

# Evaluation of find your talent - overview report

SQW Consulting

This research report was commissioned before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DFE).

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

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# 1: Introduction

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- 1.1 This report provides an overview of the main findings of the Find Your Talent (FYT) programme evaluation. Following the creation of the coalition government in May 2010, it was announced by HM Treasury on 17<sup>th</sup> June that a decision to cancel FYT had been taken as part of a review of pilot programmes established by the previous government. The evaluation of the programme was also terminated as a result of this announcement. This report therefore presents evaluation findings to date in order to capture lessons learned.

## Find Your Talent

- 1.2 The FYT programme commenced with an announcement of a pilot of a cultural offer to all children and young people in England in *The Children's Plan* (DCSF, December 2007) comprising an entitlement to five hours per week of high-quality cultural experiences. The intention was to help ensure children and young people stay on the path to success by participating in positive activities and experiences which develop their talents.
- 1.3 The programme aimed to offer high quality cultural experiences to all children and young people through a more co-ordinated and coherent offer and better local area planning of provision. The government committed to spend £25m from 2008 to 2011 through ten pathfinder areas where local authorities and cultural and other partners would trial different ways of delivering the cultural offer. In May 2008 the ten pathfinders were selected from 141 expressions of interest and the programme was launched in September 2008. Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE) was commissioned to manage the delivery of the programme, overseen by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and the Department for Education (DfE) and a steering group which included representatives from the Arts Council for England and the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA).<sup>2</sup>
- 1.4 Existing evidence suggests that engagement in cultural activities can be beneficial to a young person's development by enhancing transferable and inter-personal skills and improving motivation and behaviour. Potentially, greater take up of cultural activities could enhance and extend learning opportunities and help improve outcomes for children, as outlined in the Every Child Matters framework<sup>3</sup>. The evaluation set out to test this hypothesis across a range of different FYT delivery models and local area characteristics.
- 1.5 There are clear market failures to cultural provision and participation for children and young people. The current cultural offer is fragmented and poorly co-ordinated, making it hard for users to gain access, especially those that are particularly hard to reach. Hence the rationale for intervention lay in extending the reach and range of the current cultural offer, and in

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<sup>1</sup> Note that as a result of the formation of a new government in May 2010, the programme was subsequently terminated in June 2010 and no longer exists.

<sup>2</sup> Management and governance of the FYT programme were not included in the terms of reference for the evaluation.

<sup>3</sup>

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00331-2008>

providing high quality and better co-ordinated cultural experiences for children and young people.

- 1.6 The programme attempted to do this by strengthening in-school and out-of-school provision in local areas in order to widen participation for those accessing low or no levels of cultural activity. The aim was to remove barriers to access and increase choice, opportunity and the quality of the cultural offer for the entire 0-19 population in the ten pilot areas. The programme also aimed to support local and regional economic strategies by nurturing talent and encouraging progression into employment in the creative and cultural industries.

## The evaluation

- 1.7 In October 2008, SQW, together with Ipsos MORI and Wafer Hadley, were commissioned by the (then) DCSF and DCMS to evaluate the FYT programme in the ten pathfinder areas<sup>4</sup>. The overall purpose was to investigate:

*What works best in the delivery of high-quality cultural experiences for children and young people and determine what is needed to deliver this offer to all children aged 0-19 in different localities.*<sup>5</sup>

- 1.8 The aim of the evaluation was to assess the impact of the programme in the ten pathfinder areas between 2008 and 2011, and to construct the evidence base for future investment based on different starting points for different delivery models in different places. Specifically, the evaluation was designed to test whether, and the extent to which:

- the programme brings about increases in participation and take up of the cultural offer, especially among the hard-to-reach
- there are improvements in the overall quality, co-ordination and coherence of the offer
- the offer delivers cultural, social and other wider outcomes.

- 1.9 Our approach to the evaluation was designed to provide a robust and systematic evidence across five core themes:

- participation
- outcomes
- quality
- delivery models
- value for money.

