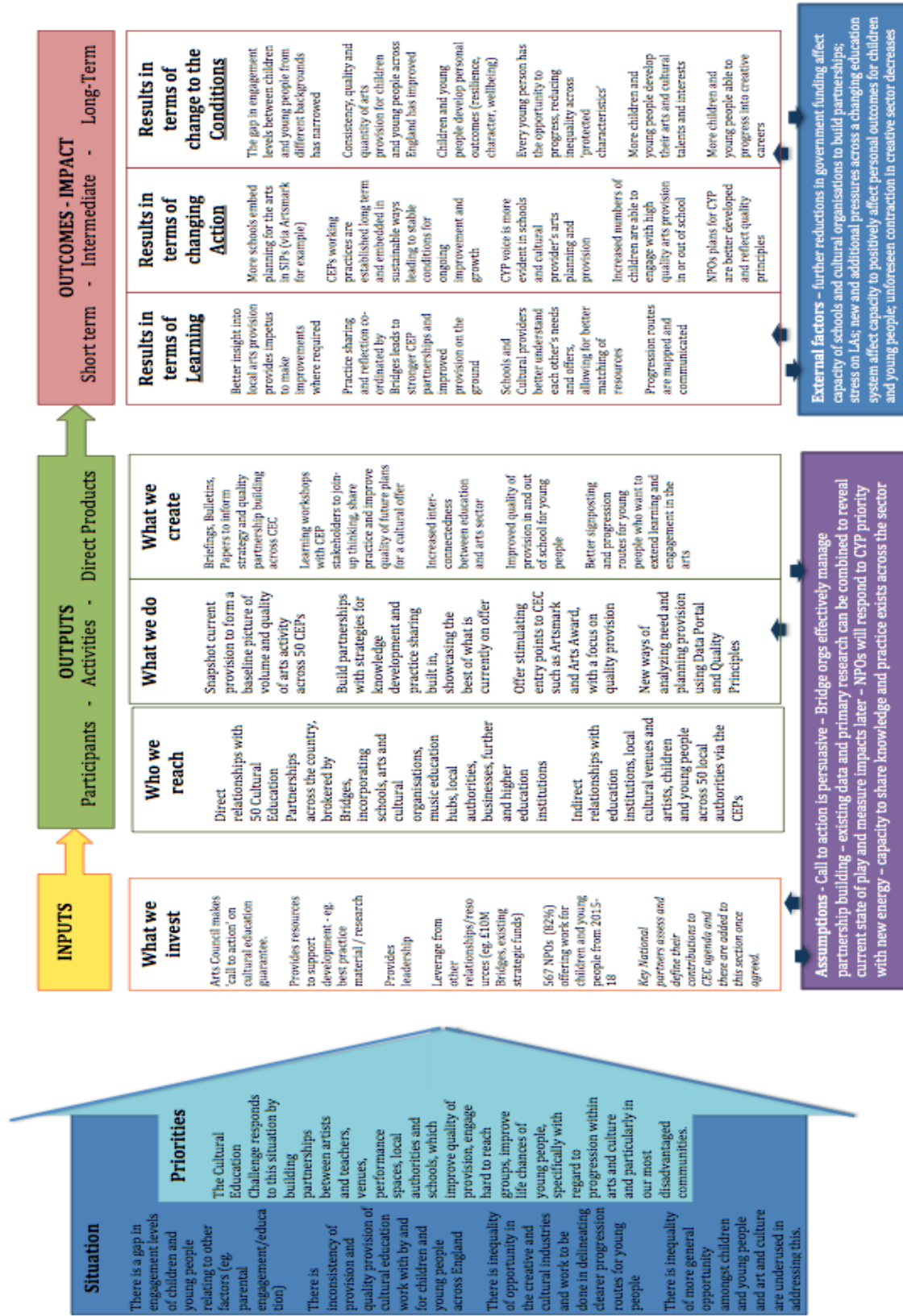## What is the Cultural Education Challenge?

3.1   The Cultural Education Challenge is a bold idea. Launched in the autumn of 2015, it sets out large scale ambitions for improvements to arts and cultural provision for young people at a time when resources are limited. The Arts Council England website states:

> "We want every child to have the chance to visit, experience and participate in extraordinary work, and be able to know more, understand more, and review the experiences they've had.
>
> The Cultural Education Challenge asks art and cultural organisations, educational institutions and local authorities to come together to drive a joined-up art and cultural offer locally, to share resources and bring about a more coherent and visible delivery of cultural education."

3.2   The aim of the challenge is to pool collective sector-wise understanding, to strengthen connections across the arts infrastructure and thereby offer young people better provision and opportunities to progress. In essence the challenge seeks to open up access to a wealth of arts and cultural opportunities by being smarter, more joined up and increasingly explicit about key factors associated with high quality provision. This will ensure the principles underpinning the best of current provision can infuse a cultural offer for young people everywhere. The catalyst for this improvement in provision will be Cultural Education Partnerships, an alliance of key players best situated locally to oversee the cultural education opportunities for children and young people. The key aims of the challenge are captured in the following logic model:

Cultural Education Challenge – Logic Model

INPUTS	OUTPUTS			OUTCOMES - IMPACT		
	Participants	Activities	Direct Products	Short term	Intermediate	Long-Term

Situation

There is a gap in engagement levels of children and young people relating to other factors (eg. parental engagement/education)

There is inconsistency of provision and quality provision of cultural education work with by and for children and young people across England

There is inequality of opportunity in the creative and cultural industries and work to be done in delineating clearer progression routes for young people

There is inequality of more general opportunity amongst children and young people and art and culture are underused in addressing this.

Priorities

The Cultural Education Challenge responds to this situation by building partnerships between artists and teachers, venues, performance spaces, local authorities and schools, which improve quality of provision, engage hard to reach groups, improve life chances of young people, specifically with regard to progression within arts and culture and particularly in our most disadvantaged communities.

INPUTS — What we invest

Arts Council makes 'call to action' on cultural education guarantee.

Provides resources to support development - eg. best practice material / research

Provides leadership

Leverage from other relationships/resources (eg. £10M Bridges existing strategic funds)

567 NPOs (B2%) offering work for children and young people from 2015-18

Key National partners assess and define their contributions to CEC agenda and these are added to this section once agreed

OUTPUTS: Participants — Who we reach

Direct relationships with 50 Cultural Education Partnerships across the country, brokered by Bridges, incorporating schools, arts and cultural organisations, music education hubs, local authorities, businesses, further and higher education institutions

Indirect relationships with education institutions, local cultural venues and artists, children and young people across 50 local authorities via the CEPs

OUTPUTS: Activities — What we do

Snapshot current provision to form a baseline picture of volume and quality of arts activity across 50 CEPs

Build partnerships with strategies for knowledge development and practice sharing built in.

Showcasing the best of what is currently on offer

Offer stimulating entry points to CEC such as Artsmark and Arts Award, with a focus on quality provision

New ways of analyzing need and planning provision using Data Portal and Quality Principles

OUTPUTS: Direct Products — What we create

Briefings, Bulletins, Papers to inform strategy and quality partnership building across CEC

Learning workshops with CEP stakeholders to join-up thinking, share practice and improve quality of future plans for a cultural offer

Increased inter-connectedness between education and arts sector

Improved quality of provision in and out of school for young people

Better signposting and progression routes for young people who want to extend learning and engagement in the arts

OUTCOMES-IMPACT: Short term — Results in terms of Learning

Better insight into local arts provision provides impetus to make improvements where required

Practice sharing and reflection co-ordinated by Bridges leads to stronger CEP partnerships and improved provision on the ground

Schools and Cultural providers better understand each other's needs and offers, allowing for better matching of resources

Progression routes are mapped and communicated

OUTCOMES-IMPACT: Intermediate — Results in terms of changing Action

More schools embed planning for the arts in SIPs (via Artsmark for example)

CEPs working practices are established long term and embedded in sustainable ways leading to stable conditions for ongoing improvement and growth

CYP voice is more evident in schools and cultural provider's arts planning and provision

Increased numbers of children are able to engage with high quality arts provision in or out of school

NPOs plans for CYP are better developed and reflect quality principles

OUTCOMES-IMPACT: Long-Term — Results in terms of change to the Conditions

The gap in engagement levels between children and young people from different backgrounds has narrowed

Consistency, quality and quantity of arts provision for children and young people across England has improved

Children and young people develop personal outcomes (resilience, character, wellbeing)

Every young person has the opportunity to progress, reducing inequality across 'protected characteristics'

More children and young people develop their arts and cultural talents and interests

More children and young people able to progress into creative sector careers

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Assumptions - Call to action is persuasive – Bridge orgs effectively manage partnership building – existing data and primary research can be combined to reveal current state of play and measure impacts later – NPOs will respond to CYP priority with new energy – capacity to share knowledge and practice exists across the sector

External factors – further reductions in government funding affect capacity of schools and cultural organisations to build partnerships; stress on LAs; new and additional pressures across a changing education system affect capacity to positively affect personal outcomes for children and young people; unforeseen contraction in creative sector decreases

3.3   The Arts Council has already identified 50 areas across the country which are either highly deprived and have a real need for a Cultural Education Partnership to be established, or where learning already exists and can be transferred from local stakeholders and interventions.

3.4   A network of 10 'Bridge Organisations' located across the country are helping to establish and initially take forward these Cultural Education Partnerships. The contention is that Bridge Organisations are important components at this early stage. In theory they are best positioned to help improve the alignment of cultural education for young people by drawing on the particular strengths of the local arts and cultural ecology, particularly when local partnerships are still establishing. Since Bridge Organisations are co-ordinating agents close to the ground, the Arts Council expects the Cultural Education Challenge to increasingly adopt a place-based approach, working in partnership to engage schools, families and other key players. This would prevent children and young people becoming falsely isolated as a group, without sufficient understanding of context or the inter-connected challenges they may face in their area, such as housing, health and future employment. Longer term, the aim is for each partnership to be entirely self-sustaining and self-administering.

3.5   There are some inherent complexities and paradoxes associated with the Cultural Education Challenge that must be borne in mind, particularly in the context of its evaluation, and these will be reflected on as we consider the research findings later in this report.

Method and approach

3.6   An aggregate picture or 'state-of-play' for the Local Cultural Education Partnerships, and indirectly the Cultural Education Challenge overall, has been compiled and forms the main body of this report. Each local partnership will also receive its own summary as an appendix to the main report. The data that fed into this work included:

- the Arts Council's online Cultural Education data portal
- telephone interviews with Bridge Organisation CEOs (n.10)
- telephone interviews Arts Council England Senior Relationship Managers (n.5)
- online surveys, one per partnership (n.45)
- in-depth telephone interviews, one per partnership (n.29)
- additional reports and data analysis submitted by local partnerships, in particular colleagues from the North East whose own commissioned research took place at the same time this fieldwork was underway

3.7   In order to reflect this broad range of start points, it was important to gain representation from partnerships at all stages of development and to understand the issues they faced as they developed their cultural offers. The survey questions were therefore designed to speak to partnerships at whichever stage they were at.

3.8   The survey, however, did not attempt to canvas a fine grained account of cultural provision artform by artform. Knowing the range of participants we expected to respond to the survey and be interviewed it was unrealistic to expect a traditional, wholly numerical baseline to emerge. Not everybody leading a partnership is in a position to forensically account for the precise range or depth of art and cultural offers in quantitative terms. Additionally, we know there is variability of data across the cultural sector, so even those who

can claim a strong knowledge of local provision will be drawing on multiple data sets of differing quality and robustness.

3.9   Instead we opted to establish the broad picture for each area, assessing views on how the cultural offer had worked in the past, the depth of planning and visioning processes going forward, the scale and direction of ambition, the strategies for engaging schools, children and young people, and what challenges lay ahead.

3.10   We were open to linking to all of these partnerships through this research but given some are at such early stages, without a lead contact or a functioning board, it would be unfair to expect structured responses to surveys or interviews. We did have a very small number of non-respondents across a couple of regions, but overall, the 45 LCEPs that responded to the survey and the 29 follow up interviews represent a good sized, representative sample of the total.

3.11   In the next section of this report findings from analysis of the data will be presented to build an overall picture of the Cultural Education Challenge at this time.

4] National findings

Degree of development of the partnerships – emerging, established or delivering

4.1   At the time of writing there are over 60 Cultural Education Partnerships across the country. Of these, 50 were initially earmarked by Arts Council England as strong locations and others are coming on board as word spreads. This means some are still in the very early stages without a functioning board or full membership but earmarked to establish themselves soon, while others have developed programmes of delivery and are in a position to reflect on early successes and ongoing challenges.

4.2   When asked if Local Cultural Education Partnerships regarded their partnership as emerging, established but not yet delivering, or established and delivering there is an almost even split across respondents (see Figure 1).
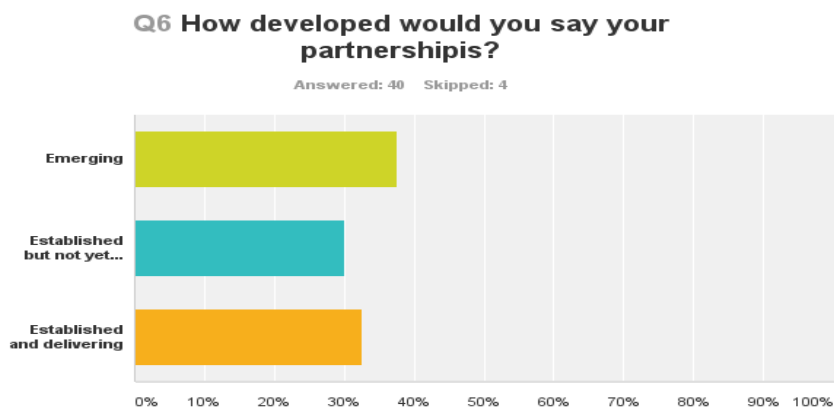
Figure 1

Local Cultural Education Partnerships' views of local cultural offers prior to the Cultural Education Challenge

4.3   The first half of the survey was designed to probe respondents' views as to the nature and effect of the cultural offer in their area in the recent past, prior to the Cultural Education Challenge.

4.4   Figure 2 below shows that the majority of Local Cultural Education Partnerships feel that previous cultural education provision had 'some impact'. This is important because, as a non-mandatory call to action, the Cultural Education Challenge needs to buy in to the underlying premise that there is ground to cover and further impacts to be made through cultural education.

Q8 How would you describe the level of impact of your cultural education provision in your locality before your partnership was established?

Answered: 42   Skipped: 3
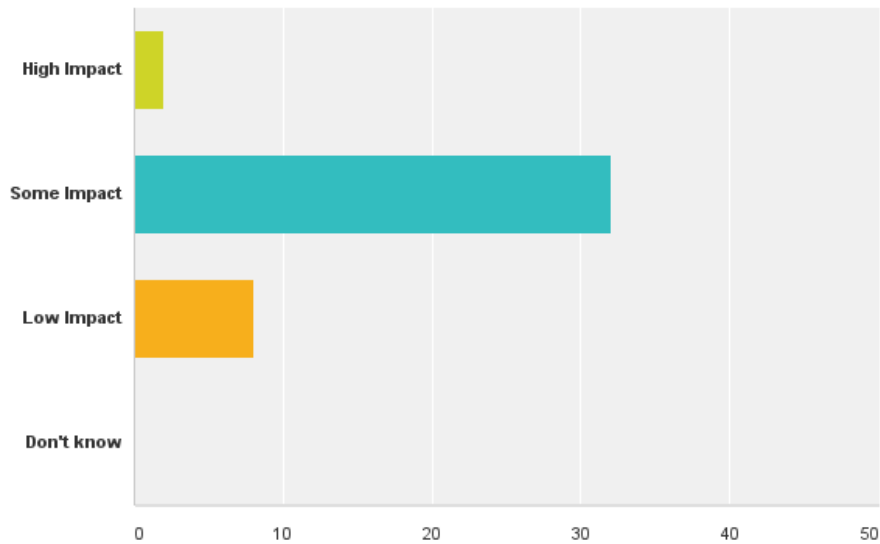
Figure 2

4.5   We also wanted to understand how the lead contacts for each partnership viewed prior cultural work with children and young people. Of particular interest was the perceived effectiveness of work targeted at socially disadvantaged groups. Figure 3 below shows that for the most part, although targeting was attempted, cultural offers had had limited success engaging socially disadvantaged children.

Q9 In terms of access was the cultural education offer in your area prior to your partnership engaging children and young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds?

Answered: 41   Skipped: 4
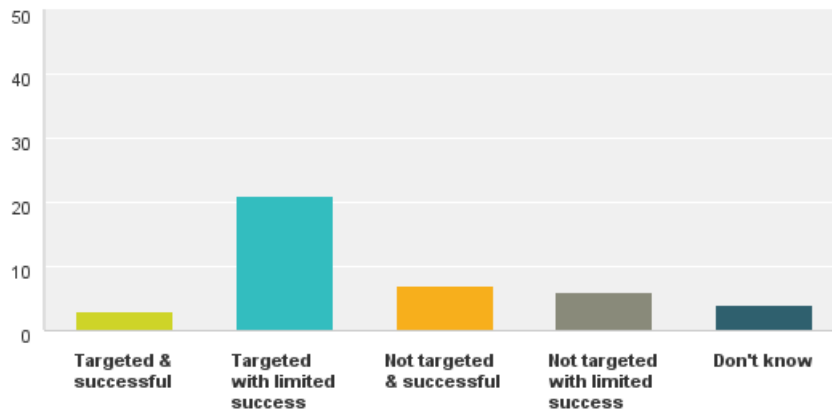
Figure 3

4.6   In addition to engaging hard to reach children and young people, the Cultural Education Challenge seeks to improve the nature and quality of partnerships locally. If the wide ranging ambitions of the challenge are to be even partially achieved, then it is likely that local partnerships and assessments of children's needs might generate the need for a wider range of developed networks and alliances beyond schools and cultural organisations (although they will very likely remain key).

