Youth Enrichment

Discovery Phase

Discussion paper submitted to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport by SQW

SQW

Contents

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Executive summary

Defining enrichment

- 'Enrichment' is a term that is primarily associated with the education sector but does have use and resonance with the youth sector.

- However, 'enrichment' has no single definition in policy and funded initiatives. It is often described in terms of its constituent activities (e.g., 'music', 'art', 'sport', 'outdoor learning') and its anticipated benefits for young people.

- 'Extracurricular activities' and 'non-formal learning' are terms sometimes used in place of 'enrichment', or to describe similar or related activities.

- From our documentary review and primary research, we suggest that there is broadly common agreement that enrichment:

  - Builds on (but is not part of) schools' formal academic curricula
  - Is both organised and intentional (meaning it is planned and deliberate)
  - Is led or facilitated by a trusted or qualified adult and/or accredited provider.

Current enrichment initiatives and stakeholders

- Services for young people are a cross-governmental responsibility, for example with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) leading the government's work in supporting the youth sector and the Department for Education (DfE) responsible for young people's formal education.

- There is a connection between DCMS and DfE in terms of enrichment, particularly where school-based enrichment draws on the youth sector. Other departments also play a role, depending on the policy area.

- Although many funded initiatives in education and the youth sector support enrichment, relatively few of these use the term 'enrichment'.

Young people's access to enrichment

- Through the entitlements set out under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the National Curriculum, young people should have access to a range of enriching opportunities, but in practice, access to enrichment opportunities varies hugely among young people.[1]

- Generally, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have less access than their more affluent peers, a trend that Covid-19 has exacerbated.[2]

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[1] https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child
[2] Ofsted (2022) Education recovery in schools: summer 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- Many young people access enrichment opportunities through school. Schools often work with youth and outdoor learning providers to broaden their offer to their pupils.

- Furthermore, many young people access enrichment outside school through youth clubs or outdoor learning providers.[3]

- Young people's ability to access enrichment is influenced by a range of factors. These include cost, geography, and family circumstances.[4]

The value of enrichment

- Adults and young people sometimes describe the benefits associated with enrichment in terms of their intrinsic value i.e., activities are worth doing in and of themselves.

- Sometimes, the benefits of enrichment are viewed in more instrumental terms, wherein it supports young people to develop in a range of ways such as in terms of their skills, confidence or identity.

Providers of enrichment and funding

- A wide range of enrichment providers offer different sorts of enrichment. These include national award schemes, youth social action, outdoor learning providers, uniformed provision, arts and cultural organisations, and parent-led sports activities.

- Interviewees said that enrichment is generally underfunded and, therefore, under-resourced. However, it is difficult to quantify this, because of both the wide variety of activity providers and types involved, and the myriad sources of funding.

- In general, we heard from interviewees that funding is short term and competitive, which stymies organisations' abilities to support enrichment.

Factors that support and impede enrichment

- A variety of factors can support or impede the implementation of – and young people's access to – enrichment activities:

  - Senior leadership buy-in, staffing, adequate resourcing, partnerships and accessibility (including physical access and meeting wellbeing needs) were all cited by interviewees and young people as factors that can support enrichment. Conversely the absence of these factors impedes enrichment provision.

  - Participation data varies by quality and availability. While some organisations collect data about young people's participation, this is often not systematic or comparable between providers. Furthermore, because enrichment activities take such a diverse range of forms, data on outcomes varies considerably (in terms of outcomes specified, mode and quality of data collection).

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[3] https://cfey.org/reports/2024/04/education-and-enrichment/
[4] https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EC-and-outcomes-final-1.pdf

➢ Partnerships are an important feature of the enrichment landscape. They can unlock opportunities for enrichment, meaning partner organisations can deliver more together than separately. Schools tend to be the locus for enrichment activities, and interviewees and young people described benefits and downsides associated with this.