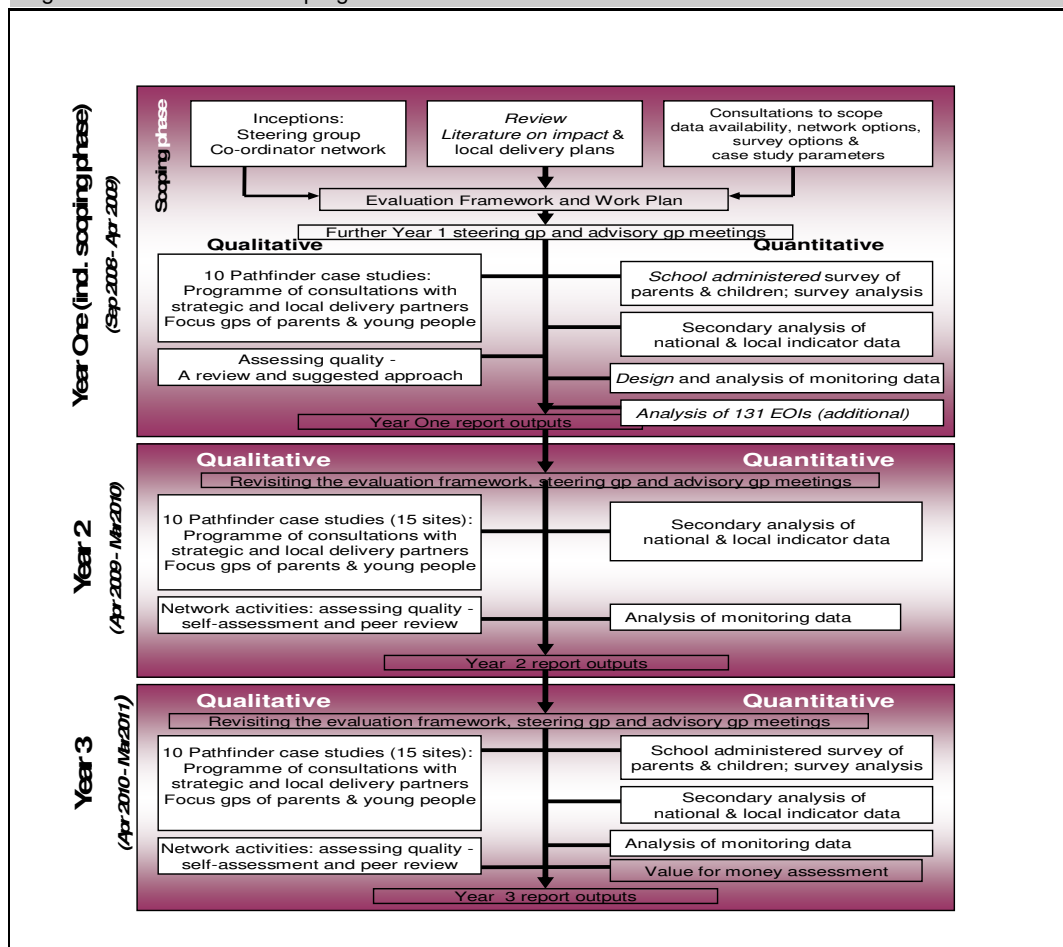
- 1.10 Figure 1-1 outlines the evaluation work programme for data collection, analysis and reporting.

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<sup>4</sup> Tower Hamlets, Leeds, Liverpool, Customs House (North and South Tyneside), Bolton, PUSH (South Hampshire), Shepway, Telford, North Somerset and Leicester and Leicestershire.

<sup>5</sup> DCSF/DCMS Evaluation Terms of Reference.

Figure 1-1: Evaluation work programme



Source: SQW

### Evaluation activities

- 1.11 The first year of the evaluation (October – July 2009) was formative in orientation, investigating programme implementation in the ten pathfinder areas and identifying barriers to delivery and critical success factors. Most pathfinder activities in Year 1 focused on setting up management, governance and advisory functions and assessing need and auditing current provision. Evaluation activities during this period focused on constructing a pre-intervention baseline for the subsequent evaluation of change and impact, drawing on three main sources: secondary data analysis covering a wide range of contextual and outcome indicators; ten pathfinder case studies; and a baseline survey of more than 3,000 parents and 4,000 children in the pathfinder areas. (Following the termination of the evaluation contract, the planned follow-up survey will no longer take place.)
- 1.12 The second (and now final) year of the evaluation involved conducting a second wave of pathfinder case studies and analysing changes to contextual data, with a stronger focus on how activities planned in Year 1 were achieving results in Year 2. Over the two years, the case studies involved around 200 interviews and 28 focus groups with children, young people and parents.