We asked respondents to rank the strength of collaboration with a range of partners including schools, pre-schools, adult, family and community education, youth justice, culture and heritage, sport and recreation, libraries, health services and housing services.

4.7   It transpired that, historically, partnerships delivering a cultural offer had tended to be formed of schools, cultural and heritage organisations or venues and to a lesser degree youth centres and youth and community sectors. This may well point to the kinds of workshops, festivals, school holiday schemes and curriculum and or CPD driven offers that have been a feature of arts and cultural work for decades. Interestingly, there were also indications of less well established but nonetheless pre-existing links with other partners. In Appendix 1, Q.11 the full range of responses are set out and suggest emergent links to health and housing sectors, as well as youth justice.

4.8   The survey asked for more detail about the status and value ascribed to partnership working between the education and cultural sectors. This was to better understand the kind of ethos these partnerships had been operating with and how effective they were perceived to have been.

4.9   The results show partnerships were considered important, with approximately half of respondents indicating this. However, just over one third of respondents felt partnerships had a positive influence, and less than a quarter indicated partnership working was a key element of their offer. Full responses to this question can be found in appendix 1, Q.12.

4.11   This suggests that while there is a common set of values at play here there are hidden factors that stop partnership-based interventions from converting their shared vision into desired outcomes.

Local Cultural Education Partnerships' views of new cultural offers and new ways of working

4.12   The second section of the survey looked at new partnerships, both emergent and established, and considered the ways they might be approaching cultural education differently than before.

Current use of data

4.13   Use of data to inform strategy and planning fits with the aims of the challenge which encourages a reflective approach to reconfiguring a familiar cultural offer. The overwhelming majority (78%) of partnerships were devising new cultural offers that were informed fully or partially by data. This data ranged from local authority statistics, free school meals data, participatory data from cultural partners, and feedback and evaluations at venues. It also included awareness and understanding of participation by schools and young people in Artsmark and Arts Award.

Q13 **Has any data been used to inform your partnership strategy and planning?**

Answered: 41   Skipped: 4
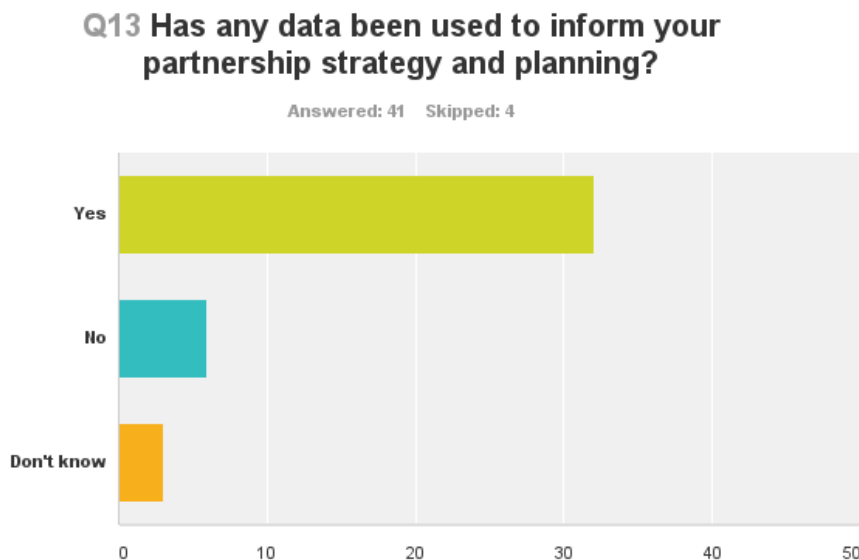
Figure 4

4.14   Just under half (48%) of the partnerships who responded indicated that they would be augmenting publicly available or existing in-house data with newly commissioned audits or needs analyses. Questions remain as to the quality of the data, the robustness of the analysis

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and the cost-effectiveness of new audits and analyses. But while we cannot yet know how this might add to the quality of new offers, partnerships generally seem committed to exploring the need for real changes to the ways things happen locally and that is entirely in line with the ambitions of the Cultural Education Challenge.

Intended engagement with the education sector

4.16   Through telephone interviews it became clear that one of the ways data is being used is to better understand the perceived changing education landscape and the somewhat volatile schools marketplace. To this end the survey included questions to reveal the range and volume of schools that partnerships expected to connect with.

Figure 5 below tells us that primary schools are expected to be the major partners and mechanism for connecting with children and young people within Local Cultural Education Partnerships. The primary curriculum has long been considered more amenable to arts and cultural interventions, given the relative flexibility of the curriculum and generally high receptivity of staff to project based working. Therefore it is encouraging to see that secondary schools are ranked almost as highly, particularly during a period when policy changes appear to be restricting spaces for the arts and culture at Key Stages 3, 4 and 5.
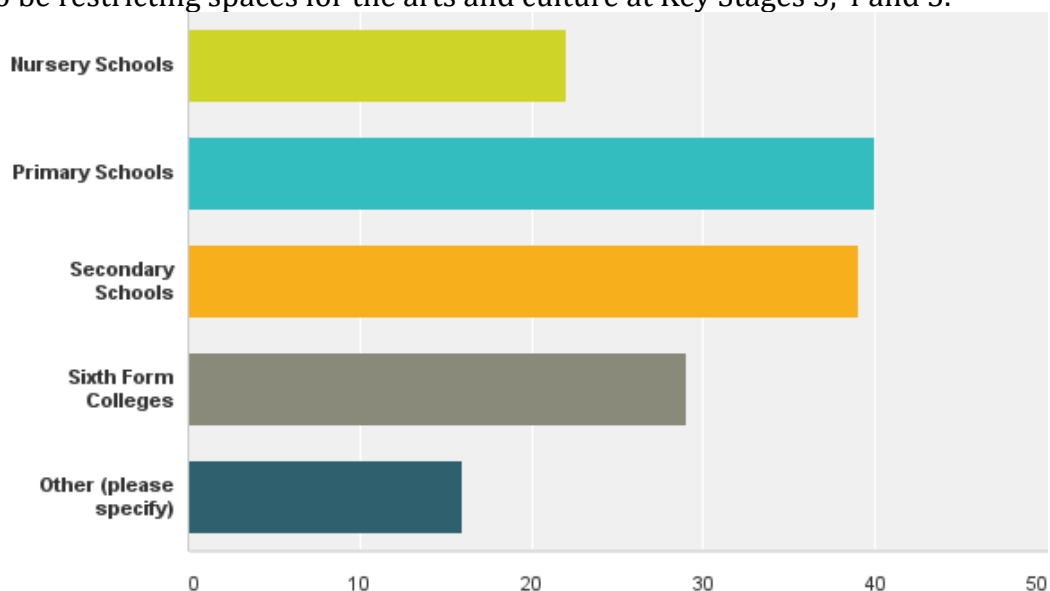
Figure 5

4.17   The role of further and higher education (which were most often cited in the 'other' category when answering this question) is not as clear cut as the relationship with schools. In the case of schools there is already some understanding of organisational and learners' needs – requirements to assist school improvement, for example, or to augment the arts and cultural curriculum with an additional quality or depth of experience. With further and higher education the nature of partnership working is still being explored to some extent, although with further education the alternative career pathways and creative apprenticeships were often mentioned in interviews as being a pragmatic starting point.

4.18   Local Cultural Education Partnerships were also asked to consider the types of schools they would be aiming to work with in terms of governance structures. This was to explore whether there were any sub-groups within the school system overall that might be super-

served, or not be engaged by the revised cultural offer. Encouragingly, Figure 6 shows a wide range of schools were indicated as being 'in scope' for future cultural provision.

Q17 Thinking of the governance structures of schools, which types of schools do you anticipate working with? (Please tick all that apply)

Answered: 41   Skipped: 4
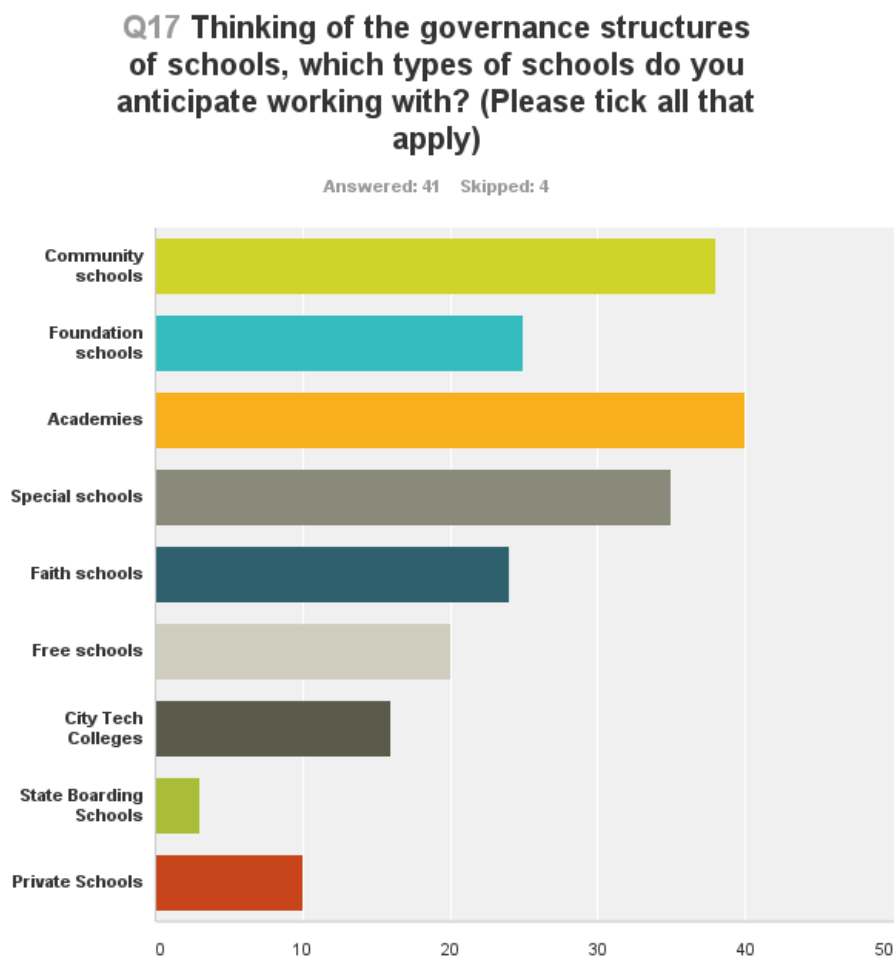
Figure 6

4.19   In terms of numbers of schools they planned to work with, many partnerships registered ambitious aims. Just under half of the respondents intend to work with upwards of 50% of schools in their area, and 14 of the 45 LCEPs surveyed (35%) were aiming to work with all schools (see Figure 7). It is also notable that 10 respondents (25%) did not know what proportion of schools they intended to work with.

Q28 Approximately what proportion of schools within your area do you hope to reach through your revised cultural offer?

Answered: 40   Skipped: 5
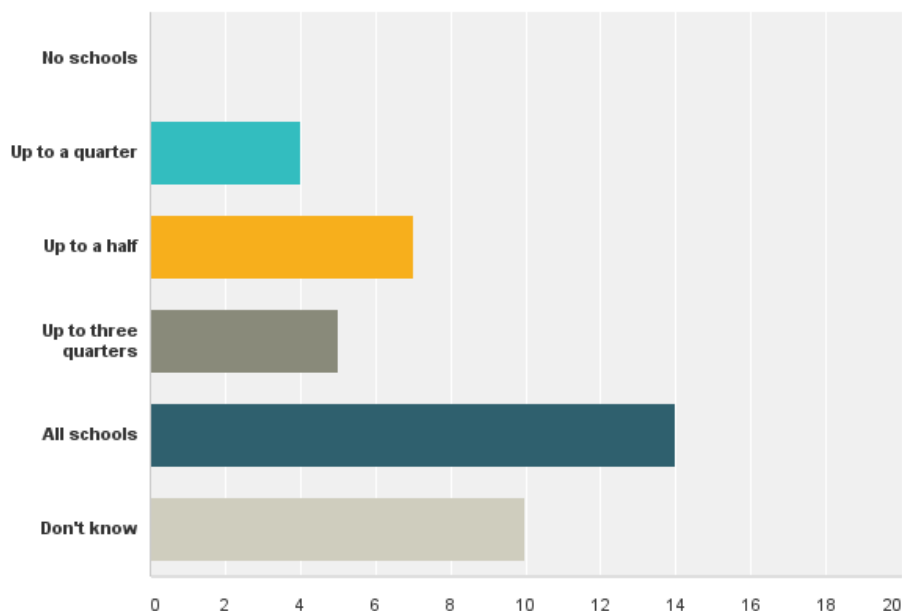
Figure 7

Intended priorities

4.23   Since Local Cultural Education Partnerships are the chief mechanism for the Cultural Education Challenge to succeed it is important to gauge how in step local priorities are with national objectives. We therefore asked partners to indicate how important a range of national priorities were to them locally. Figure 8 below shows that there appears to be a good deal of congruity on local and national priorities going forward. The lowest of these national priorities for the partnerships is around National Portfolio Organisation planning for work with children and young people, perhaps because Local Cultural Education Partnerships are not directly mandated to influence this. In all other respects there is strong agreement between local and national priorities of the challenge (see Figure 8 below).

Q22 To what extent would you say the following priorities feature in your partnership's ambitions and plans?

Answered: 39 Skipped: 6

Legend:
- Better insight into local arts and culture provision
- Practice sharing and reflection
- Schools and Cultural providers better understanding each other's needs
- Progression routes for young people clearly mapped and communicated
- More schools embedding planning for the arts and culture
- LCEPs working practices established for the long term
- Children's and Young People's voice more evident
- Increased numbers of children are able to engage with high quality arts provision in or ou...
- Explicit use of cultural education as a mechanism for narrowing gaps
- NPO plans for CYP are well developed
- More CYP choosing cultural or creative career

Figure 8

4.24   In addition, there are a number of regional and local thematic or strategic priorities that may find connections to partnerships in the future. These are set out in Figure 9 below.

Q23 Thinking of other significant local priorities, to what extent is your partnership planning to link with the following:

Answered: 38   Skipped: 7
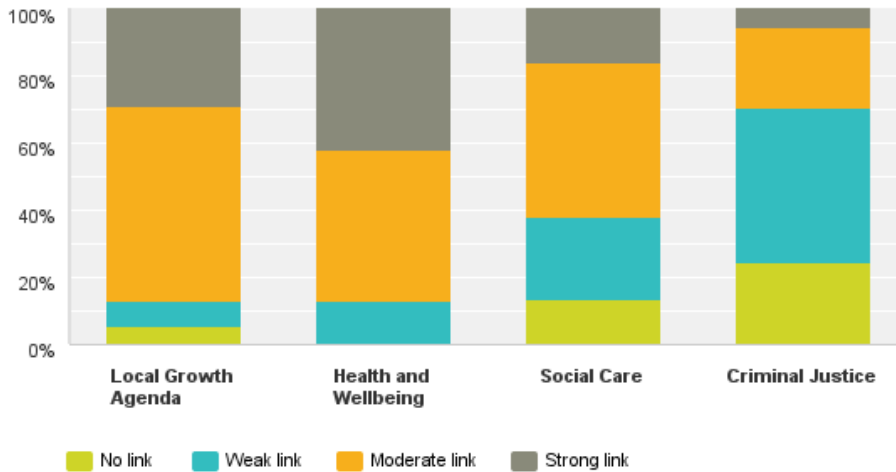
Figure 9

4.25   Findings suggest that while links exist in relation to all the areas cited they appear to be strongest on local economic growth and health and wellbeing.

Intended beneficiaries

4.26   The survey went on to ask which stakeholder groups Local Cultural Education Partnerships felt were most likely to derive benefits from the new cultural offer. Children, schools and teachers stood out as the expected main beneficiaries, with partners from the cultural sector ranking just behind. It may seem surprising that employers rank lower than other groups listed.

Q25 From the following list can you indicate which groups you expect to receive high, medium, low or no benefit from your partnership's work

Answered: 40   Skipped: 5

Legend:
High likelihood of benefit
Medium likelihood of benefit
Low likelihood of benefit
No likelihood to benefit
Not sure
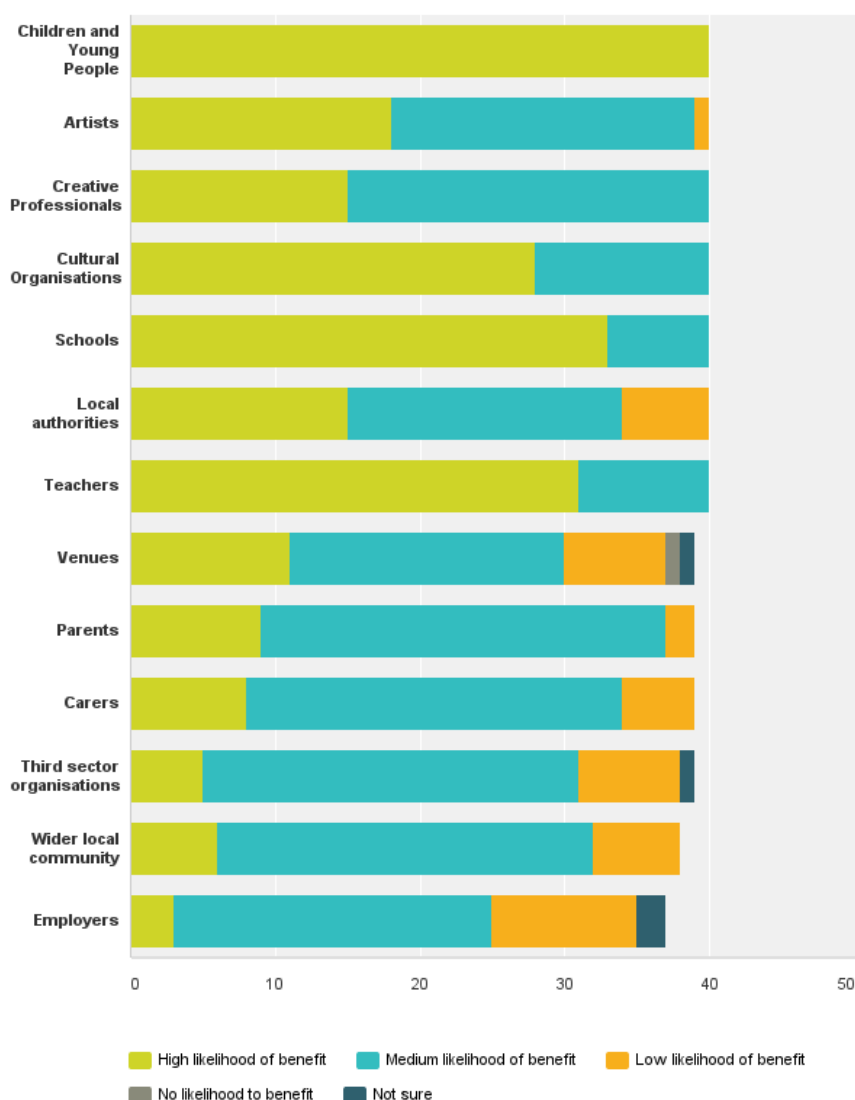
Figure 10

4.18   Local Cultural Education Partnerships gave the impression that reaching socially disadvantaged groups of children and young people had been problematic in the past (Figure 3). When asked if they would be actively targeting such groups in future the majority of partnerships (63%) said they would, only 12% said they would not and the remainder (24%) were undecided (see Appendix 1, Q19).