1. Introduction to this discussion paper

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Section summary

- This exploratory research examines enrichment: how stakeholders across the education and youth sectors define it, who provides it, and young people's experiences of it.
- This paper is intended to support discussion within DCMS and between DCMS and the Department for Education (DfE) about how enrichment can be further supported.
- The research is based on initial scoping consultations, a desk-based document review, interviews with education and youth sector stakeholders and focus groups with young people.
- Each section of the report contains a summary and more detailed commentary reflecting our research findings. Each section also presents a set of questions to guide further discussion within and between DCMS and DfE about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.

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Background

1.1 SQW and its partner, UK Youth, were commissioned in 2023 by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to undertake this exploratory research into youth enrichment. The research was commissioned because of interest in the subject by the Secretary of State and the Youth Strategy Team (which sits within the Civil Society and Youth (CSY) directorate).

1.2 This paper builds on a suite of projects SQW has led since 2022, including the three-part Youth Evidence Base research which involved analyses of five longitudinal datasets, an international literature review and analysis of the impact of youth club closures.[5] The Youth Evidence Base highlights some of the ways in which open access youth provision can benefit young people and their communities.

1.3 Consequently, the Department wanted to explore how its activities can further augment young people's access to enrichment opportunities. Because enrichment can happen both inside and outside school, **this paper is intended to support discussion within DCMS and between DCMS and the Department for Education (DfE) about how they can further support enrichment, individually and as partners.**

1.4 Each section of the report (with the exception of this first section) contains a summary, more detailed commentary on our research findings, and questions to guide further discussion.

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[5] The Youth Evidence Base research can be viewed here:
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-provision-and-life-outcomes-research

Research phases

1.5 SQW worked with the Youth Strategy Team at DCMS to identify a suitable focus and approach for the Youth Enrichment research. We then undertook a rapid evidence review, stakeholder interviews and focus groups with young people, before then summarising our findings in this report. This process is summarised in Figure 1-1. SQW has led the research with guidance from UK Youth, who also arranged the young people focus groups.

Figure 1-1: Project overview
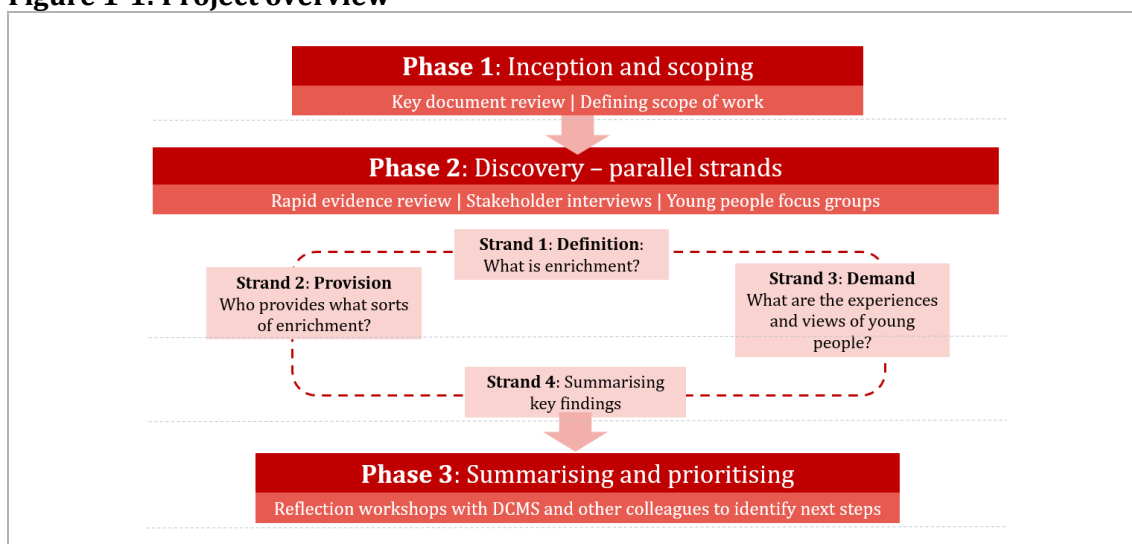
Work to date

Defining the research questions

1.6 After conducting a rapid document review of policy and existing research, we produced a scoping report in the late Autumn 2023. This set out the three lines of enquiry which relate to the definition, provision and demand of enrichment (summarised in Table 1-1). These lines of enquiry are explored in this paper.