## Measuring success

- 1.13 The measures by which the outcomes of FYT were to be assessed were derived from several sources, including the DCMS/DCSF evaluation terms of reference, the logic model designed for the evaluation, the DCMS/DCSF FYT Prospectus, and the ten pathfinder delivery plans for Year 1. They were developed with reference to the DCSF Every Child Matters outcomes and also research and evaluation evidence on the impact of cultural activities and interventions. The 16 primary output and outcome measures are summarised in Table 1-1.

Table 1-1: Primary output and outcome measures

- Increased participation in cultural offer
- Improved information and choice
- Increased mix and range of cultural activities in a local area
- New or improved partnership working
- Enhanced engagement with children and young people and families
- Enhanced awareness of what is on offer
- Enhanced awareness of one's own talent
- Enhanced knowledge and understanding of cultural forms
- Enhanced/shifts in perceptions and attitudes towards cultural activities
- Enhanced leadership characteristics in terms of identifying and supporting other young people
- Increased transferable skills/gaining new skills for producing cultural outputs
- Enhanced 'personal skills' as denoted by the QCA Personal Learning and Thinking Skills framework
- Enhanced enjoyment in cultural participation
- Enhanced coherence in cultural offer
- Enhanced or improved co-ordination in the cultural offer
- Improved quality of the cultural offer ( a combination of some of the outcomes above)

Source: SQW

## This report

- 1.14 This report provides an overview of findings from the first two years of the evaluation to the point of its termination in June 2010, during which time the ten FYT pathfinders began to deliver a universal cultural offer for children and young people in their areas. With regard to the five evaluation themes, the report presents baseline findings on participation in the ten areas, discusses early evidence for some of the outcomes listed above, considers the quality of the cultural offer made by the pathfinders, and considers the different pathfinder delivery models. Evidence discussed in the report has been gathered from a secondary analysis of national indicator data for the ten pathfinder areas, a baseline participation and attitudinal survey of parents and children conducted by Ipsos MORI, and two rounds of case study visits to the 10 pathfinders and their projects. In the absence of follow-up data, the report is silent on the overall impact of the programme, the relative effectiveness of different FYT delivery models, and value for money.

## 2: Local area characteristics and participation

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### Introduction

- 2.1 An important element in FYT programme was the selection, from 141 expressions of interest, of ten pathfinders offering different area characteristics and delivery models, in terms of demand for and supply of cultural experiences, to test during piloting. This chapter considers evidence collected for the baseline (i.e. *pre-programme evidence*) area characteristics of the ten pathfinders and the levels and nature of participation in cultural activities, and identifies priorities for local action arising from the findings.

### Area characteristics

- 2.2 Despite the intention to select pathfinders from areas with contrasting characteristics, national indicator data show that the ten pathfinders display similar demographic and economic area characteristics, as illustrated in the table below. They generally served large populations of children and young people, were relatively more deprived than the national average, and suffered from low levels of participation and attainment.

Table 2-1: Demographic and socio-economic characteristics for the FYT pathfinders

Pathfinders generally served large 0-19 populations; particularly large were FYT PUSH and Leicester and Leicestershire that spatially cover more than one local authority. Even where absolute populations were small (Telford and Wrekin and Bolton), they served large populations of children and young people as a proportion of their total populations.

Pathfinder populations were also generally more deprived than the national average, when measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) and Free School Meals (FSM) eligibility. This is particularly the case for Tower Hamlets in London.

Pathfinders experienced relatively lower levels of GCSE attainment. The gap in educational attainment between FSM and non-FSM pupils was particularly pronounced in Bolton.