Intended engagement with out of school settings

4.30   Having enquired about schools – both in terms of type and scale of engagement – the survey also explored whether partnerships intended to target work in out of school settings and what proportion of such settings might be expected to engage. The survey found that 16

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of the 45 partnerships were not sure how many out of school settings they might work with and 11 partnerships suggested they might expect to work with up to a quarter in their location. Contrary to expectation, only a minority expected to work with half or more out of school settings. Figure 11 below shows that there are likely to be significant levels of activity in youth centres and cultural venues. This may support the aims of the Challenge since the least engaged children and young people often find activities framed in out of school contexts more accessible.
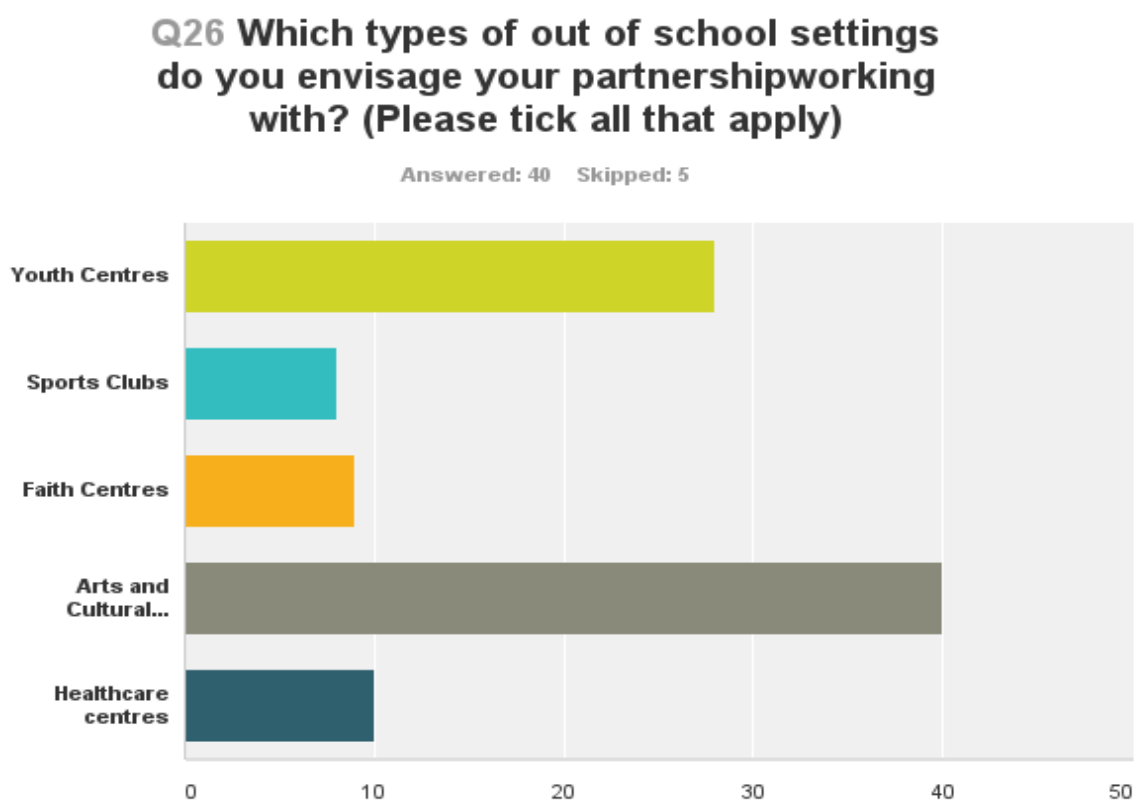
Figure 11

Intended offer – artforms

4.31   One of the challenges facing these new local partnerships is the kinds of infrastructure already in place within their locality. With this in mind, the survey asked what kinds of artforms partnerships were expecting to develop. From the table below we can see that with one or two exceptions (which from interview data was accounted for by the absence of known partners or venues in the area) there is an attempt to ensure a very broad coverage of artforms. Differences in high and medium categories are more difficult to pin down, but may be due to: paucity of venues and local expertise; pre-existing offers already serving needs well and so are less significantly reformed through Local Cultural Education Partnership activity; or local needs and priorities indicating greater demand for some artforms over others. Other variances – for example, the dominance of theatre, music, visual arts and museums – may be due to historical links between such artforms and curriculum planning in schools where trips and enrichment activities have been better developed in relation to those artforms than others.

Q32 Thinking of the range of cultural provision and art forms you expect to see developed through your LCEP, can you indicate areas you foresee being high, medium or low priorities?

Answered: 37   Skipped: 8
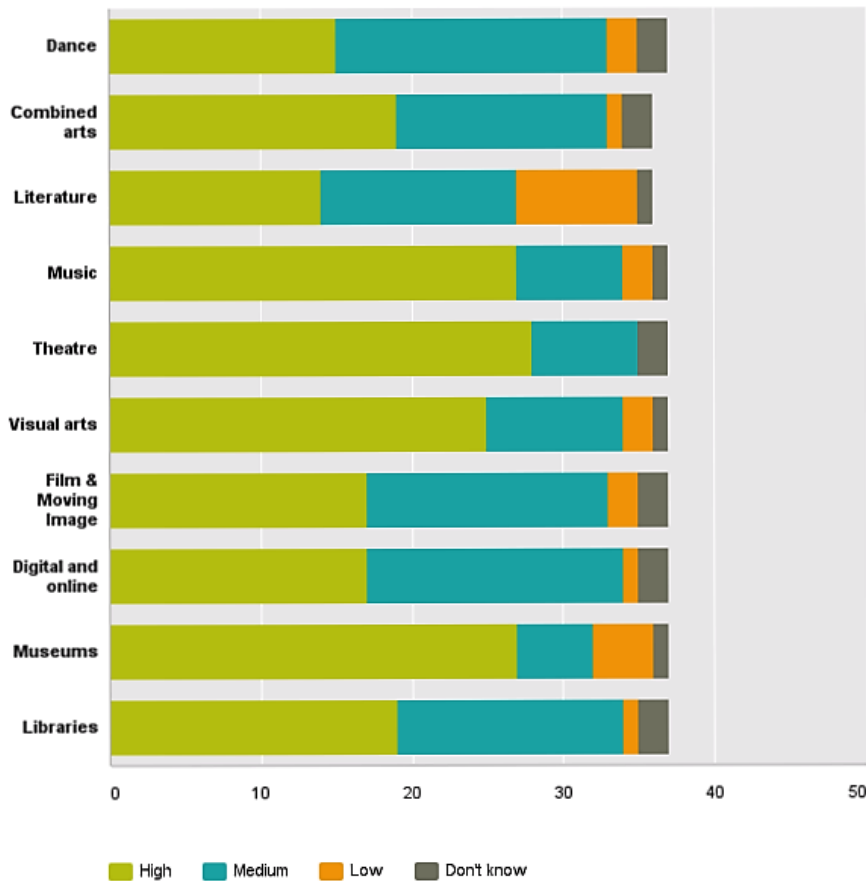
Figure 12

4.32   As well as the artforms listed above there are of course a range of existing cultural organisations and initiatives which partnerships may connect with or respond to. The survey looked to see how connections were likely to develop with some existing schemes. Figure 6 below shows us that there were three stand out schemes which it made sense for Local Cultural Education Partnerships to plug into: Music Education Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award.

4.33   During telephone interviews lead contacts often shared some additional insights about the natural connections they saw as 'quick wins'.

Artsmark is an obvious link to make. It has been remodelled to better meet the needs of schools and it seems to be proving popular. If we can take out a refreshed schools based offer that gets teachers better connected to the cultural infrastructure where they work that will cover a lot of bases.
Local Cultural Education Partnerships lead contact, North West

Resourcing and sustainability

4.34   Interviews showed that there were differences of opinion about the primacy of additional or new funding as a catalyst for Local Cultural Education Partnership work. However, everybody agreed that in order for the new cultural offers for children and young people to be sustained, future funding needs to be considered.

75% of respondents indicated that existing funding would be expected to contribute to the fulfilment of the partnerships' ambitions. However, additional funding was also indicated as being essential in approximately three quarters of partnerships (based on survey and interview data). This funding was generally cited as necessary or two reasons: to cover costs such as staffing to support administration and oversight of partnership development; or to cover costs of particular interventions as 'proof of concept' for new ways of working that might initially require some subsidy.

Q34 Considering longer term cultural education provision, what resources is your partnership targeting to support your work in the future? (Please select all that apply)

Answered: 40   Skipped: 5
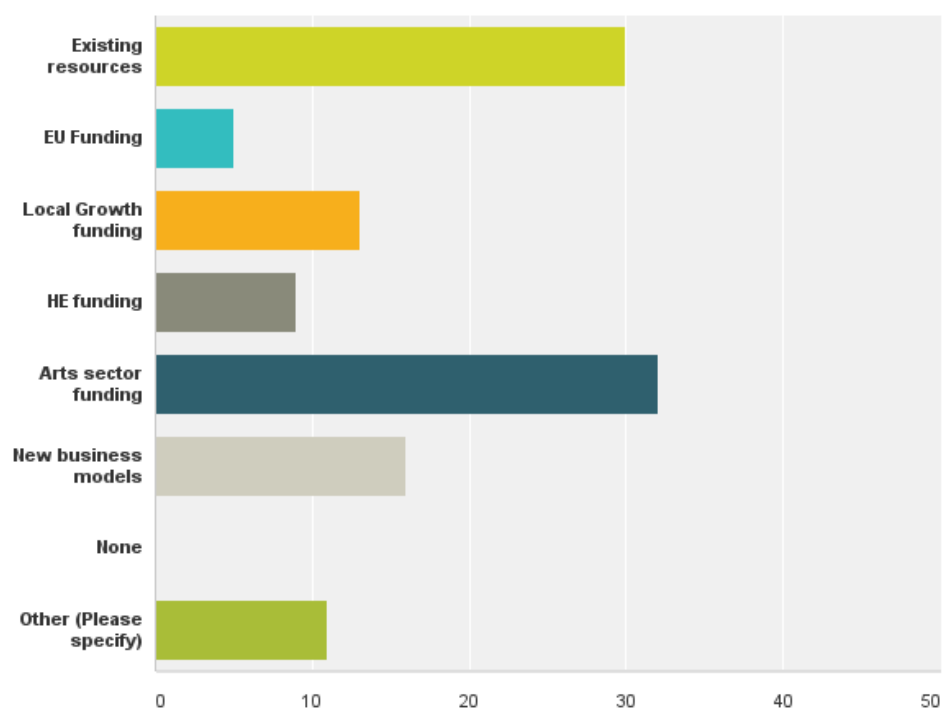
Figure 13

4.36   Although it is difficult to pin down precisely what funding applications or new business models are in the pipeline, as so many partnerships are at an early stage, the survey did probe a little deeper around this issue of funding sources. Interestingly, aside from one off awards through trusts and foundations, Figure 14 shows that Grants for the Arts features prominently as a vehicle for much of this future work. Whether this is an indication of a reprioritisation of pre-existing Grants for the Arts work, or will lead to a surge in numbers of applications (and therefore new pressures on already strained resources) remains to be seen.

Q35 From the sources of funding below can you indicate which, if any, your partnership is planning to leverage to support cultural education?

Answered: 39   Skipped: 6
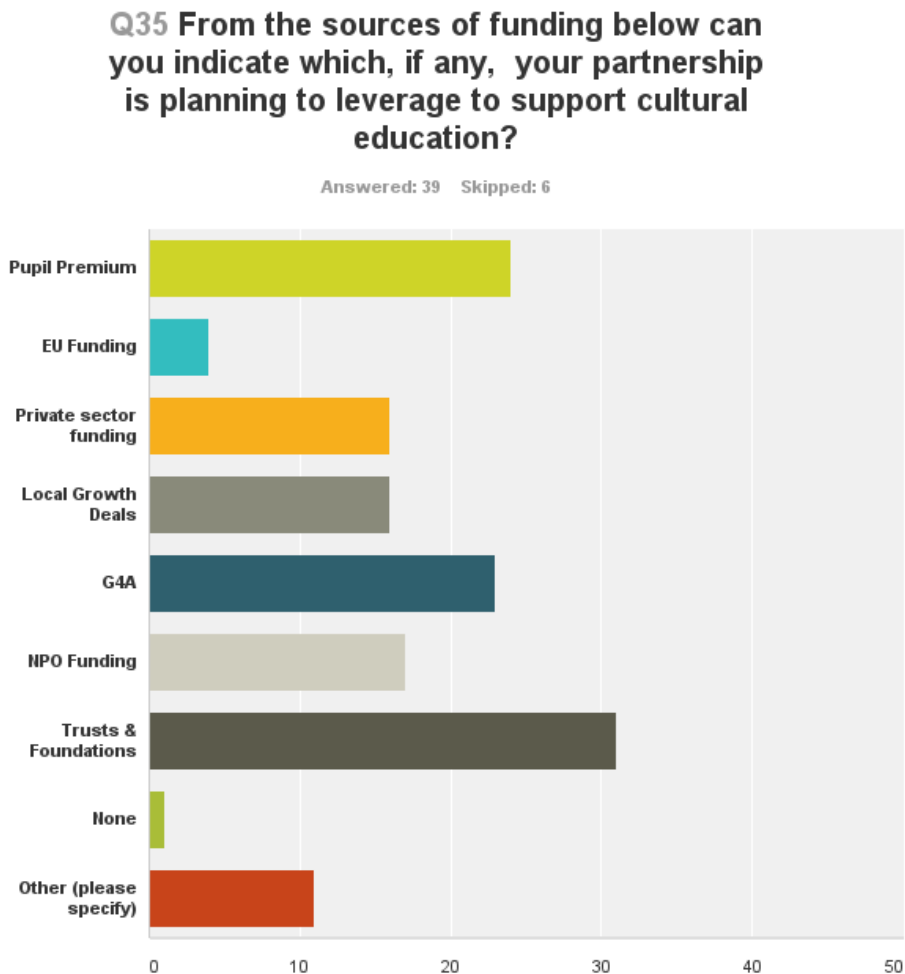
Figure 14

4.37   As well as seeking to understand new thinking around funding and future sustainability, the survey also asked questions about the set-up and governance of partnerships. This was to ascertain whether partnerships had been formalised with terms of reference, for example, or were looser, less structured alliances. Given the importance of equality of opportunity at the heart of the Cultural Education Challenge, there were also questions about the role of equality and diversity within the partnerships and any forms of quality assurance that may be used.

4.38.	Regarding terms of reference, only three out of 41 partnership responses suggested they did not have terms of reference or plans to instigate any in the future. Only two partnerships did not know. The majority – 36 – either had terms of reference or had plans to set them up in the future. This suggests that there are open and agreed understandings of the remit and limits of partnerships locally, helping to make partnership work clearer and more coherent.

4.39	The place and role of equality and diversity issues was less developed within partnerships but there was a strong intention to set up action plans or their equivalents (see Figure 15 below).
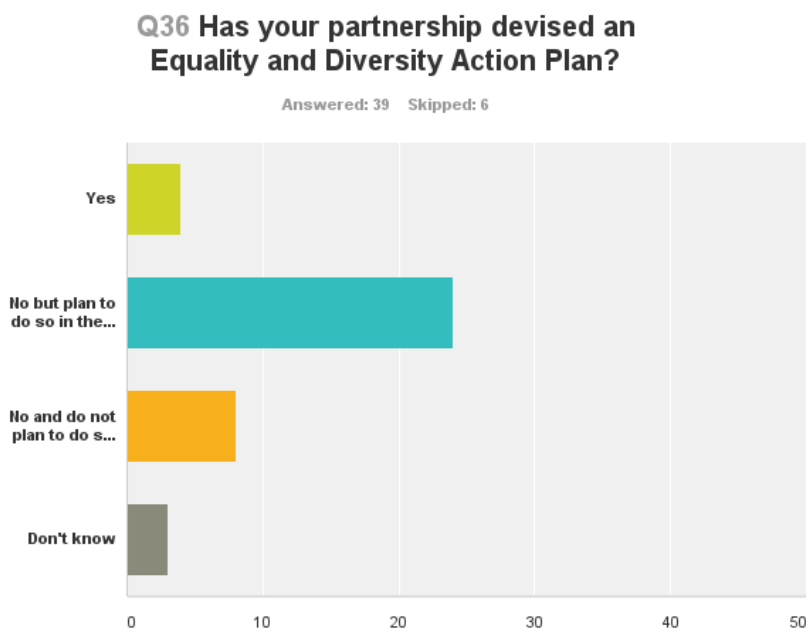
Figure 15

4.40	Finally, the degree to which quality frameworks had been adopted as a means of assuring standards of provision for children and young people, as well as a way of partially expressing some of the intrinsic values of the arts and culture in learning contexts. The survey asked partnerships whether they were adhering to a specific quality framework. 28 partnerships reported that they either had a framework in place or were in the process of adopting one. Comments within the survey suggest a range of possibilities here:

> Action research and evaluation methodologies case studies of excellence to inform scoping phase Working with CUREE and Paul Hamlyn Foundation to evaluate impact of School Without Walls.