Table 1-1: Research questions and sub-questions

Line of enquiry	Related sub-questions
1. Definition – What is enrichment?	• How is 'enrichment' defined in policy and research? • What outcomes can enrichment activities deliver? • How do young people understand the term and concept of enrichment?
2. Provision – Who provides what sorts of enrichment?	• Which types of organisations provide enrichment? • What interactions and partnerships contribute to enrichment activities?

Line of enquiry	Related sub-questions
	• What are the sources of funding for enrichment? • What factors shape providers' ability to offer enrichment to young people? • What sorts of data do provider organisations collect and/or report publicly?
3. Demand – What are young people's views and experiences of enrichment?	• What types of enrichment do young people *do*? • What types of enrichment do young people *want*? • *Why* do young people participate in enrichment? • Why do young people *not* participate in enrichment? • Are there *gaps* in provision of enrichment available to all young people? • What does 'good' enrichment look like for/to young people?

Defining the scope

1.7 This research focuses on provision for young people in England aged 11 to 18 years, and up to 25 years for those with special educational needs and disability (SEND). We wanted to examine the nature of enrichment across the education (i.e., schools and colleges) and youth sectors. In relation to the youth sector, we sought to explore open access and universal enrichment provision (i.e., that any young person can attend) although we were not rigid, acknowledging that many organisations combine open and targeted provision (targeted provision typically being accessed by young people with particular needs or characteristics).

1.8 We did not start with a single definition of 'enrichment'; this is something we explored with a wide range of interviewees to understand how the term is defined by stakeholders across the education and youth sectors.

Consultations and focus groups

1.9 During consultations with adults and young people we asked what enrichment is, factors that support or impede young people's access to enrichment opportunities, and gaps in provision. Between December 2023 and January 2024, we conducted:

- **Formal consultations with 30 stakeholders.** We engaged stakeholders with insight into the education and/or youth sectors through their work as practitioners (sometimes as teachers or youth workers), researchers and policy professionals. In many cases, these were people that had an interest or expertise in enrichment specifically; in others, they were people with a wider perspective on policy or practice in these sectors. We sought to speak with consultees in a wide range of organisations including: national and regional youth infrastructure organisations; national, regional and local providers of youth

services and provision; outdoor learning providers; multi-academy trusts and teaching unions; and central government departments. We identified participants through desk-based research and an ongoing 'snowball' sample through further interviews.

- **Informal conversations with other stakeholders** to discuss current research projects including the Enrichment Partnerships Pilot[6] where work has not yet been published.

- **Focus groups with over 50 young people engaging with a wide variety of enrichment providers**.[7] Young people were engaged through a range of enrichment providers, including non-military uniformed youth groups, national enrichment providers and local youth clubs (universal and targeted). The young people who participated were between 11 and 25 years of age, and some had forms of SEND. The young people were from a range of geographies (including urban, suburban and rural contexts); some were from more affluent backgrounds and some from less affluent backgrounds; some had forms of special education need or disabilities; some were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Table 1-2: Stakeholders interviewed (N=30)

	Researcher	Educationalists	Policy	National Youth Organisation	Local/ regional youth worker/ support
Number	4	2	6	11	7

Analysis

1.10 We analysed the interview and focus group transcripts using specialist software, MaxQDA. Interview notes were coded against the lines of enquiry and sub-questions outlined in Table 1-1. Coded text extracts were then systematically reviewed by the project team to consider themes and insights relevant to the three lines of enquiry.

Acknowledgements

1.11 We would like to thank the consultees and young people who shared their views and experiences for this research. We also want to thank UK Youth and members of youth organisations who helped to arrange our focus groups with young people and who gave their time and insights to this study.

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[6] More information about the NCS Trust pilot is available here: https://wearencs.com/enrichment-partnerships-pilot

[7] Focus groups were arranged through c. 10 youth organisations. Young people that participated said they engaged with many more enrichment providers and brought their experiences of this wide range of providers to the discussions.