Pathfinders also experienced relatively low levels of post-16 participation in education and economic activity, and the proportions of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET) was a challenge for Bolton, Liverpool, Leeds and Telford and Wrekin in particular.

The 2008 and 2009 OfSTED *Tellus* survey of children and young people showed that, compared to 62% in England overall, a smaller proportion of children in pathfinder areas got involved in adult-led activities out of school in 2008. This was particularly the case for Tower Hamlets. There appeared to be unmet demand for music provision, cinema and theatre. However, participation in art, craft, dance, film and video making was higher than the national average.

Despite high levels of satisfaction with activities provided in their area, nearly half of the children responding to the *Tellus* survey in pathfinder areas thought that 'better activities for children and young people would improve their local area' and over half believed that they were not listened to in decisions about their local area.

Sources: SQW secondary analysis of national indicator datasets.

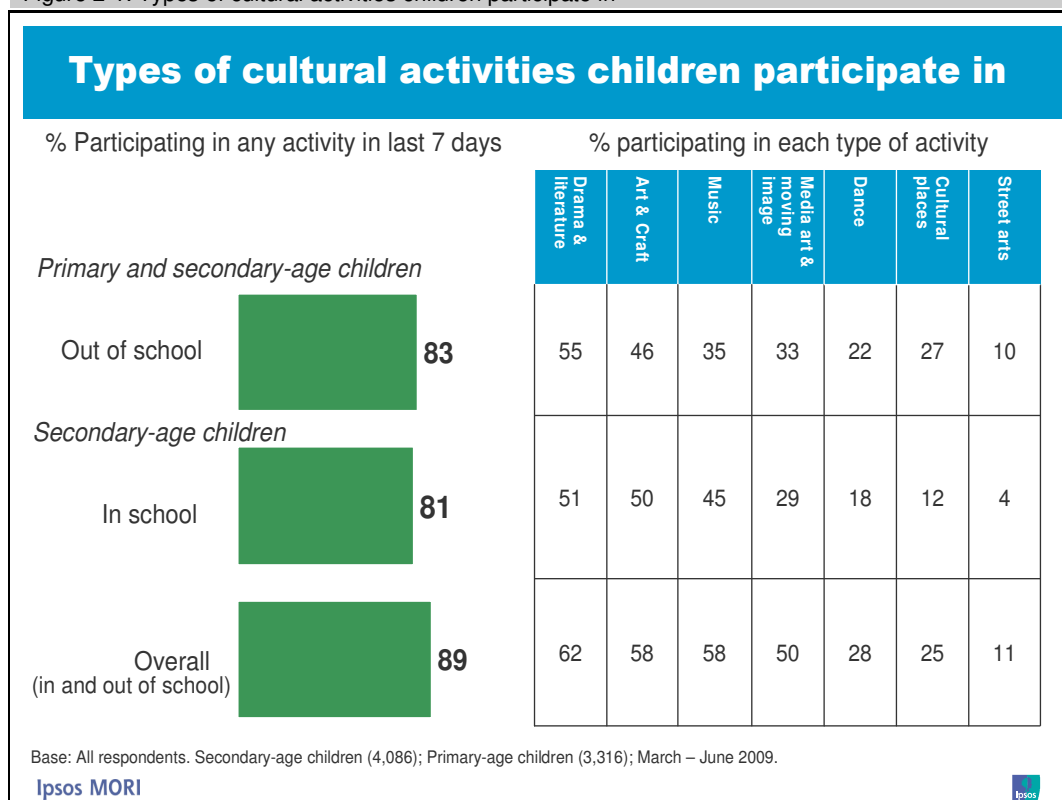
### Participation characteristics

- 2.3 The Ipsos MORI baseline survey of parents and children highlighted some key characteristics of participation in, and attitudes towards, cultural activities among the 0-19 population in the ten pathfinder areas.



2.4 **Levels of participation<sup>6</sup> were generally high among children in the pathfinder areas,** with 89% of secondary-aged children participating in a cultural activity in the last seven days, either in school and/or out of school, in Spring 2009.