> Working with a consultant as a Critical Friend to establish an effective evaluation feedback framework and strategy, so that this can be recorded and evaluated providing a structure and way forward for future partnership collaboration.

> Arts Council quality principles.

> We want the Arts Council to support us with funding to make this happen on a high-quality level.

5] Emerging themes and implications

Approaches to partnership building and emerging typologies

5.1   Variety was certainly the common theme when it came to Cultural Education Partnerships. Every location had a slightly different narrative, reflecting real differences on the ground. However, despite these very real distinctions there was some commonality of approach. There is always a risk of over-simplification in creating typologies of emerging practice, but it did seem that partnerships were driven by a mixture of factors related to supply and demand:

>   1] Supply driven – those partnerships where the cultural offer is already strong and the main challenge is to re-route delivery mechanisms to ensure more of the offer reaches greater numbers of children and young people.
>
>   2] Demand driven – those partnerships where improved understanding of the nature of demand for cultural opportunities by children, young people and schools is the first-order challenge. Such partnerships are looking to prioritise children and young people's voices and to help refine the discourse around identifying needs and matching needs to the right kind of offer. Artsmark and Arts Award can help in such partnerships.
>
>   3] Supply refined – those partnerships where questions are raised about the nature and quality of supply and where some appraisal and refinement of the offer may drive early activity based on local audits of practice.
>
>   4] Combinations of the above.

5.2   Realistically there are unlikely to be many partnerships that fall *exclusively* into one of the first three categories and although in describing their work some seemed more or less supply- and demand- driven than others there is always a blend of approaches taken to revising a cultural offer and taking it back to various markets. So rather than consider these categories as exclusive labels they are suggested as ways of indicating emphasis and framing future discussion.

5.3   Partnerships adopt a number of ways of working as they build connections and generate buy in early on, and many points of learning arise from this that would be worth sharing regionally and nationally. Those lead contacts who were interviewed shared the following insights about particular approaches taken to building the right kinds of alliances and working relationships:

High level strategic partners
These partnerships take as their start point the formation of an influential board. The board comprises senior individuals from a range of sectors aligned to their priority areas as identified in the organisation's impact and outcomes.

5.4   In the South East, a partnership is emerging with help from the Bridge Organisation Artswork. The partnership is characterised by high level stakeholders engaged at board level and a clear shared sense of top-line priorities. One lead partner explained how their partnership board came together:

"Firstly our Bridge Organisation has been great at drawing the right people together so meetings are already moving forward quickly because like minds are around the table. The local Director of Public Health is the Chair. Thanks to pre-work by our Bridge and the match funding approach they have taken we are securing high level buy in...public health, police commissioners and others are all having input. We now have a better understanding of what we offer, but also in a more rounded way what the demand is. Our approach is very place-based just by virtue of the range of voices and high level stakeholders around the table."

Dual sector partnerships

These partnerships take as their initial motivation the need to reformulate the supply-demand relationships between the cultural sector and the education sector (chiefly, schools). The rationale for this start point generally is that schools are central platform used to reach children and young people and prevailing relationships either prevent or inhibit potential impact.

5.5   While it is still early days for one partnership in the North West it already seems clear that the key to success will be reconnecting cultural and educational partners in more productive ways:

"It is a sensitive time for cultural organisations and schools. On one hand not everybody in the schools improvement sector fully subscribe to the idea that arts and culture can be a force for good in the sense of improved exams and that side of things. On the other hand, cultural organisations are keen to retain their core purpose and not lose too much of their distinctive value. For them it can be a challenge to operate with schools only in instrumentalist ways – serving lots of agendas but rarely art and culture for its own sake. So there is work to be done there, too. We need to resolve some of these issues."

Partnerships using existing energy and capacity

Other partnerships use very specific challenges as their start point to galvanise support and begin new activity. In rural areas there tended to be low or no cultural infrastructure and so using the energy of individual practitioners, or organisations able and willing to travel in to help shape an offer, was vital. In urban areas, where the range of possible partners sometimes seemed overwhelming, a local jointly shared challenge which could help reshape an offer was seen to be the best start point.

5.6   In London one interviewee summarised the other prevalent approach to partnership building and enhancing the existing cultural offer.

"We work in collaboration with a group of local, like-minded organisations. We are all fairly close together geographically. We share certain aspirations to deliver a more fit for purpose offer to schools and we want to develop that in a coordinated way. For us our partnership feels a natural progression for organisations of our size. We have identified a common goal, we are also responding to a shared problem – falling numbers of school visits. We all need to think more creatively about sustaining those relationships more, so we share that energy and that is what is taking us forward during these early months."

Early successes and opportunities

5.7   Overall, good progress is reported and some early successes are already evident. The case studies below illustrate what Local Cultural Education Partnerships can achieve if momentum is sustained.

Improved use of data

The Cambridge Local Cultural Education Partnership is led by Jane Wilson who is based in Cambridge City Council's Community Services Department as Culture and Community Manager. Jane's role, as she sees it, is to enable others to deliver on the partnership's ambition, so she has prioritised improvements to data gathering on the cultural consumption of young people to help improve their offer.

Initial trawls of what data was available, including the DCMS's Taking Part survey confirmed that while there were pockets of reliable and consistent quantitative data, there wasn't really anything that helped build an accurate picture of what was happening locally.

Looking further afield it was discovered that some innovative work in Flanders had led to the development of a 'loyalty card' style data collection system for capturing trends in arts and cultural engagement. Building on this, and using workshops with the partnership's key stakeholders, they decided to develop a local version of the Flanders model. Working in a city surrounded by technology, the group tried to consider ways they could make better use of existing systems to build a more accurate picture of children and young people's engagement in arts and cultural life. The library card was the most logical fit. Library cards give each holder a unique identifier and they are free so there are no barriers to obtaining one in terms of cost. In this way the idea of a Culture Card was born and it is now possible to scan for any form of cultural activity using low-cost technology on hand held devices such as phones or tablets.

The Culture Card will provide live data linked to postcodes that will build a very fine grained picture of cultural engagement. Moreover, there are other data sets held at county level that the Culture Card could potentially relate to – opening up opportunities to illuminate links to attainment and other specific outcomes.

Place based approaches building on Creative People and Places

In Doncaster the partnership lead Nick Stopforth described how strategically linking to Creative People and Places has been a useful kickstart to the Cultural Education Partnership.

At the time of our interview, over the seven months the Doncaster partnership had then been

running, Nick explained that a strategy had been agreed that centred on children and young people, and sought to understand their needs and how they might best be sustained within families and communities.

In that context the Creative People and Places funded project Right Up Our Street has proven to be a useful entry point to future Cultural Education Partnership work. The project generated rich grass roots activity in a very deprived area of Doncaster, Danerby. This is an area with low life expectancy, and large numbers of families who have been unemployed for generations. There is a very low or no expectation of the arts and culture being part of their community. However, due to projects like Right Up Our Street, the community began to see art and culture as something for and by them, and something their children might be inspired to participate in. The Doncaster Local Cultural Education Partnership is now able to build on the successes of Right Up Our Street because the community is that much more receptive than it otherwise would have been.

Wide ranging stakeholder engagement

Portsmouth has an emerging partnership with a wide range of stakeholder interests represented. So far they have defined their secretariat and confirmed funding for the first eight months of work. Most of that work will be to inform the future delivery of the strategy, including some fact finding research to better understand local demand.

With support from their local Bridge Organisation the Portsmouth partnership comprises: members from key National Portfolio Organisations; other cultural organisations; schools and local authority staff with oversight of education matters; the university of Portsmouth; representatives with interest in health issues; and the regional police commissioner who has an interest in the ways arts and culture work might help with issues of youth justice and youth offending.

This influential board has signed off on a plan that covers a number of themes: families and early years; broad and balanced curriculum; health and wellbeing inequalities; transferable skills; and pre-employment.

Given the high level of engagement and the segmented areas of priority the partnership certainly identifies the challenges ahead, particularly the need to secure funding, but feels confident it is well positioned to secure investment from a range of potential partners.

Re-engaging schools

The Cultural Education Partnership emerging in Liverpool is planning to use Artsmark to connect to schools and build a broader cultural provision.

Artsmark is a structured arts-led scheme for school improvement, and while there is no plan to offer free access to the scheme, there will be a subsidised enrolment fee, making it easier for more schools to take part. There are some conditions attached to the subsidy, namely that the school must work with a local cultural venue and must share their learning. This subsidy segues into a range of other offers, including co-planning between teachers and artists, workshops to support teacher CPD, and awareness raising of local cultural infrastructure.

There are also plans to develop an Arts Industry Talent Development Day, linked to the general schools-wide work experience week which occurs each year.

It is hoped this range of offers will incentivise schools and the local school improvement team to see the value of arts and cultural learning. But it begins with Artsmark, the preferred way to reach high numbers of schools and begin the process of connecting to venues and circulating successes throughout the sector.

Challenges

5.8   It became clear from telephone interviews with Bridge Organisations and Arts Council Senior Relationship Managers that all partnerships were facing challenges and opportunities which were affecting their abilities to develop at the pace some had expected. Some were moving ahead more quickly, others more slowly. The survey presented us with an opportunity to understand what these complicating factors might be and whether they were helping or hindering progress. The table below sets out some of these elements and they are ranked as having a positive, negative or no significant influence.

	Disabling factor	No significant influence	Enabling factor	Total
Levels of funding and resources	59.46% 22	5.41% 2	35.14% 13	37
Partnership building	0.00% 0	5.26% 2	94.74% 36	38
Inter-departmental or multi-agency collaboration	2.63% 1	21.05% 8	76.32% 29	38
Demand from schools for cultural offers for young people	5.26% 2	23.68% 9	71.05% 27	38
Identifying disadvantaged children and young people	2.78% 1	55.56% 20	41.67% 15	36
Availability of high quality cultural education professionals	13.16% 5	18.42% 7	68.42% 26	38
Local schools are engaged with Artsmark	13.51% 5	45.95% 17	40.54% 15	37
Transport links to cultural venues	47.37% 18	36.84% 14	15.79% 6	38
Clarity of progression routes for young people	44.74% 17	26.32% 10	28.95% 11	38

Table 9.

5.9   We can see that the role of funding and resources appears divisive here, with 59% citing it as a slowing partnership development, while a still sizeable 35% see it as an enabling factor. However, reflecting on feedback from telephone interviews, this variance can be

accounted for quite straightforwardly. Generally, partnerships in early stages, or those moving from inception to delivery phases (which make up two thirds of survey respondents), face an administrative burden that is perceived as stretching staff who are already at capacity with day to day duties.

5.10   Such partnerships often cited the need for additional funding solely to administrate burgeoning partnerships and activities. Conversely, when discussing new ways of working, those partnerships who are now delivering activities suggest that the lack of funding is emancipating. Since no additional money is part of the process, a cleaner dialogue can take place, unconcerned with allocation of resources, etc. These perceptions are not contradictory of course, more a facet of the stages different partnerships are at. Some of the written commentaries accompanying these responses alluded to key issues in more detail:

> "Capacity of lead organisations to drive forward work given competing demands on time and no additional resources is a disabling factor"

> "There is strong interest from some schools for cultural offers but heads and teachers are beleaguered by Ofsted and attainment priorities (currently not focused on arts and cultural education), not knowing where to look for clear information, and lack of time and funding to do this. These factors are preventing a significant demand."

> "The partnership has been fortunate and helped to gain funding to support aspects of its work, eg to set up and develop an annual festival. Cultural organisations have brought resources to the table which have made a significant impact on opportunities and outcomes. The partnership is of course limited in some respects in terms of resources it can jointly provide, and has made less impact in some areas such as developing understanding of progression routes and pathways to employment where there has been less capacity to do the work."

> "The most disabling factor is physical isolation from the cultural venues and the costs facing schools and young people to travel."

5.11   A minority of partnerships felt that their current status was fragile and warned that additional resources would be needed to ensure future sustainability. This was flagged in the additional comments in the survey, and was expanded on in interviews. In every case where a *relatively new partnership* made this point, it related to the costs of administrating an emerging partnership, chasing up actions, ensuring commitments were met and retaining engagement through a structured set of workshops, events or meetings. More developed partnerships were looking for additional funding to help support taster projects that would stimulate further demand and serve as a demonstration of the merits of additional cultural work, particularly within schools.

5.12   However, funding was not the only issue raised when considering the set up and establishment of a new cultural education offer. Some challenges were resource based, others related more to the interpersonal work to build trust and common purpose in emerging partnerships:

Resource-based challenges
- finance – pressure to raise funds to deliver taster sessions or full-

blown projects
- staff – lack of administrative support creating fragility around board function and follow up of actions
- time – lead partners still have their 'day job' and fitting in increasingly complex relationship management takes time out of their core role

Challenges with building partnerships
- engagement by schools slower than expected
- education strategic partners (ie school services) reluctant to engage
- cultural partners ambivalent to service school improvement agendas

5.13   This mix of issues often naturally overlapped to create multiple challenges which appeared to slow progress in some areas. However, it should be stressed that while there were clear difficulties in maintaining momentum at times, and some issues needed to be bottomed out with key partners, there appeared to be an overarching willingness to seek solutions and move forward. Moreover, there are many examples of areas who built a broad coalition of local interests and leveraged support from high level strategic board members and who are therefore more likely to secure long term sustainability. The following sections explore the key challenges and issues highlighted by Local Cultural Education Partnerships in greater detail.

Gaining momentum

5.14   In the East of England a lead contact explained that their partnership was now feeling more solid, that the cultural sector was better represented than before and that schools attendance was improving. Termly meetings had been set up and will rotate across different schools. However:

> "Progress has been slower than we'd like. We moved from a position where it was very unconnected provision to being better connected. Just getting those links set up, aside from upping delivery, has been time consuming. Awareness between and across different organisations was poor and that is now much better."

5.15   Elsewhere, another lead contact was in a different position, having an established concept on which to build a cultural partnerships but still operating at a relatively small scale. Taking the offer to a wider schools audience faced a number of different challenges that slowed the rate of progress.

> "Our local partnership has piggy backed on our existing 'Culture Challenge'…It is a staged process so, for example, schools say they need to build their confidence to know where to go and define what is good or not for themselves, and with our culture challenge offer, that confidence builds naturally, the more you engage. We get a small amount of funding from our Bridge Organisation, but it consumes more time than we can offer as a small organisation and we end up offering a lot of resources for free which isn't sustainable long term."

5.16   In some areas a longstanding culture of subsidising a cultural offer to schools is now starting to bite as these activities are having to become self-sustaining. This slows the rate of progress to some degree. One partnership explained:

"Schools, however, have an appetite for this work. Primary tends to be more fertile ground than secondary. That said, cost remains an issue. What has been offered has been heavily subsidised or free. That is the big issue that needs addressing for us at a time when school budgets are being squeezed. Taking time to help schools warm to a new non-subsidised offer will be important but slows down the momentum and pauses things before going to scale."

5.17   A key stakeholder based in a local authority expressed the challenge slightly differently:

"The partnership is currently resourcing itself by people having to work over and above the requirements of their 'day job' to make it all happen. Some partners will have no issue doing that. It is hard work, but they will absorb it and get on with it. But others are less intensively involved and they need time to buy into the power of arts and culture as a force for improvement in the curriculum. Winning over teachers and headteachers and being frank about the kind of benefits but also the kind of extra work required will be key."

5.18   While contexts and details vary, the common narrative was one of stretched resources and additional time needed to shift perceptions, test models, pursue solutions or build alliances. Time in this sense is linked to staffing levels. Most partnerships had no dedicated administrative support to help with the early stage challenges of following up actions and chasing down additional information, etc.

Agreeing priorities

5.19   Some partnerships (approximately 15 of the 45) are still going through the process of gathering data to inform their priorities. Others (approximately 30) have already set out their strategy and vision and are now looking to find ways to deliver on their ambitions. *All* partnerships that responded to our research had gaps between their ambition and their ability to achieve objectives. Even the most advanced and longstanding partnerships were clear that fundraising would have to go on and that delivery of some of their ambitions would be contingent on that. Therefore, there are a range of resourcing and capacity challenges which the work of each partnership immediately has to address.

5.20   Based on telephone interviews, where partnership leads were asked to describe their high level partnership building and visioning processes, two main approaches were taken. Some have commissioned small scale audits or needs analyses, many of which are still in train. Others have workshopped with board members and extended associates to settle on a high level consensus.

5.21   In the South East there were two examples of these distinct approaches. One lead contact explained:

"Our partnership has now met four times. We have worked over those four meetings to finalise our delivery plan and we have three sub groups each with a specific focus. The first group supports and develops new engagement for children and young people. The second focuses on activity that promotes and enables readiness for creative employment. The third facilitates achievement of Artsmark and Arts Award. We have set ourselves up this way because we were building on our local areas' overarching

local authority strategy. We looked at Artsmark and Arts Award figures, at deprivation stats and national figures to highlight which groups were most likely to disengage."