2. Defining enrichment

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Section summary

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- 'Extracurricular activities' and 'non-formal learning' are terms sometimes used in place of 'enrichment', or to describe similar or related activities.

- From our documentary review and primary research, we suggest that there is broadly common agreement that enrichment:

  ➢ Builds on (but is not part of) schools' formal academic curricula

  ➢ Is both organised and intentional (meaning it is planned and deliberate)

  ➢ Is led or facilitated by a trusted or qualified adult and/or accredited provider.

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Categorising enrichment

2.1   As we explain throughout this section, there is no single or simple way to define enrichment. Figure 2-1 captures some of the key dimensions highlighted during our research (either our desk-based research or from our interviews and focus groups with stakeholders) as ways to categorise enrichment. These elements are described throughout this report. Please note that the red boxes denote categories that are not mutually exclusive – provision may be some or all of these things simultaneously.

Figure 2-1: Typology for enrichment (visual)
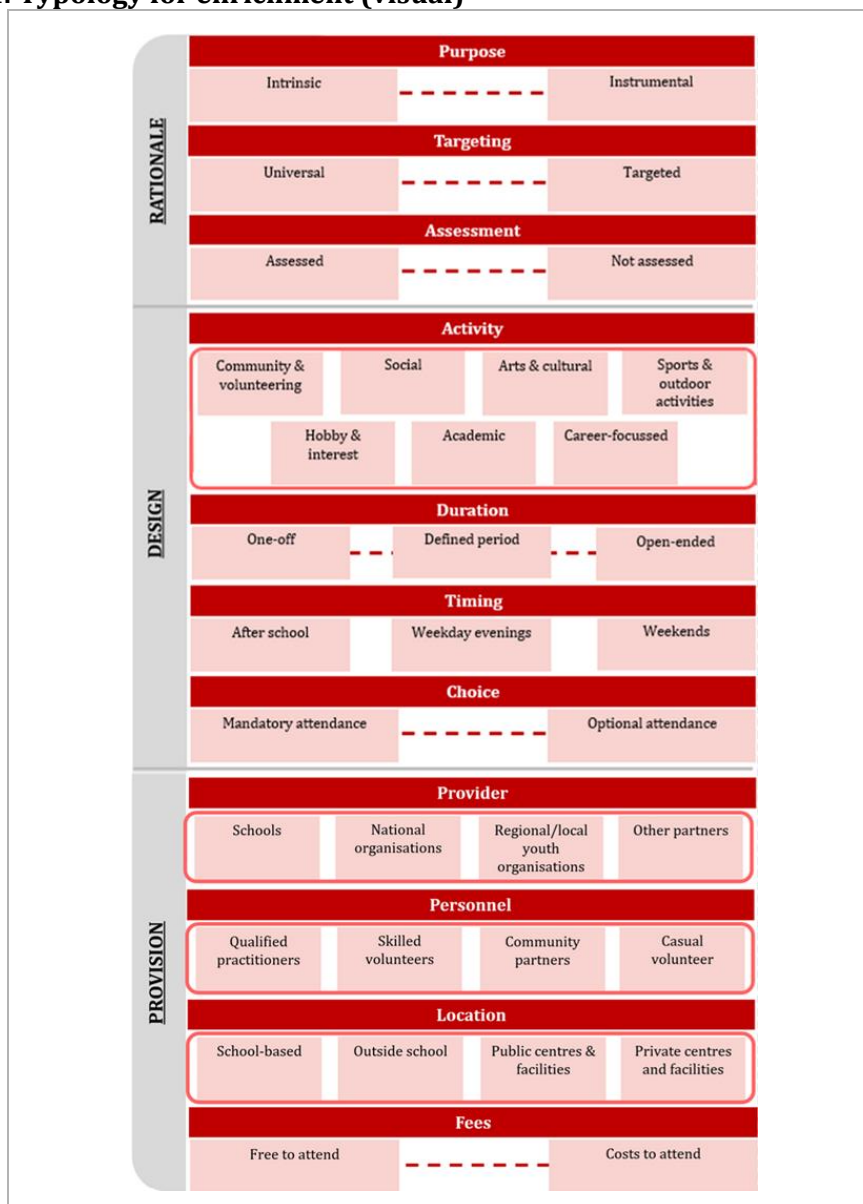
Source: SQW