Figure 2-1: Types of cultural activities children participate in



Source: Ipsos MORI baseline survey of parents and children, 2009

2.5 Almost two-thirds (62%) of secondary-age children participated for five hours or more in any cultural activity. However, this finding masks the fact that fewer children of all ages participated in out-of school activities, and fewer secondary-age children participated in in-school activities:

- **less than half** (46%) of primary- and secondary-age children spent five or more hours in *out-of-school* cultural activity in the week preceding their interview
- **Three in ten** (29%) of secondary-age children spent five hours or more in the week preceding their interview in *in-school* cultural activity<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>6</sup> Due to the nature of self-completion surveys, at each question, there are a number of respondents who did not specify an answer. This affected data from the pupil survey in particular. As a result, an imputation exercise was undertaken by Ipsos MORI to address missing responses on the pupil-level data. Children are classified as a 'participant' in an activity if they/their parent ticked at least one of the listed activities within that cultural form, and specified that they spent at least 30 minutes participating in that form of activity in the last seven days. The percentages presented for the five hour measure include all respondents for whom comprehensive timings are available.

<sup>7</sup> Note that parents of 5-10 year olds were not asked about their in-school cultural participation.









































- Quality assurance badge system and code of conduct for practitioners (Leeds)
  - Use of the Arts Award accreditation scheme (PUSH)
  - Integrating existing frameworks (Bolton)
  - Taking young people's views into account in commissioning decisions (Leicestershire).
- 4.34 Some pathfinders devoted considerable energy to this issue. In Bolton, for example, a weeklong festival called 'That's Quality' gave young people the opportunity to explore what quality means to them. Partners were also encouraged to integrate existing quality frameworks such as Hear by Right and Quality in Study Support Framework (QiSS), and to use a quality kite mark aimed at giving parents an easy signal of the safety and quality of an activity.
- 4.35 Pathfinders were keen to consider both demand side and supply side definitions of quality, (e.g. the cultural experience for the participant young person, and the delivered cultural output from the provider). Several stakeholders were of the view that quality is subjective and defined entirely by the customer or end user, and should be based on a person's evaluation of their entire experience and not just its end product.
- 4.36 Case study evidence suggests that the programme did generate an improvement in the quality of the cultural offer in pathfinder areas. For example, consultees in Tower Hamlets were of the view that the pathfinder had made greatest progress in raising awareness of existing provision and increasing the coherence of the offer through the development of a strand-based programme of activity, all of which had CPD elements. In Bolton, growing membership of their Cultural Change teams and the increased levels of collaboration across and between partners suggest that the pathfinder's activities had generated a cultural change to improve quality of what was on offer.
- 4.37 In Telford, partners and providers consulted during the case study thought that the quality of provision was high and the programme had reached those who were furthest away from cultural experiences. PUSH stakeholders thought that their success lay in projects being influenced and led by young people. Leeds locality coordinators felt that as a result of the programme, there was stronger emphasis on sustained provision of cultural activities and a clear route for young people for pursuing opportunities.
- 4.38 It was clear from the case study consultations that quality was defined and measured by pathfinders using a multitude of factors, indicating that it is indeed multi-faceted. However, there is clearly a need for adopting a consistent framework that incorporates these factors and measures the success of the programme overall.

## Conclusion

- 4.39 Over 200 interviews were conducted in 2009 and 2010 with pathfinder teams, partners, providers and other stakeholders in the ten pathfinder areas. Whilst the first year focused on understanding processes, structures and mechanisms that pathfinders were due to set up for delivering FYT, the second year attempted to understand the effectiveness of delivery.

- 4.40 Stakeholders were very positive about the management and partnership arrangements for delivering the programme. These were beginning to generate positive benefits for the cultural infrastructure in pathfinder areas in the following ways:
- greater sharing and understanding of priorities for targeting young people and enhancing their cultural experiences
  - appropriate protocols and networks to enable knowledge sharing and integration of activities among partners and providers
  - commitment to sustainability by embedding FYT structures into existing priorities for children's services
  - professional development and training for practitioners.
- 4.41 Partners played active and explicit roles in designing and commissioning of projects, and there were good examples of involving young people in leading and influencing the programme. New and innovative partnership working paved the way for better coordinated programmes of activity, and more informed audiences. Pathfinder leads and coordinators also played significant roles in driving forward FYT in their areas, actively seeking and maintaining partnerships and delivering effective projects.
- 4.42 No one model of delivery was most effective; rather, the ingredients for success lies in the extent to which the lead organisation was able to sustain contributions by its partners in delivering a multi-faceted programme involving a range of target groups, art forms and geographic areas. What also matters is provision that is demand led, well-coordinated and high-quality, judged both by supply-side professional excellence and the cultural experiences of children and young people.