5.22   Meanwhile in a nearby area, fact finding and agenda setting are still underway, as a Cultural Education Partnership lead explained:

"We have a good instinctive feel for what we think the issues are, where the hot spots and cold spots are and so forth, but we haven't really tested that yet and we think it is important to make our approach evidence based. With support from our Bridge we are undertaking local research that will help underpin (or perhaps challenge) our assumed priorities. We will have a final plan of action in place by spring 2017."

Funding a sustainable offer

5.24   Interviewees felt that a business model where cultural sector services would be largely funded by school budgets would be fragile. There was some evidence of schools' positivity toward paying for schemes such as Artsmark, but interviewees drew an implicit distinction between what was essentially a membership levy and a transactional model of payment for services.

5.25   This lack of confidence in schools being able to fund services long term at full cost raised a question about their ability to reach *all* children. Reasons for this uncertainty were complex, but it was generally felt that any market driven model would always face competition from other sectors, could be vulnerable to shifts in education priorities and government funding for schools. Additionally, given the proliferation of independent academies and academy chains whose own priorities might alter in unforeseen ways, there was a general feeling that without additional resource from other quarters, any offer reliant on schools would be a fragile one.

5.26   In telephone interviews, very few partnership leads felt that schools were in a position to be able to absorb *all* the costs of a cultural offer in the long term. Therefore additional streams of funding, such as new arts sector funding, grants from trusts and foundations or the creation of new business models to stimulate revenue streams were all cited as being an important part of the Local Creative Education Partnership vision around sustainability.

5.27   This could lead to a dramatically variegated local offer, placing strain on the aims of a national call to action.

5.28   It must be kept in mind that it is still relatively early days for the Cultural Education Challenge. No freestanding business models which are tried and tested can claim to be scalable at this time. Most cultural projects described through interview suggest the range of provision being developed for children and young people was in response to early interest and energy from stakeholders. Generally, these plans were built on pressing themes, local priorities and emerging understanding of school and pupil demand and are often fuelled by local audits. Very few cultural offers were driven by a pre-defined model of delivery, with fully costed elements and testing of longer term supply and demand. There are some exceptions, including the configuration of the cultural offer in East London, which we look at below.

5.29   Working out of and supported by the Barbican, East London Cultural Education Partnership has refined a model which is currently being marketed to local schools. Branded 'Creative Schools' this approach to cultural learning and reforming relationships between the cultural sector and schools is rooted in evidence generated by A New Direction. A New Direction commissioned research which shed light on the current state of cultural education across London schools. Very clear intelligence emerged, corroborating the idea that a small number of schools were being super-served by a very rich cultural offer, leaving the majority of children missing out. Creative Schools is a direct response to that.

5.30   The programme works by building long term demand within schools for the kinds of support cultural organisations can offer to a variety of learning situations. So far there are 16 schools signed up, alongside 23 cultural organisations. There is a two-tier membership fee which both schools and cultural organisations pay. This initial investment effectively buys time to build a strong relationship between partners. The essence of that strength is the creation of a bespoke offer, rather than off-the-shelf CPD. Significantly the post within the Barbican nominally responsible for the Cultural Education Partnership is full-time and is partly funded through a Partnership Investment Programme by the local Bridge Organisation, A New Direction. This differs from most partnerships which either have no dedicated administrative oversight, or have given a portion of staff time from other responsibilities which are rarely back-filled, creating workload issues.

5.31   Capitalising on its UK City of Culture status Hull Cultural Education Partnership is taking the opportunity to ensure all schools in the city are designated Artsmark schools. Through the City of Culture initiative it has been possible to underwrite the costs of having all schools subscribe to the Artsmark scheme, using the restructured programme as a cultural bridgehead to kickstart school improvement. Quite whether this will build a demand among the local schools which can be self-sustained long term, or whether it will exacerbate some of the historical tensions alluded to previously around subsidy versus full cost recovery, remains to be seen.

5.32   Circumstances dictated an approach that works on a broader front for the Gloucestershire Cultural Education Partnership. The focus on schools is less evident, but there remains a very focused commitment to children and young people. Create Gloucestershire are the lead organisation for the local Cultural Education Partnership and their existing board covers a wide range of arts related interests – careers, health and overall participation. The general thrust is to identify shared outcomes everyone around the partnership table would like to see achieved for children and young people, and then work back from there to ensure systematic solutions are found.

A key point here is that it is not assumed from the outset that schools would always be a natural partner for interventions and that children and young people's demands and needs might be better served in non-school settings. For example, in order to address issues of leadership development in young people, the Cultural Education Partnership have focused on developing four young person led organisations, each embedded within key National Portfolio Organisations within Gloucestershire, rather than work via schools where the pace of change might be slower.

5.33   Therefore, at this early stage, based on survey and interview data, it is reasonable to surmise Local Cultural Education Partnerships are exploring a number of routes to sustainability but no single model has emerged that might be transferable elsewhere. When

this phase of trialling and experimentation draws to a close, and, perhaps crucially, as some of the start-up funding from Bridge Organisations ends, and offers of subsidy from local authorities begin to recede, there will be a clearer picture of the kinds of services and offers being developed.

Engaging with schools

5.34   Partnerships were well appraised of the shifting education landscape, and while change is certainly one of the few constants in schooling, as the Cultural Learning Alliance have suggested, the scale and pace of recent reforms have been particularly noteworthy and with potentially negative effects on arts in school[1].

5.35   The impact of Progress8, the Ebacc, the opening of apprenticeship pathways and so forth, have had an impact on the place, role and relative value of the arts and cultural activities in school. Add to this the swathe of changes at local authority level, and the rise of academies as a means of governing schools, and you have a mix of factors that dramatically affect the ways schools relate to external partners, and in particular how they engage with culture.

5.36   Although most partnerships intended to work with some schools in their areas, there was a recurring theme in interviews with programme leads that schools were increasingly pressured environments, with much of that pressure tacitly working against a focus on the arts and culture.

> "The biggest challenge is to get overworked and distracted schools to engage and get them to understand that you are offering support, not additional work. If the schools have already bought into Artsmark it is easier."

> "Our plan involves building and sustaining the confidence within schools to stick with this approach, but also to always know where to go next, what they need to do and who can best help them…The main thing here is to get the schools to see how they can take on a sort of curatorial role themselves, choosing what is right for their needs with minimal support. They will become co-planners and commissioners of arts education with cultural sector partners."

> "For us regular connection with schools is vital. We meet with them every three months via twilight CPD sessions. It is always easy to find individual switched on schools, but unless you can build and sustain relationships with schools who start out sceptical or even resistant to some degree it is hard to move beyond serving the same small groups. We have been working with our Music Hub who has helped us to forge relationships with schools – not who are necessarily the keenest or most expert, but the ones who might stand to benefit most."

5.37   The question of how best to work with local authorities to improve school engagement also recurred in conversations with partnership leads. The picture varied depending on local contexts but the trend was toward fewer specialised contacts, by reducing numbers of local authority arts advisors, slimming down school improvement teams and co-opting freelancers. This reduction of staff was often driven by priorities that were interpreted as being in conflict with the generally accepted values of arts and cultural education. This gave some partnerships

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[1] http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/images/uploads/CLA_Briefing_Arts_Stats_in_Schools_Aug_2015v1.pdf

– although not the majority – a strong sense of swimming against the tide when it came to working with local authorities.

5.38   However, momentum remains strong. Even where relationship building has been a challenge the consensus view was very much that there was more work to be done, rather than no avenues left to explore.

> "We are undertaking a small piece of research to understand how to best navigate the schools market. It has become a lot more complicated. We do have education advisors and the arts specialist who was recently made redundant is now freelancing offering CPD so there are different kinds of connection to what you might call 'school improvement' activity, but to be honest probably not at the level or depth required to sustain this approach longer term. So that is something we are trying to understand better and continue to work on."

> "Our Bridge has been actively training senior leaders and governors in schools with the collaboration of the local school improvement team – we are lucky that our local team seems to get this agenda and see it as a positive thing. This training has been delivered to all primaries across the county, raising the visibility of arts and culture and bringing it to the front of people's minds as something that should be a vital part of school life, a key ingredient in the mix. Also it is well known in our area that there is very poor social mobility locally and so arts and culture is specifically being used as a lever to address that, both in terms of skills developed but also aspirationally, too."

5.39   While this ambition to connect with schools at scale is strategically sound and in keeping with the overarching aims of the challenge, survey data related to the pre-existing cultural offer (see Table 2) implies new approaches would be required to move beyond those schools already switched on and to reach those children least disposed to engage.

> "In my view we need to use Artsmark and Arts Award to spread the word – when schools see other neighbouring schools evangelise about things there is probably no more effective way of getting the work of Cultural Education Partnerships embedded. But we have to be honest that not all schools may be ready to commit to Artsmark or support Arts Award. If they are not then Cultural Education Partnerships can offer other ways we can help – they may not even be curriculum related to start with. Every engagement is a potential step forward, however small."

5.40   Anecdotally we know that the management of relationships with schools is becoming more labour intensive and single co-ordinating points of contact, such as local authority advisors, are being replaced with one-to-one relationships with single academies or academy chains. Most partnerships interviewed for this work reported having a strategy for engaging schools at the heart of their plans. How they engaged schools depended to a great extent on two factors: first, how positive the local authority school improvement team were to the idea of art and culture acting as a catalyst for overall improvement and second, the capacity to manage school relationships in a fragmented market.

5.41   In the East region the situation was described as being:

> "...a challenge of time and capacity when it comes to recruiting and maintaining relationships with schools. Our idea has been to try to get head teachers who have oversight of multiple schools onto our board. They have the kind of levels of influence that can help coordinate things over multiple sites. Also, we keep trying to increase the local council's involvement. Lastly, our Bridge Organisation looks for artists and creative professionals who work across multiple schools in the region and they use their networks to help cement our offer in place. The more connections we can use that pre-exist, the more efficiently we can manage our school relationships."

5.42   From the perspective of the cultural sector it has been a time of change too. Not only has there been a relative squeeze on funds, and a pressure to find new and/or additional sources of funding, there has also been an implicit expectation that culture and the arts should respond differently to the needs of schools than they have previously. Since the advent of Creative Partnerships (2001-11) there has been a move towards instrumentalist partnerships with schools, where the pressing needs of educational establishments (often flagged in Ofsted reports and school improvement plans) are the primary objective for arts interventions. This means that it is as commonplace for artists and cultural practitioners to be working to decrease bullying or improve wellbeing as it is for them to be developing arts related skills and knowledge. This trend towards increasingly instrumentalist uses of arts and culture is summarised well by Ken Jones in *Culture and Creative Learning*[2].

Workload and capacity

5.43   Capacity to manage processes and relationships within Local Cultural Education Partnerships was an issue that was raised repeatedly, particularly within early stage Local Cultural Education Partnerships. While some improvements might be expected as a result of efficiencies and pooling knowledge, there was a perceived point beyond which 'smarter' working would not take a partnership. Those stakeholders who responded via the survey and through interviews remarked that to move from establishment to growth required a level of coordination and management that exceeded the limits of their respective 'day jobs'. However, while emerging partnerships suggested that some level of dedicated administrative support at local level would be vital to ensure the logistics and communications required to make the cultural offer run smoothly, more established Local Cultural Education Partnerships appeared to have absorbed some of these functions within existing roles.

> "In our area we have continued to stimulate demand by underwriting some of the costs associated with delivery. This has resulted in large scale engagement but we now face some resource implications; there has been no reduction in subsidies to schools, nor have we asked schools to contribute a little more year on year. This leaves us in a position where schools may need to find the equivalent of £1,000 per year each to keep this going at a time when local authority cuts, including my own post, mean there will be no direct connection helping schools shift positively with this change in requirements."

> "We've got to the stage where everyone, including some senior board members, are

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[2] Jones, K (2009) Culture and Creative Learning, CCE: Newcastle.

talking excitedly about the prospect of this work. Everyone can see why it is needed. But we haven't got a clear sense yet of how or from what sources we will get the funding to turn this into action. We have to begin to deliver or we will run out of steam. Also we could do with some support in managing the partnership, and expectations of partners. The partnership idea can start out for some as a 'safety in numbers' idea, better to be inside the tent than outside, rather than being altruistic and working to a higher goal. Managing that requires tact and the right people. It isn't just a challenge of diaries and calendars."

"We don't need much at this stage – resource for a single co-ordinator, someone who could stay dedicated to the partnership and oversee coordination and communication."

"For us the challenge is time and capacity. It isn't always cash. Thinking time for everyone involved to genuinely realise this is about doing this differently and for the long term. There is a real sense of ambition and it would be a shame just to dive in without properly aligning our interests and expectations. Sometimes the pressure to deliver on numbers – KPIs, numbers of schools engaged with etc – can overtake the more important pre-work."

"Our Bridge have been very understanding about the time issue, how long it takes to get new ways of thinking and working straight with all the partners. Otherwise it isn't a partnership is it? But the Bridge are the exception. Mostly there is pressure to hit targets, reach numbers etc and that is a risk because if the tail starts to wag the dog in that way we are forgetting why we are doing this. It has to be set up correctly."

Strength of buy-in and degree of common purpose

5.44   Commitment to the idea of the Cultural Education Partnership, particularly by key strategic organisations and individuals, was also cited as a challenge in some areas. There were two main issues here.

5.45   Firstly, it was reported by some partnerships that there remained a belief among some education leaders (in schools, sometimes in local authority positions) that the implementation of arts and cultural activities via partnerships with external providers added a layer of complexity and a measure of distraction. This was particularly challenging at a time when a drive for improvements in the core curriculum dominated so much of the policy rhetoric around education. For example, in one partnership the local authority school improvement service was behind the idea of Cultural Education Partnerships, but scepticism, or clashing priorities were evident elsewhere:

"We can't quite get a strategy in place for schools. It still feels a bit hit and miss…The school improvement team have been supportive. They do believe in it. It comes down to how much power they have with the heads and that is changing all the time. There are lots of heads of academies now and they go their own way to an extent."

5.46   Other examples highlighted the difficulty an ambivalent school improvement team

could unintentionally create:

> "We have had good contact with school improvement people in the past and they were certainly interested initially, but unless they can immediately see how it will help them succeed with their targets their enthusiasm wanes a bit…So instead of them going into schools saying 'try this arts and cultural project' and how it can help, they are going in banging the maths, English and science drum I guess and we end up pulling in what feels like opposite directions, but we don't mean to."

5.47   Secondly, and definitely in a minority of cases, there were instances of cultural partners unwilling to fully buy into an education challenge that, in their view, purported to be culturally driven, but was in fact subservient to a wide ranging set of school needs unrelated to art or culture.

> "Our schools are now under a lot of pressure, like most city schools outside of London I suppose. There are a lot that fall into the 'requires improvement' category…Some cultural organisations question the need to completely serve the needs of the improvement agenda and want there to be space for other values too, and of course time for their own development."

5.48   In terms of building supporting engagement, there was a suggestion that a persuasive communications strategy and national support would be important going forward.

> "We need the Arts Council advocating around the importance of understanding audiences, evidence gathering and knowing the lie of the land."

> "I'm a bit concerned about what resource there is to back this up at the centre. Things are not totally fragile here, but effective support from the centre will always help. How the Arts Council can help to accelerate understanding or demonstrate the value of local Cultural Education Partnerships, and tie that up to help advance the cause is key. Peer learning and sharing strategies will also help. We are trying to build this to last so the Arts Council have to help with the big challenges – those conversations with Department for Education and DCMS. What are the Arts Council arguing for for the next five or 10 years?"

6] Summary and conclusions

6.1   This project was certainly evaluative, but in trying to discover more about the nature of the partnerships delivering the Cultural Education Challenge it has also developed as a research and review project. In that sense the findings presented here are not solely and exclusively questions of fact, impact or effect. In general, researching the Cultural Education Challenge has been an extremely positive experience. The enthusiasm and commitment of a very wide range stakeholders is impressive. On the whole, Arts Council England seems to have instigated an appropriate light-touch framework for the definition, recruitment and induction of partnerships with oversight from Bridge Organisations.

6.2   This research has been wide-ranging. The report has examined how partnerships have come together locally and how they have constructed and defined the work and nature of what is to be part of this national challenge. It focused on the extrinsic dimensions of the composition of partnerships generally as well as more inter-subjective aspects of how particular partnerships have forged a local identity for themselves and signed up to relevant and recognisable local priorities. The report examines how this more local dimension goes to the heart of how each partnership works, how they make things happen, in what ways they value cultural learning and how they develop understandings in others, particular schools, families and wider community.

6.3   Let's conclude by considering three productive tensions which have underpinned the development of these Cultural Education Partnerships and which will most likely continue to provide opportunities and challenges for future growth.

1. The shifting education landscape and the role of cultural education

6.4   Schools feature strongly in most Cultural Education Partnerships and this makes sense as they remain the most effective route to the majority children and young people. However, we have heard from stakeholders that there continues to be some ambivalence across the education sector as to whether the arts and cultural education can lead to improved schools in ways that would be measured as successful by government or Ofsted, for example. Given this risk-aversion by some schools, there will therefore be a challenge ahead to ensure all children and young people – not just a select few – are given the opportunity to work on a range of arts and cultural activities.

This challenge is partly a matter for lead partners and their ability to develop relationships with local authorities and, increasingly, academies and multi-academy chains, and so partly a matter of local or regional opportunities. But it's also a dilemma for the Cultural Education Challenge. The more that partnerships are expected to be wide reaching with their offer and the more complex the demands placed on them in terms of relationship management and collaboration, the more key individuals reflected that they could only optimise outcomes by having some resources dedicated to their local cultural offer. It was felt that the arts sector itself, and particularly Grants for the Arts programmes and so forth, would need to be applied for to fund these resources.