Defining 'enrichment' and similar terms

2.2 As a term, 'enrichment' has its roots in the education sector where it has been in use since at least the 1960s although, even then, it was noted that an "aura of vagueness and confusion seems to surround the term".[8] Specifically, in the context of support for academically gifted young people, Clendening and Davies (1983) suggested that 'enrichment' is:

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[8] Barbe WB. What is enrichment? In: Magary JF, Eichorn JR, editors. The Exceptional Child: A Book of Readings. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc; 1960. pp. 199-206.

[A]ny learning experience that replaces, supplements, or extends instruction beyond the restrictive bonds and boundaries of course content, textbook, and classroom.

Clendening and Davies, 1983[9]

2.3 The term is a useful one, denoting developmental activities with intrinsic value (they are 'enriching') and that extend learning beyond the formal curriculum. Its broad appeal is useful but there are a range of other terms that may be used alongside it or in its place.

2.4 Policy documentation about the youth sector tends to refer generally to 'youth services' or focus on specific areas of youth provision; it infrequently uses the term 'enrichment'.[10] For example, DCMS only refers to 'enriching activities' once in its response to the Youth Review.[11] 'Enrichment' tends to be associated more closely with schools and the education sector.

2.5 The definition used by DCMS and DfE in relation to the Enrichment Partnership Pilot (EPP) frames enrichment in terms of the types of activities undertaken and their potential benefits:

Enrichment programmes encompass a wide range of activities, including sports, art, drama, outdoor experiences, debating, volunteering, business, tech or cooking. Those activities can have a significant positive impact on young people, including on their academic progress and wellbeing.[12]

2.6 Research being led by The Centre for Education and Youth (CfEY) and UK Youth for the National Citizen Service (NCS) Trust and The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE) says:

"[Enrichment] may include social action and volunteering, outdoor learning, sports and arts clubs, or adventures away from home [and] provide opportunities for young people to develop essential skills, engage with education, build confidence, improve their mental health and wellbeing, and increase social interaction."[13]

2.7 These written definitions describe a set of activities, the purpose of which goes beyond training young people simply to be good at those activities to supporting a range of wider,

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[9] Clendening, C. P. & Davies, R. A. (1983) Challenging the Gifted: Curriculum Enrichment and Acceleration Models, R. R. Bowker Company, New York.

[10] We conducted keyword searches in GOV.UK for 'enrichment' and other associated terms such as 'extracurricular'. We reviewed policy documentation flagged to us by the DCMS Youth Team, including the Youth Review, and information regarding policies such as those included in Figure 3-1.

[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response/youth-review-summary-findings-and-government-response#:~:text=across%20the%20sector.-,Government's%20response,from%20home%20and%20volunteering%20opportunities

[12] The Enrichment Partnerships Pilot (EPP) (announced November 2023) provides circa £2.7m in grant funding (jointly provided by DCMS and DfE) to the NCS Trust and Duke of Edinburgh's Award to deliver a pilot aiming to improve the enrichment offer in up to 200 secondary schools in Education Investment Areas. The EPP is being evaluated by the NfER: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/applying-to-be-a-delivery-partner-for-the-enrichment-partnerships-pilot

[13] A briefing note can be found here: https://wearencs.com/sites/default/files/2023-07/23_02_007%20-%20Website%20PDF_V1.pdf

often educational and more holistic outcomes. Furthermore, the term 'enrichment' is often used to describe interventions and activities which might be described straightforwardly as 'football', 'music', 'volunteering', etc.