## 5: Conclusion - making a difference

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### Introduction

- 5.1 The central questions for any programme evaluation are: what difference has the programme made, and what changes has it brought about which would not have happened anyway? With £25m in planned programme funding distributed across ten pathfinder areas, these are not trivial questions. Before its termination, the evaluation had begun to collect evidence for answering these questions, with a particular focus on identifying ‘what works’ in providing a demand-led, local area-based and high-quality universal cultural offer for children and young people. These early results are discussed in this chapter.

### Impact

- 5.2 The FYT programme represented a mix of top-down central government investment designed to catalyse innovative bottom-up delivery solutions in response to local needs. Hence it was important for the evaluation to identify what difference the programme had made to children and young people at an aggregate, all-programme level, but also to observe new approaches to local planning and delivery that are important in bringing about this change. The findings from Year 1 and 2 demonstrate early evidence of programme additionality in several areas, as observed and reported by partners and stakeholders:
- An enhanced cultural offer for young people that is of high-quality and better coordinated
  - Improved communication and awareness among children and young people about what is on offer
  - Reaching out to children and young people in school and out-of-school settings in new areas and for new participants
  - Networking and brokerage among partners, providers and practitioners, developing a shared understanding of what delivering an demand-led, local area-based, high-quality cultural offer means.
- 5.3 The programme appeared to have gained strategic added value<sup>10</sup>, as demonstrated by the partnership structures and processes that pathfinders have set up as part of the FYT delivery infrastructure, and providing strategic leadership (evident in management and governance arrangements) using the FYT investment. Case study consultees were of the view that joined-up working had taken place, and as pathfinders continued in their capacity building efforts, delivery partners and providers were beginning to collaborate effectively. Investment in the

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<sup>10</sup> Strategic added value is a measure of the impact of strategic leadership, partnership creation and decision-making. It is the added value that is expected to be realised by co-ordinating the outputs from a programme and influencing others to help achieve programme outputs and outcomes. Although the concept was devised for Regional Development Agency impact evaluations, it is also applicable to other strategic bodies that can influence their partners’ and stakeholders’ behaviour.

strategic development of cultural providers was seen by one pathfinder as a key area of additionality.

5.4 In the absence of follow-up post-programme survey data it is difficult to quantify the impact of the programme on outputs and outcomes for children and young people. Nevertheless, the largely qualitative evidence from over 28 focus groups with children and young people who had attended FYT activities indicates some early signs of the ways in which programme activities had benefited them, including increased aspirations and confidence and progression into education or employment:

- Children and young people found FYT activities enjoyable and engaging
- They reported that these offered something new and more focused for them
- They produced creative outputs that involved effective team working
- There was evidence of improved confidence among participants
- There were also examples of practical skills and knowledge development
- Participants were keen to come back for more.

5.5 Pathfinders cited anecdotal evidence that participation in cultural activities had increased as a result of FYT. One pathfinder (Leicestershire) noted that 30,000 young people had engaged in their 'Go and See' visits, and there was some evidence that a good number of participants had sustained involvement over a longer period of time.