In other words, however much the challenge may be designed to work locally and independently, the scale of ambition it represents at a time of cuts in local authority and schools budgets might drive strategies for sustaining work toward national funding streams and organisations, such as Arts Council England and its partners, to help shore up that ambition.

6.6   As we saw in the table 14 above, there appears to be a very complex mix of factors influencing possible routes to funding. Some are about schools seeing the value of investing in culture more clearly than before, others are more focused on making reduced funding within the arts sector work harder and achieve more with less. Other factors at play are, to an extent, philosophical or evidence based choices about the most effective ways of working, and these vary from partnership to partnership.

2. Increasing prioritisation of non-arts outcomes

6.7   Some partnerships reported there were cultural organisations and professionals who raised concerns about the arts and culture being used in instrumental ways to serve school improvement agendas at the expense of more intrinsic outcomes. They suggested this 'trade off' was becoming established as a key dimension of all cultural work in the education sector. The implication was that in order to access the schools 'market' there needed to be an explicit drive towards improving standards generally or addressing themes related to the core curriculum. These improvements need not be related to arts or cultural outcomes.

6.8   Quite whether this develops into a real concern remains to be seen. It was not a majority view, by any means. The majority of cultural partners in fact appeared to be pragmatic rather than idealistic on this point, but it recurred enough in interviews for it to be noteworthy. It may be worth discussing this theme with cultural sector partners more deeply to establish whether or not this ambivalence is more widespread since it is a fundamental aspect of the nature of the working relationship between the two sectors.

3. Opportunity and cultural labour market variation

6.9   At a local level, as one would expect, partnerships interpreted and applied the Cultural Education Challenge through the prism of their own experiences. The challenge is designed to be open to this kind of local interpretation. However, with an accent placed on access for all and quality of opportunity a challenge arises in that each partnership can only make the best of what is available to them and at times, the drive to make things happen can lead to a flexibility that may lead to variation in coverage or in quality. This is simply a variant of a classic tension between local variation in labour markets and centralised 'intervention', programme development or, as in this case, a looser but coherent call to action. Another way this tension may express itself is a growing demand for training associates or affiliated workers in order to meet growing demand. At such points funding becomes an issue, but so do the values that bind the challenge. Will it be easier or more difficult to retain the coherence of the challenge as inception and consolidation of partnerships moves into growth and delivery of opportunities?

Questions for further learning

6.10   Although this project attempts to characterise a group of people working in partnership across a range of changing contexts it also raises a number of questions about interventions by the Arts Council, the value and role of the Bridge Organisations, and the light touch 'management' and implementation of co-ordinated communications and evaluation. The following questions are offered as prompts to stimulate discussion about the lessons (and legacy) of the Cultural Education Challenge.

Key questions for Local Cultural Education Partnerships

1. How might partnerships understand, communicate and further develop what might

constitute high quality work with children and young people?

2. Do partnerships have frameworks, theories or understandings of what defines progression in cultural learning and know how to implement change around such understandings?

3. Can partnerships help find a degree of fit between the frameworks that give form to cultural learning and its progression and those used by schools more generally to describe and demarcate stages of learning more generally?

4. How is evidence and data being used to inform future planning? Is the quality of data reliable and of high enough standards?

5. Might there be economies of scale or savings to be explored across multiple partnerships in relation to administration and coordination?

Key questions for Bridge Organisations

1. Is it necessary for Bridge Organisations to describe questions of quality and standardisation in cultural education intervention design and share such understanding with their workforces, Arts Council England, schools and other practitioners; is there a role to help bring coherence and diligence to ongoing professional development across growing partnerships?

2. Are Bridge Organisations mandated to make interventions based on lack of progress in partnerships and what form would that take?

3. How might Bridge Organisations empower partnerships to work collectively and share knowledge and experience whilst maintaining a clear sense of what defines quality?

4. How might Bridge Organisations ensure that any growing freelance workforce identifies with Cultural Education Challenge ambitions and values?

Key questions for Arts Council England

1. How might Arts Council England continue to manage, review, revise and reinforce Cultural Education Challenge ambitions and aims across a disparate and evolving partnership workforce?

2. What explicit levers might Arts Council England use to help ensure common practices/values and standards?

3. How could Arts Council England offer other models of knowledge sharing beyond monitoring and compliance?

7] Appendices

7.1. Area: London

This short summary picks out key themes for a particular Arts Council England geographical area, drawing on recent research exploring the early progress of LCEPs nationwide. It places emphasis on areas of strong difference or commonality between London and the national picture and is split into two sections: perceptions of the cultural offer prior to LCEPs forming and current/future plans for new work.

The organisations based in London which responded to the survey comprised:

Hammersmith Lyric
Barbican Guildhall
Barking and Dagenham Council
Croydon Music and Arts
Camden Spark

1] Perceptions of the Cultural Offer prior to LCEPs

How developed are the partnerships in London?

Nationally there appears to be a fairly even split across three types of partnership:

Emerging (16)

Established but not yet delivering (12)

Established and delivering (13)

In the case of London's partnerships we find that of the 5 that responded to the LCEP survey 2 are emerging and 3 are established and delivering.

While this may mean there are starker differences between the stages of development London's partnerships are at, there are also likely to be good opportunities for cross partnership learning because some are further ahead in their planning and delivery.

Levels of impact of cultural offer prior to the Cultural Education Challenge and LCEP establishing

Overall the national picture suggested that there was some room for improvement with regard to impact. 32 partnerships felt there had been some impact and 2 reported impact had been high. However 8 partnerships said impact had been low.

London felt slightly more positive about past impacts with 4 partnerships signally there had been some impact, and 1 partnership reflecting impact had been high.

Reflecting collectively on what past successes looked like to different London-based partnerships would be another potentially useful learning point for any future knowledge sharing as it may

assist in describing quality indicators and common metrics for the kinds of shared outcomes CEC aims to achieve.

Success of past work in reaching socially disadvantaged young people.

The Cultural Education Challenge places a premium on reaching out to socially disadvantaged young people, ensuring that despite policies of austerity placing pressure on provision, that those most in need do not miss out. Interestingly the national picture shows that while the local cultural offer has attempted to reach out to such young people in the past it has met with only limited success. Only 3 of 45 partnerships claimed to have been reaching significant numbers of children and young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The remainder were less successful whether or not they were targeting such groups.

In the London area, again, the picture was more positive than was the case nationally. 2 partnerships suggested they had been targeting and succeeding in engaging children from disadvantaged backgrounds, 1 suggested it was not targeting but reaching a diverse group of young people nonetheless and 1 other reflected that while they tried to reach such groups, by and large they failed to engage them.

How important had partnership working been to the cultural offer in the past?

Generally the national picture showed us that while many subscribed to the principle of partnership working and valued it highly (50% said it was a vital component of their local offer), decreasing numbers testified to its effectiveness (35%) and even fewer (23%) felt it had a significant impact.

With regard to London there was a more split response to this question across the partnerships. 2 felt that partnership working had neither been vital to their work, nor had it been effective. 2 were undecided on the place and role of partnership working and 1 felt it was valuable, had been effective and had had significant impact.

2] Current/Future plans for new work

Use of data to inform plans

All London's LCEPs that responded to the survey planned to use data and evidence to inform planning and to shape their cultural offer. This is in line with the national picture, where the majority (32 of 45) are also using various sources of data to influence the nature and scope of their partnership working.

Who will partnerships be aiming to work with in the education sector?

The national picture shows us that primary and secondary schools dominate the relationship with LCEPs. London's partnerships mirrored that with Nurseries, Sixth Form Colleges and HE partners featuring less strongly.

Governance

All of the London based partnerships either had formal terms of reference to guide their respective boards, or were planning to devise other types of formal governance procedures. This was broadly in line with the national picture where only 3 of 45 partnerships did not have terms of reference and had no plans to create them.

Expected beneficiaries

Nationally, as one would expect, children and young people were envisaged as the main beneficiaries of LCEP work. Teachers, schools and cultural organisations were, in that order, the next biggest anticipated beneficiary groups. In the case of London that pattern was replicated but with the addition of Local Authorities as potentially benefitting from the more coherent offer as a result of LCEP work.
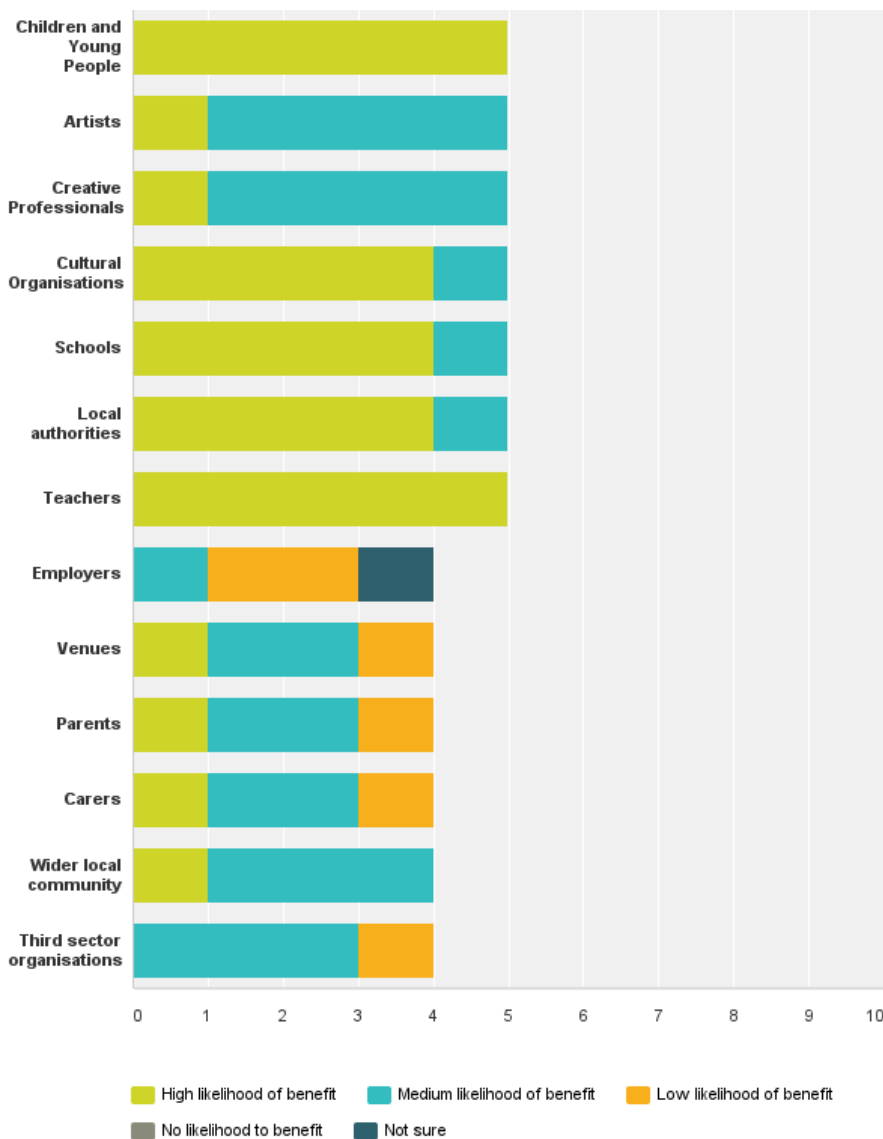
London LCEPs expected beneficiary groups

Enabling and Disabling Factors

London partnerships cited lack of funding as the major disabling factor, while partnership building, multi-agency working demand from schools and good levels of capacity in the cultural sector as the most enabling factors.

Nationally the picture was very similar, but with more variability with regard to local capacity to deliver.

Proportion of schools LCEPs aim to work with

In London ambitions are high with between three quarters and all schools aiming to be worked with by 4 of the 5 partnerships (1 was undecided). Nationally there was more of a spread here, with up to a quarter and up to a half featuring as goals for other parts of the country.

Links to other cultural interventions and schemes

In keeping with the national picture, London's LCEPs are chiefly linking with Music Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award in an effort to build a clearer offer locally. Creative People and Places also featured in London LCEP's plans.

Future resourcing

London's view on future funding was in step with the national view. LCEPs cited 'existing resources', 'arts sector funding' and Local Growth funding as the most likely means of securing investment for LCEP priorities.

Arts sector funding most often equated to Grants for the Arts applications. Applications to Trusts and Foundations and leveraging Pupil Premium funding also featured in London LCEP plans.

SUMMARY

Broadly speaking London's LCEPs mirrored the national perceptions on most of the themes covered in the survey. They were slightly more positive than the average with regard to the quality and impact of past work.

Unsurprisingly London LCEPs felt they were in a strong position to meet demand, particularly direct requests from schools, having a good variety of arts and cultural infrastructure in place.

Going forward it will be interesting to facilitate sharing of development and new ideas across the London partnerships and to reflect on the ways in which they may be working differently than before. New ways of working may be contributing to better outcomes for partners and children and young people and understanding the nature of that different approach will be key to the overall success of the Cultural Education Challenge.

7.2. Area: Midlands

This short summary picks out key themes for a particular Arts Council England geographical area, drawing on recent research exploring the early progress of LCEPs nationwide. It places emphasis on areas of strong difference or commonality between the Midlands and the national picture and is split into two sections: perceptions of the cultural offer prior to LCEPs forming and current/future plans for new work.

The organisations based in the Midlands that responded to the survey comprised:

The Core at Corby Cube
The Elmley Foundation
The Spark Arts for Children
Platform Thirty1
Derby Theatre
Magna Vitae
Coventry University
Tamworth Borough Council
Community Growth CIC
Shropshire Council
Birmingham Repertory Theatre
Worcestershire County Council

1] Perceptions of the Cultural Offer prior to LCEPs

How developed are the partnerships in the Midlands?

Nationally there appears to be a fairly even split across three types of partnership:

Emerging (16)

Established but not yet delivering (12)

Established and delivering (13)

In the case of the Midlands partnerships of the 10 LCEPs that responded to the question (3 skipped) there were a greater number in the established but not yet delivering category (7). Just 2 LCEPs were emerging and only 1 established and delivering.

Levels of impact of cultural offer prior to the Cultural Education Challenge and LCEP establishing

Overall the national picture suggested that there was some room for improvement with regard to impact. 32 partnerships felt there had been some impact and 2 reported impact had been high. However, 8 partnerships said impact had been low.

The Midlands broadly mirrored the national perception with 3 LCEPs reporting low impact, 8 partnerships signally there had been some impact, and none suggesting prior impact had been high.

Success of past work in reaching socially disadvantaged young people.

The Cultural Education Challenge places a premium on reaching out to socially disadvantaged young people, ensuring that despite policies of austerity placing pressure on provision, that those most in need do not miss out. Interestingly the national picture shows that while the local cultural offer has attempted to reach out to such young people in the past it has met with only limited success. Only 3 of 45 partnerships claimed to have been reaching significant numbers of children and young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The remainder were less successful whether or not they were targeting such groups.

In the Midlands the picture was similar. 6 partnerships suggested they had seen limited success in engaging children from disadvantaged backgrounds, 1 suggested it was not targeting groups, but reaching young people from disadvantaged backgrounds nonetheless and 3 others were unsure about this aspect of prior work.
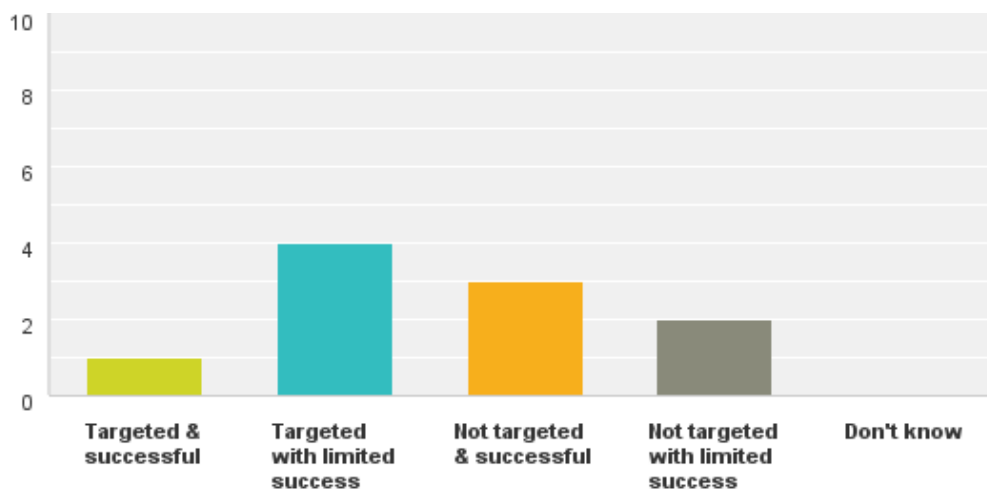
Midlands LCEPs prior cultural offer: success at reaching disadvantaged young people

How important had partnership working been to the cultural offer in the past?

Generally, the national picture indicated that while many subscribed to the principle of partnership working and valued it highly (50% said it was a vital component of their local offer), decreasing numbers testified to its effectiveness (35%) and even fewer (23%) felt it had a significant impact.

With regard to the Midlands this trend was less evident. Of the 10 partnerships that responded, there was a much greater degree of balance across all the elements of partnership work. LCEPs were evenly split about the value, quality, effectiveness and impact of this aspect of work, the biggest difference from the national picture was the assertion that impacts were high and well evidenced.

2] Current/Future plans for new work

Use of data to inform plans

The majority of the Midlands LCEPs (8 of 10) that responded to the survey planned to use data and evidence to inform planning and to shape their cultural offer. This is broadly in line with the national picture, where the majority (32 of 45) are also using various sources of data to influence the nature and scope of their partnership working.

Who will partnerships be aiming to work with in the education sector?