5.6 The case studies also provided evidence of greater parental engagement with cultural activities. Parent/carers' cultural participation influences the participation of their children, so involving parents/carers and families is important for engaging particularly early years and primary-age children (the influence of peers grows stronger amongst older children and young people). Children's Centres and schools have an important role to play in encouraging parents/carers to engage in and extend the range and depth of cultural activities offered to their children. Conversely, parental opposition can prevent children from participating, so it is important to get them on side and, as the baseline survey data suggest, providing more information about the cultural offer in local areas would help to achieve this. Case studies highlighted a number of useful examples of engagement with parents:

- Tower Hamlets Family Engagement Programme – established as one of the key strands of the programme, it involved production of a 'family friendly' venues guide outlining venues which have regular affordable (either free or low cost) family provision, and devolved budgets to Local Area Partnership (LAP) coordinators to encourage/support families who wouldn't usually engage to take up the available offer (£5000 per LAP per term)
- Telford – teachers working with disadvantaged primary school pupils reported that parents have raised their expectations of what their children can achieve and have experienced the benefits of cultural activities themselves.

## Sustainability

- 5.7 The issue of sustainability clearly took centre stage for FYT pathfinders when it came to setting up management and governance structures and mechanisms for delivery of the programme. As discussed in earlier sections, the approaches adopted involved embedding the cultural offer within existing structures and the local context, and leaving a legacy.
- 5.8 Furthermore, many pathfinders demonstrated their commitment to sustainability and indicated the ability of elements of the programme to sustain itself beyond its funding life, by investing in CPD and setting up networking protocols that partners could continue to use and benefit from. Some stakeholders identified culture change and shared understanding as a key plank of achieved sustainability. The goal was to create an infrastructure that continues to generate opportunities for young people beyond the lifetime of FYT funding, and which did not necessarily require significant additional investment. North Somerset, for example, created a series of 'legacy' projects that were designed to attract organisations, especially schools, to continue investing in cultural activities beyond FYT.
- 5.9 Several pathfinders were successful in attracting significant additional investment from partners as a way of ensuring sustainability for FYT project activities. By December 2009, projects in Telford had secured approximately £389,000 in (planned) match funding from a FYT (planned) budget of £586,000. Existing projects secured a greater share of this match funding (60%, compared with 40% for new projects 40%), suggesting that the pathfinder's efforts to mainstream project activities were working. Leveraged funding sourced from a variety of organisations and individuals, including schools, the then Learning and Skills Council, the MLA, Arts Development, Birmingham REP, Ideas Foundation and participant registrations. Bolton took the innovative step of creating a Funding and Partnerships Officer post whose role was to work with core FYT partners to identify and apply for alternative sources of funding to build capacity. In addition, PUSH secured over £500,000 in matched funding for FYT projects, and the Leeds pathfinder established the principle of part-funding for some of their FYT activities in order to ensure greater commitment and ownership from delivery partners.

## Messages for local authorities

- 5.10 The evaluation findings to date enable several conclusions to be drawn for developing a local area-based, demand-led and high-quality cultural offer for children and young people. The findings allow for implications to be identified for future provision in an austere financial environment where cost-effective provision will become ever more important.

### ***Delivery models***

- 5.11 The sharpening of focus by pathfinders in adopting a 'progressive universalism' approach towards vulnerable groups and areas indicates a continuing need for targeting provision for groups and areas where significant returns are likely to be gained. This is rightly so, given that participation generally is high and there are specific sub-groups (secondary-aged children, boys, ethnic minorities, poor communities) that are the low participators.



- 5.12 In the absence of continuing central government funding and given the paucity of information about existing cultural activities reported by parents in some areas, a stronger emphasis should be placed on improving the coordination, coherence and communication of the existing cultural offer and extending its reach to ensure wider participation. Pathfinders had successfully set several activities in train to achieve this – establishing networks of providers and partners, CPD for practitioners and taster sessions for children and young people, and listening to what sorts of cultural activities they wanted for their local areas. Communicating the offer is very important, and new approaches are needed to encourage those who think that engaging in a wide range of different cultural experiences is ‘not for me’.