The national picture indicates that primary and secondary schools dominate the relationship with LCEPs. The North's partnerships mirrored that with Nurseries and HE partners featuring less strongly. FE colleges, however, are more prominent in the Midlands plans than some other areas. In the 'other' category agencies working with 'at risk' young people and SEN schools were mentioned.
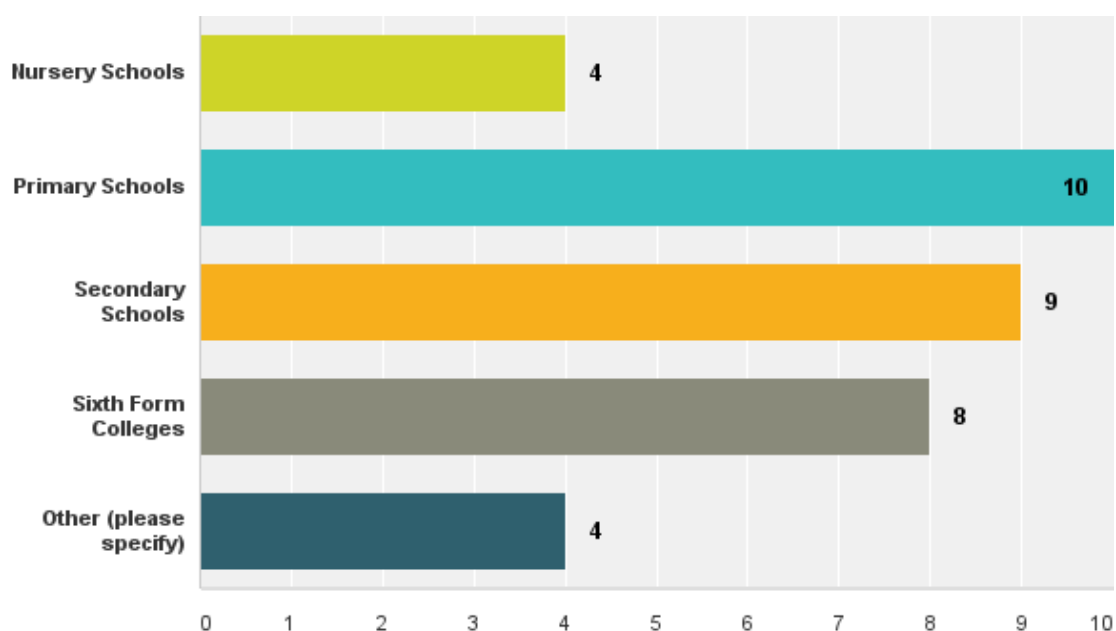
Midlands LCEPs anticipated education sector partners

Governance

Most of the Midlands LCEPs (8 of 10) had not yet set up terms of reference to guide their respective boards but had plans to do so. 2 LCEPs already had terms of reference in place.

Expected beneficiaries

Nationally, as one would expect, children and young people were envisaged as the main beneficiaries of LCEP work. Teachers, schools and cultural organisations were, in that order, the next biggest anticipated beneficiary groups. In the Midlands that pattern was replicated.

Enabling and Disabling Factors

Midlands LCEPs cited transport links to venues as the major disabling factor, while partnership building, multi-agency working demand from schools and good levels of capacity in the cultural sector as the most enabling factors.

Nationally the picture was split over the role of funding with LCEPs seeing lack of new money as an enabling and disabling factor. The Midlands LCEPs mirrored this response.

Proportion of schools LCEPs aim to work with

Nationally, ambitions are high with regard to numbers of schools LCEPs are planning to work with. In the Midlands there was more of a spread of perceptions about the scale of ambition.
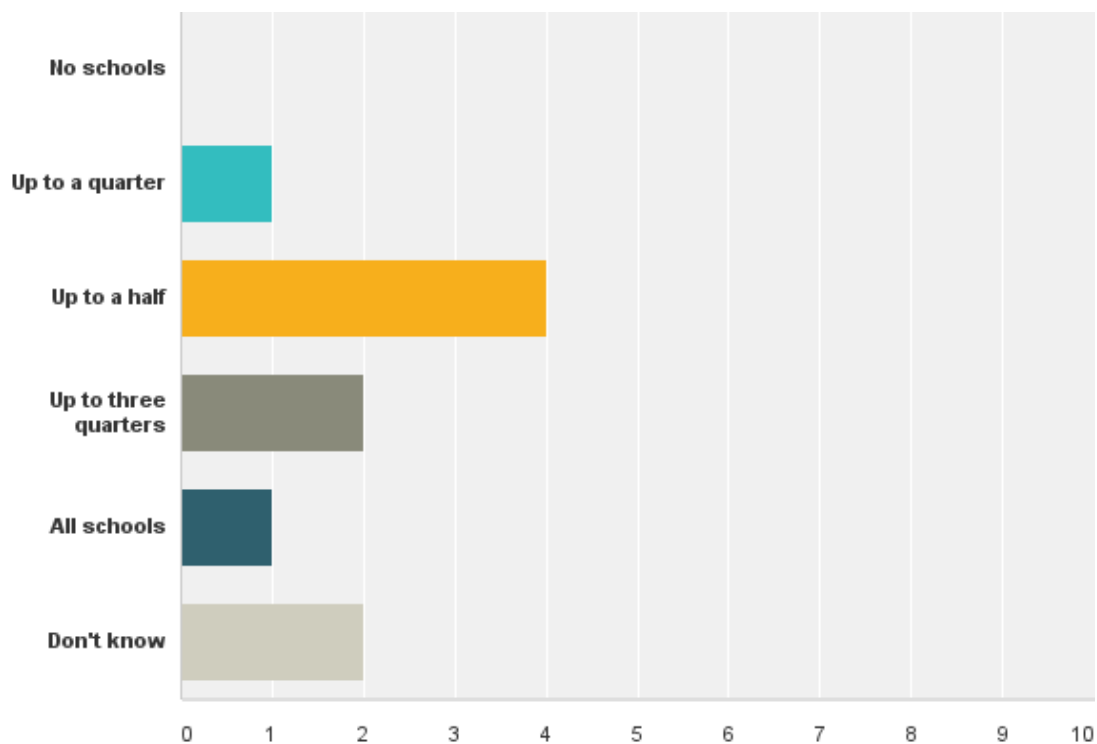
Number of Midlands LCEPs targeting proportions of schools in their area

Links to other cultural interventions and schemes

Again, in keeping with the national picture, the Midlands LCEPs are linking strongly with Music Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award in an effort to build a clearer offer locally. The Museum's Schools Programme and Creative People and Places also featured to a significant degree in the Midlands' LCEP's plans, as did the Shakespeare Festival.

Future resourcing

Midlands' LCEPs views on future funding was in step with the national view. LCEPs cited 'existing resources', 'arts sector funding' as the most likely means of securing investment for LCEP priorities.

Arts sector funding most often equated to Grants for the Arts applications and in the case of the Midlands 'New Business Models' featured more strongly than the national average with 7 of the 10 partnerships suggesting this would be a key element in any plan for future resourcing of the local cultural offer for children and young people.

SUMMARY

Broadly speaking the Midlands LCEPs mirrored the national perceptions on most of the themes covered in the survey.

LCEPs felt they were in a stable position to meet demand, particularly direct requests from schools, having a good variety of arts and cultural infrastructure in place, however transport links were cited more frequently in Midlands LCEPs than was the case nationally, reflecting an ongoing challenge around logistics associated with children and young people reaching venues. LCEPs suggested they were well positioned in terms of emergent relationships with HE partners, having a slightly higher number of associations or collaborations than the national average.

Going forward it will be interesting to facilitate sharing of development and new ideas across these partnerships and to reflect on the ways in which they may be working differently than before. New ways of working may be contributing to better outcomes for partners and children and young people and understanding the nature of that different approach will be key to the overall success of the Cultural Education Challenge.

7.3. Area: North

This short summary picks out key themes for a particular Arts Council England geographical area, drawing on recent research exploring the early progress of LCEPs nationwide. It places emphasis on areas of strong difference or commonality between the North and the national picture and is split into two sections: perceptions of the cultural offer prior to LCEPs forming and current/future plans for new work.

The organisations based in the North that responded to the survey comprised:

Hull City Council
Stephen Joseph Theatre
St Helens Council
Blackpool Council
Link4Life
Liverpool Learning Partnership
Octogon Theatre Bolton
Stockton Borough Council
Kirklees Council
Doncaster Council

1] Perceptions of the Cultural Offer prior to LCEPs

How developed are the partnerships in the North?

Nationally there appears to be a fairly even split across three types of partnership:

Emerging (16)

Established but not yet delivering (12)

Established and delivering (13)

In the case of the North's partnerships of the 10 LCEPs that responded there were a greater number in the emerging category (7). Just 2 LCEPs were established but not yet delivering and only 1 established and delivering.

Levels of impact of cultural offer prior to the Cultural Education Challenge and LCEP establishing

Overall the national picture suggested that there was some room for improvement with regard to impact. 32 partnerships felt there had been some impact and 2 reported impact had been high. However, 8 partnerships said impact had been low.

The North broadly mirrored the national perception with 1 LCEP reporting low impact, 9 partnerships signally there had been some impact, and none suggesting prior impact had been high.

Success of past work in reaching socially disadvantaged young people.

The Cultural Education Challenge places a premium on reaching out to socially disadvantaged young people, ensuring that despite policies of austerity placing pressure on provision, that those most in need do not miss out. Interestingly the national picture shows that while the local cultural offer has attempted to reach out to such young people in the past it has met with only limited success. Only 3 of 45 partnerships claimed to have been reaching significant numbers of children and young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The remainder were less successful whether or not they were targeting such groups.

In the North the picture was similar. 6 partnerships suggested they had seen limited success in engaging children from disadvantaged backgrounds, 1 suggested it was not targeting groups, but reaching young people from disadvantaged backgrounds nonetheless and 3 others were unsure about this aspect of prior work.

How important had partnership working been to the cultural offer in the past?

Generally, the national picture showed us that while many subscribed to the principle of partnership working and valued it highly (50% said it was a vital component of their local offer), decreasing numbers testified to its effectiveness (35%) and even fewer (23%) felt it had a significant impact.

With regard to the North this trend was less evident. Of the 10 partnerships that responded, 5 felt that partnership working had been a vital component of prior work, 4 felt quality and effectiveness of partnerships had been high, and although none felt impacts had been significant, most partnerships neither agreed or disagreed with the statements about this aspect of the work, suggesting they felt less sure about past impacts.

2] Current/Future plans for new work

Use of data to inform plans

The majority of the North's LCEPs (6 of 10) that responded to the survey planned to use data and evidence to inform planning and to shape their cultural offer. This is broadly in line with the national picture, where the majority (32 of 45) are also using various sources of data to influence the nature and scope of their partnership working. Only 1 of the North LCEPs suggested they had no plans to use data to inform planning.

Who will partnerships be aiming to work with in the education sector?

The national picture indicates that primary and secondary schools dominate the relationship with LCEPs. The North's partnerships mirrored that with Nurseries, Sixth Form Colleges and HE partners featuring less strongly. In the other category Universities, FE and Studio Schools were mentioned.
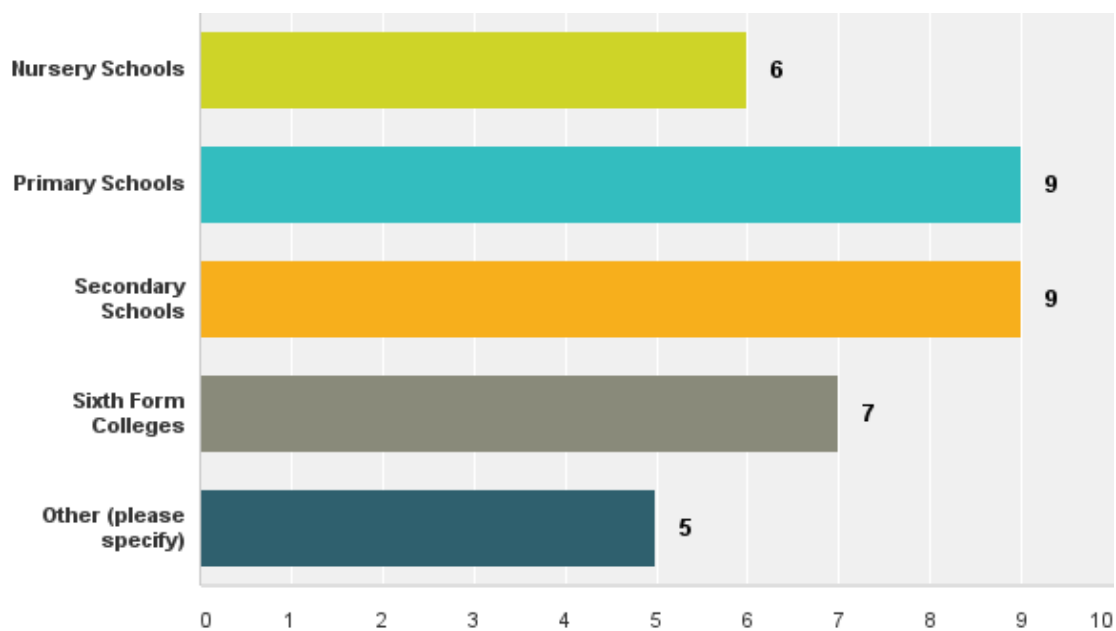
North LCEPs anticipated education sector partners

Governance

Most of the North LCEPs either had formal terms of reference to guide their respective boards, or were planning to devise other types of formal governance procedures. This was broadly in line with the national picture where only 3 of 45 partnerships did not have terms of reference and had no plans to create them. In the North, only 1 partnership neither had ToR and had no plans to in the future, the remainder either had them in place or were turning attention to it in the future.

Expected beneficiaries

Nationally, as one would expect, children and young people were envisaged as the main beneficiaries of LCEP work. Teachers, schools and cultural organisations were, in that order, the next biggest anticipated beneficiary groups. In the North that pattern was largely replicated, but there was a greater openness to potential benefits for the cultural sector itself than was the case nationally or in some other ACE areas.

Enabling and Disabling Factors

Northern LCEPs cited transport links to venues as the major disabling factor, while partnership building, multi-agency working demand from schools and good levels of capacity in the cultural sector as the most enabling factors.

Nationally the picture was split over the role of funding with LCEPs seeing lack of new money as an enabling and disabling factor. The Northern LCEPs mirrored this response.

Proportion of schools LCEPs aim to work with

Nationally, ambitions are high with regard to numbers of schools LCEPs are planning to work with. In the North with so many of the LCEPs in the area still at early stages they are to a great extent unsure about proportions of schools they aim to working with. 5 LCEPs report that they do not

know the scale of their plans yet, 2 suggest they will aim to work with all schools, 1 with up to three quarters and 1 with up to a half of all schools in their area.

Links to other cultural interventions and schemes

Again, in keeping with the national picture, the North's LCEPs are linking strongly with Music Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award in an effort to build a clearer offer locally. The Museum's Schools Programme and Creative People and Places also featured to a significant degree in the North's LCEP's plans.

Future resourcing

The North's view on future funding was in step with the national view. LCEPs cited 'existing resources', 'arts sector funding' as the most likely means of securing investment for LCEP priorities.

Arts sector funding most often equated to Grants for the Arts applications. Applications to Trusts and Foundations and leveraging Pupil Premium funding also featured in the North LCEP plans. S106 funds were also cited as a potential target. Interestingly, LCEPs in the North reported HE funding more frequently than other ACE areas as a possible source of future funding.

SUMMARY

Broadly speaking the North's LCEPs mirrored the national perceptions on most of the themes covered in the survey.

LCEPs felt they were in a stable position to meet demand, particularly direct requests from schools, having a good variety of arts and cultural infrastructure in place, however transport links were cited more frequently in Northern LCEPs than was the case nationally, reflecting an ongoing challenge around logistics associated with children and young people reaching venues. LCEPs suggested they were well positioned in terms of emergent relationships with HE partners, having a slightly higher number of associations or collaborations than the national average.

Going forward it will be interesting to facilitate sharing of development and new ideas across these partnerships and to reflect on the ways in which they may be working differently than before. New ways of working may be contributing to better outcomes for partners and children and young people and understanding the nature of that different approach will be key to the overall success of the Cultural Education Challenge.

7.4. Area: South East

This short summary picks out key themes for a particular Arts Council England geographical area, drawing on recent research exploring the early progress of LCEPs nationwide. It places emphasis on areas of strong difference or commonality between the South East and the national picture and is split into two sections: perceptions of the cultural offer prior to LCEPs forming and current/future plans for new work.

The organisations based in the South East which responded to the survey comprised:

Lowestoft Rising
Colchester Institute
University of Kent
Luton Culture
Festival Bridge
PHACE
Cambridge City Council
20Twenty Productions CIC
Arts and Heritage Alliance Milton Keynes
Our Future City
Norfolk Museums Service

1] Perceptions of the Cultural Offer prior to LCEPs

How developed are the partnerships in the South East?

Nationally there appears to be a fairly even split across three types of partnership:

Emerging (16)

Established but not yet delivering (12)

Established and delivering (13)

In the case of the South East's partnerships we find that of the 12 that responded to the LCEP survey 5 are emerging, 2 are established but not yet delivering and 5 are established and delivering.

Levels of impact of cultural offer prior to the Cultural Education Challenge and LCEP establishing

Overall the national picture suggested that there was some room for improvement with regard to impact. 32 partnerships felt there had been some impact and 2 reported impact had been high. However, 8 partnerships said impact had been low.

The South East broadly mirrored the national perception with 4 reporting low impact, 7 partnerships signally there had been some impact, and 1 partnership suggesting prior impact had been high.

As a point for future development and as way of describing the added value of LCEPs, it would be interesting to discover more about the ways each partnership is planning to do things differently as they attempt to increase the impact of cultural work.

Success of past work in reaching socially disadvantaged young people.