### ***Delivery and partnership structures***

- 5.13 In the current financial and political environment, reduction and consolidation of the wide range of agencies which currently support local cultural activities is likely, and this may lead to a simplification of local area structures for delivering a future universal cultural offer. The FYT pathfinders engaged multiple (often cultural form-specific) agencies as strategic partners and leveraged additional funding from them in order to extend the work of FYT delivery partners. Reduction and consolidation of agencies would thus lead to simplified partnership arrangements and also fewer sources of additional funding. However, encouraging children, young people and families who are ‘low participators’ to discover a wider range of cultural experiences is a necessarily localised and complex process, involving close working with early years settings and schools, cultural organisations and practitioners, and community and voluntary sector (VCS) organisations.
- 5.14 Developing partnerships between local public and VCS organisations will undoubtedly become more important, and the pathfinders display good practice in this area. They have set up local area groups comprising delivery partners and sometimes also children and young people. With strategic direction typically provided by a central coordinating team and an advisory group, these local ‘engagement groups’ have been responsible identifying needs, developing elements of the offer and project ideas, and helping to select high-quality provision. This level of community engagement is likely to remain a necessity for any future delivery of a universal cultural offer.
- 5.15 For a local area-based, demand-led and high-quality universal cultural offer to succeed, area-based coordination is required. Pathfinder experience suggests that local authorities can play effective roles in determining need, planning provision, coordinating delivery, commissioning supply, and assuring quality. Strong local authority involvement – either as pathfinder lead organisations or working alongside lead cultural organisations – affords opportunities to link the cultural offer to other area-based priorities for children, families and communities. Several pathfinders connected the development of a universal cultural offer to wider policies, strategies and initiatives for children and young people in order to secure the future relevance and wider support for investment in the cultural offer.
- 5.16 Pathfinder experience also shows that local authorities can play important roles in brokering partnerships between Children’s Centres, schools and other children’s venues seeking to access local, regional and national cultural organisations and networks of practitioners. Pathfinder experience suggests that even with devolved budgets, schools will still need to find

good cultural organisations and practitioners to work with, and also other schools with good practice to share on how cultural experience enhances children's learning. It is likely therefore that the brokerage services created by some pathfinders will still be in demand.

### ***Engaging schools***

- 5.17 Pathfinders involved schools in the design and delivery of the cultural offer to children and young people in a variety of ways, most typically as delivery partners or representatives on advisory groups rather than as strategic partners. The central place schools occupy in their communities was recognised as an opportunity to engage large numbers of children and young people in creative learning and cultural form practice linked to curriculum delivery and also out-of-school activities. The baseline survey findings also reveal that parents/carers want schools to play a greater role in telling them about the cultural opportunities which are available in their areas.
- 5.18 Despite the central roles schools played in the design, delivery and communication of the cultural offer in some pathfinder areas, several pathfinders struggled to engage schools and secure their participation. There were several reasons for this. It was reported that specialist arts colleges did not think that FYT added significantly to what they already offer their pupils, and pathfinders had difficulty persuading them to share their resources with other schools and their communities. Other schools were sometimes deterred by FYT application processes for securing project funding, or felt unable to prioritise FYT over more pressing priorities for their pupils, or did not have the capacity to engage with yet another external initiative. The lack of connectivity between FYT and curriculum delivery was also presented as an obstacle.
- 5.19 Schools and colleges that did engage with FYT reported positive results, particularly when cultural practitioners worked alongside teachers and developed their confidence and capacity for supporting creative learning and developing cultural form practice with their pupils. Giving young people the opportunity to meet people who work in the creative and cultural industries opened their eyes to the wide range of employment prospects the sector offers, and made them aware of education and training pathways. Schools also worked with community and cultural organisations to identify the sorts of cultural experiences that would appeal to their pupils, brought large numbers of children and young people into cultural venues they would otherwise not have visited, and provided arts-based after-school activities.
- 5.20 Involving schools in the design, delivery and communication of a local area-based, demand-lead and high-quality cultural offer for children and young people thus remains a priority for local authorities and cultural organisations. Another challenging priority going forward is enabling children and young people and their families to become more actively involved in the design and delivery of the cultural offer, not just as participants and creators in different cultural forms, but also as advisors, innovators, promoters and commissioners of local cultural projects and activities. More active participation in creating the cultural offer will strengthen links to other services for children and young people and create opportunities for embedding cultural activities across a wide range of related policies and strategies. Doing so will help local authorities and their partners to make the case for continuing investment in cultural provision targeting 'low participators' within a progressively universal offer for all.

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