The Cultural Education Challenge places a premium on reaching out to socially disadvantaged young people, ensuring that despite policies of austerity placing pressure on provision, that those most in need do not miss out. Interestingly the national picture shows that while the local cultural offer has attempted to reach out to such young people in the past it has met with only limited success. Only 3 of 45 partnerships claimed to have been reaching significant numbers of children and young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The remainder were less successful whether or not they were targeting such groups.

In the South East area the picture was similar. 10 partnerships suggested they had seen limited success in engaging children from disadvantaged backgrounds, 1 suggested it was not targeting but reaching a diverse group of young people nonetheless and 1 other was unsure about this aspect of prior work.

How important had partnership working been to the cultural offer in the past?

Generally the national picture showed us that while many subscribed to the principle of partnership working and valued it highly (50% said it was a vital component of their local offer), decreasing numbers testified to its effectiveness (35%) and even fewer (23%) felt it had a significant impact.

With regard to the South this trend was also broadly evident. While a slightly higher proportion than the national average indicated ambivalence about the primacy of partnerships to their ways of working in the past (4 of the 12 partnerships neither agreed or disagreed) the decreasing confidence in the effectiveness and impact of partnership working was clear, with 7 of the 12 partnerships disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that the quality and effectiveness was partnerships was high. 8 of the 12 South East LCEPs felt that partnership working had not had significant impact or been able to evidence impact convincingly.

2] Current/Future plans for new work

Use of data to inform plans

The majority of the South East's LCEPs (9 of 12) that responded to the survey planned to use data and evidence to inform planning and to shape their cultural offer. This is in line with the national picture, where the majority (32 of 45) are also using various sources of data to influence the nature and scope of their partnership working.

Who will partnerships be aiming to work with in the education sector?

The national picture indicates that primary and secondary schools dominate the relationship with

LCEPs. The South East's partnerships mirrored that with Nurseries, Sixth Form Colleges and HE partners featuring less strongly.
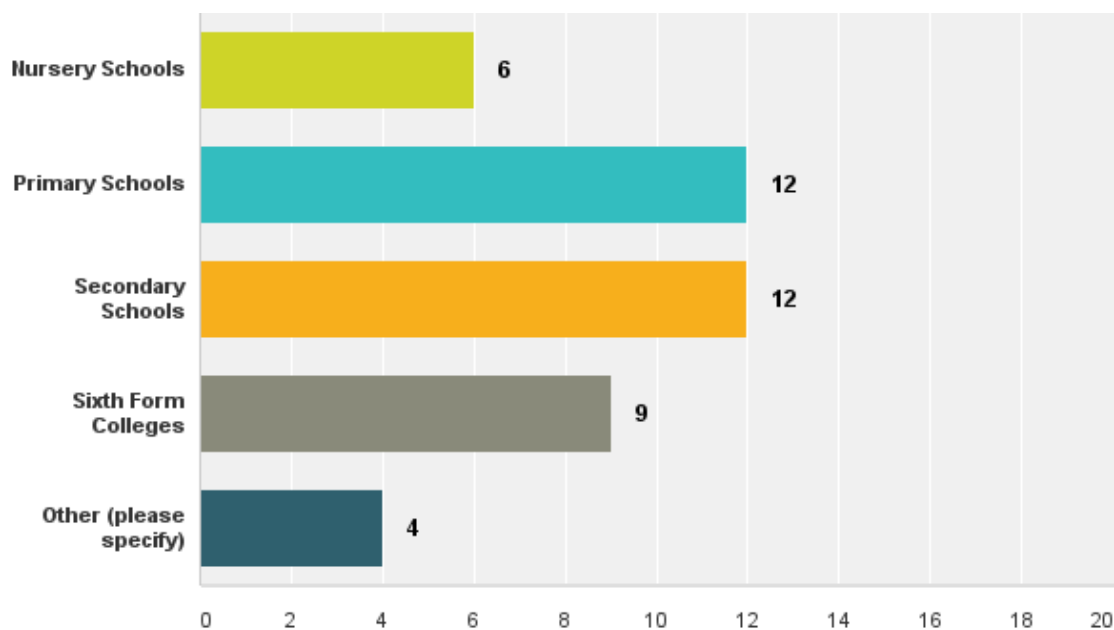
South East LCEPs anticipated education sector partners

Governance

Most of the South East based partnerships either had formal terms of reference to guide their respective boards, or were planning to devise other types of formal governance procedures. This was broadly in line with the national picture where only 3 of 45 partnerships did not have terms of reference and had no plans to create them. In the South East, 1 partnership neither had ToR and had no plans to in the future, and 1 LCEP was unsure; the remainder all had ToR in place.

Expected beneficiaries

Nationally, as one would expect, children and young people were envisaged as the main beneficiaries of LCEP work. Teachers, schools and cultural organisations were, in that order, the next biggest anticipated beneficiary groups. In the case of South East that pattern was replicated.

Enabling and Disabling Factors

South East partnerships cited lack of funding as the major disabling factor, while partnership building, multi-agency working demand from schools and good levels of capacity in the cultural sector as the most enabling factors.

Nationally the picture was more split over the role of funding with more LCEPs seeing lack of new money as an enabling factor.

Proportion of schools LCEPs aim to work with

As with the national trend, ambitions are high in the South East with between half of the LCEPs in the area indicating they propose to work with all their local schools. One LCEP was not sure of the

scale of their ambition regarding schools numbers, another estimated up to three quarters of schools, two others up to a half and one up to a quarter of schools in their area.

Links to other cultural interventions and schemes

Again, in keeping with the national picture, the South East's LCEPs are linking strongly with Music Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award in an effort to build a clearer offer locally. The Museum's Schools Programme and Creative People and Places also featured to a significant degree in the South East's LCEP's plans.

Future resourcing

The South East's view on future funding was in step with the national view. LCEPs cited 'existing resources', 'arts sector funding' and Local Growth funding as the most likely means of securing investment for LCEP priorities.

Arts sector funding most often equated to Grants for the Arts applications. Applications to Trusts and Foundations and leveraging Pupil Premium funding also featured in the South East LCEP plans. S106 funds were also cited as a potential target.

SUMMARY

Broadly speaking the South East LCEPs mirrored the national perceptions on most of the themes covered in the survey.

South East LCEPs felt they were in a strong position to meet demand, particularly direct requests from schools, having a good variety of arts and cultural infrastructure in place. They were also well positioned in terms of emergent relationships with HE partners, having a slightly higher number of associations or collaborations than the national average.

Going forward it will be interesting to facilitate sharing of development and new ideas across these partnerships and to reflect on the ways in which they may be working differently than before. New ways of working may be contributing to better outcomes for partners and children and young people and understanding the nature of that different approach will be key to the overall success of the Cultural Education Challenge.

7.5. Area: South West

LCEPs briefing note for Arts Council England SRMs

Area: South West

This short summary picks out key themes for a particular Arts Council England geographical area, drawing on recent research exploring the early progress of LCEPs nationwide. It places emphasis on areas of strong difference or commonality between the South West and the national picture and is split into two sections: perceptions of the cultural offer prior to LCEPs forming and current/future plans for new work.

The organisations based in the Midlands that responded to the survey comprised:

Prime Theatre
The Arts Development Company
5x5x5=Creativity
Create Gloucestershire

1] Perceptions of the Cultural Offer prior to LCEPs

How developed are the partnerships in the North?

Nationally there appears to be a fairly even split across three types of partnership:

Emerging (16)

Established but not yet delivering (12)

Established and delivering (13)

In the case of the South West, of the 4 partnerships that responded to the question 3 are established and delivering, and 1 was established but not yet delivering. None were in the emerging category.

Levels of impact of cultural offer prior to the Cultural Education Challenge and LCEP establishing

Overall the national picture suggested that there was some room for improvement with regard to impact. 32 partnerships felt there had been some impact and 2 reported impact had been high. However, 8 partnerships said impact had been low.

Only 3 partnerships in the South West responded to this question and all felt that there had been some impact in the past.

Success of past work in reaching socially disadvantaged young people.

The Cultural Education Challenge places a premium on reaching out to socially disadvantaged

young people, ensuring that despite policies of austerity placing pressure on provision, that those most in need do not miss out. Interestingly the national picture shows that while the local cultural offer has attempted to reach out to such young people in the past it has met with only limited success. Only 3 of 45 partnerships claimed to have been reaching significant numbers of children and young people from socially disadvantaged backgrounds. The remainder were less successful whether or not they were targeting such groups.

In the South West 2 LCEPs felt work in their area had targeted disadvantaged children but had only limited success in engaging them. One other LCEP felt that no targeting had taken place in the past, but despite that, the cultural offer had managed to engage children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

How important had partnership working been to the cultural offer in the past?

Generally, the national picture indicated that while many subscribed to the principle of partnership working and valued it highly (50% said it was a vital component of their local offer), decreasing numbers testified to its effectiveness (35%) and even fewer (23%) felt it had a significant impact.

With regard to the South West this trend was less evident. Of the 3 partnerships that responded, there was a much greater degree of balance across all the elements of partnership work. All 3 LCEPs reported that partnership work had been values in the past, all 3 suggested the work it generated was of high quality. There was more of a split with regard to the impact of such work, with 1 LCEP feeling impacts had been significant, 1 unsure and 1 feeling there had been little impact.

2] Current/Future plans for new work

Use of data to inform plans

South West LCEPs that responded to the survey planned to use data and evidence to inform planning and to shape their cultural offer. This is broadly in line with the national picture, where the majority (32 of 45) are also using various sources of data to influence the nature and scope of their partnership working.

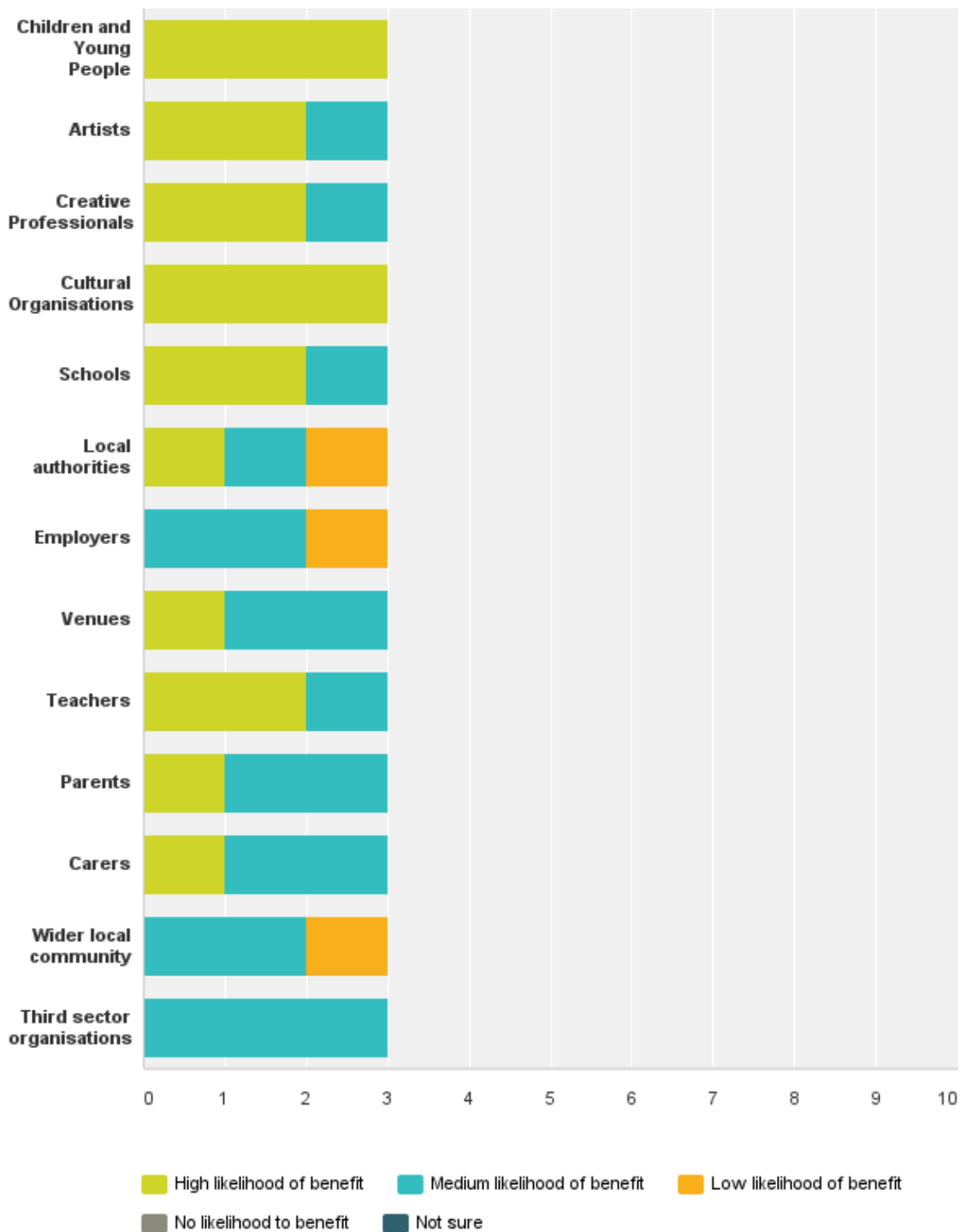**Who will partnerships be aiming to work with in the education sector?**

The national picture indicates that primary and secondary schools dominate the relationship with LCEPs. The South West's partnerships were somewhat different, with also featuring strongly.
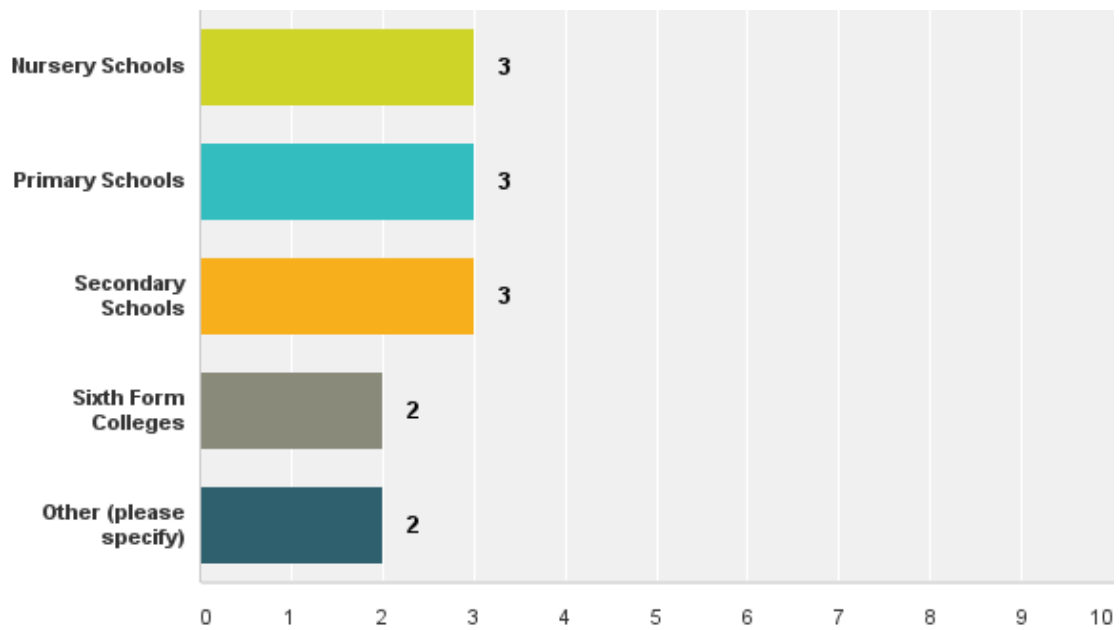
South West LCEPs anticipated education sector partners

Expected beneficiaries

Nationally, as one would expect, children and young people were envisaged as the main beneficiaries of LCEP work. Teachers, schools and cultural organisations were, in that order, the next biggest anticipated beneficiary groups. In the South West that pattern was replicated but there was greater emphasis placed on potential benefits to cultural organisations in comparison to the national picture.

Children and Young People

Artists

Creative Professionals

Cultural Organisations

Schools

Local authorities

Employers

Venues

Teachers

Parents

Carers

Wider local community

Third sector organisations

High likelihood of benefit
Medium likelihood of benefit
Low likelihood of benefit
No likelihood to benefit
Not sure

South West LCEPs expected beneficiaries

Enabling and Disabling Factors

South West LCEPs cited transport links to venues as the major disabling factor, while partnership building, multi-agency working demand from schools and good levels of capacity in the cultural sector as the most enabling factors.

Nationally the picture was split over the role of funding with LCEPs seeing lack of new money as an

enabling and disabling factor. The South West LCEPs were more positive about lack of funding, citing it as an enabling factor.

Proportion of schools LCEPs aim to work with

Nationally, ambitions are high with regard to numbers of schools LCEPs are planning to work with. In the South West 2 partnerships reported they would work with all schools in their area and 1 suggested up to a quarter of all schools.

Links to other cultural interventions and schemes

Again, in keeping with the national picture, the South West LCEPs are linking strongly with Music Hubs, Artsmark and Arts Award in an effort to build a clearer offer locally. The Museum's Schools Programme and Creative People and Places also featured to a significant degree.

Future resourcing

South West LCEP's views on future funding was more focused on leveraging new funding from within the sector, citing 'arts sector funding' as the most likely means of securing investment for LCEP priorities. Grants for the Arts was the most commonly cited route.

SUMMARY

Broadly speaking the South West LCEPs mirrored the national perceptions on most of the themes covered in the survey, however they were generally more positive about the lack of new funding underpinning this work, and were more upbeat about their past work and existing networks.

Going forward it will be interesting to facilitate sharing of development and new ideas across these partnerships and to reflect on the ways in which they may be working differently than before. New ways of working may be contributing to better outcomes for partners and children and young people and understanding the nature of that different approach will be key to the overall success of the Cultural Education Challenge.