2.8   Our interviews also reflected a lack of a single definition for enrichment. Documents reviewed for this study, alongside contributions from research participants, indicate the term 'enrichment' encompasses a diverse group of activities, with a wide variety of providers and delivery models. These are often grounded in the education sector and schools specifically, although interviewees said 'enrichment' is also sometimes used to describe activities supported by the youth and outdoor learning sectors. Interviewees often defined enrichment in terms of activities and intended outcomes, although these were framed very differently by different stakeholders (this is explored more, below). It might be argued that grouping disparate activities together under the term 'enrichment' is potentially helpful because it captures something about the common objectives these activities share. However, some stakeholders suggested the term can be reductive and imprecise in comparison to the professional standards and principles that guide wider practice in much of the education, youth and outdoor learning sectors.

What 'enrichment' is in terms of how young people experience it is probably what other people might call outdoor learning or youthwork, or mentoring or sports or, you know. And so depending on what you call it, it kind of suddenly becomes part of different policy objectives.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

2.9   While one interviewee suggested enrichment was "anything that helps a child become a better person", this was not the general view: most stakeholders felt enrichment is something more specific. There was broad agreement, though, both in the literature and in our consultations that 'enrichment' (however named) is a valuable endeavour for all young people.

Commonly used alternative terms

2.10   Three interrelated (but distinct) terms can be used interchangeably or alongside 'enrichment'. These are:

i)   Extracurricular activities, defined by the Social Mobility Commission (SMC) as "the breadth of activities which young people undertake outside of the formal and compulsory lesson time", spanning the musical, artistic, social and sporting domains that provide learning and development opportunities

ii) Non-formal learning (NFL), defined by CfEY and UK Youth as taking place outside of a classroom environment and participating in an activity or acquiring a skill that is not formally assessed

iii) Youth work, which the NYA suggests encompasses three distinct but interconnected areas of support: (1) universal youth work; (2) personalised support and advocacy for the most vulnerable and at-risk young people; and (3) listening to and involving young people in shaping the policies and services that affect them.

2.11 During our interviews and focus groups we heard a range of alternative terms often used in preference to 'enrichment'. Many interviewees said they would be more likely to use terms like 'extracurricular' to describe enrichment offered in or through schools (i.e., aligning the activities with the 'curriculum'). Most of the contributors we spoke with said that they would often simply describe the activity itself, rather than using the term 'enrichment' – for example, 'music', 'sport', 'football', 'volunteering', etc. Indeed, young people said that the term 'enrichment' is not generally one they or their friends would use at all, and they only really encounter it in particular settings – occasionally in school, or when thinking about Universities and College Admissions Service (UCAS) statements.

I would have never used the term enrichment, so the terms that we are using here and I'm not saying that everybody does, but certainly my own work, we would think about extracurricular activities in the school context or we would think about volunteering in the school context or outside the school context.

Adult consultee (researcher)

The word is too complex, not for casual conversation, used more for when you're trying to 'sell' the activity [e.g., in a UCAS application].

Young person

My peers wouldn't use the term 'enrichment'… I would usually think about clubs, hobbies, things I do outside of the house.

Young person

2.12 There is therefore value in attempting to find a 'best fit' definition in describing enrichment and, from our documentary review and primary research, we suggest that there is broadly common agreement that enrichment:

- Builds on (but is not part of) schools' formal academic curricula

- Is both organised and intentional

- Is led or facilitated by a trusted or qualified adult and/or accredited provider.

'What' is being enriched?

2.13 While all interviewees agreed that enrichment is potentially beneficial to young people, there is a subtle but important difference to be made about 'what' is being enriched. Sometimes it is curriculum content that is enriched – interviewees said this might include optional school-based activities outside the formal curriculum ('extracurricular'), or activities that support schools' formal curricula using different pedagogical approaches such as outdoor learning ('co-curricular'). Sometimes, it is young people who are enriched (i.e., through ensuring that they develop particular skills). While these are not mutually exclusive, the distinction helps to unpick some of the 'first principles' underpinning interviewees' and young people's responses.

Enrichment is easiest to define in relation to the formal education curriculum, because that's where it derives from.

Adult consultee: (national youth organisation)

So, I think there is a link with school. It is not a term I have heard used in Youth Work in the Youth Sector.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

I think the way that I see it is the structured bit and the objective being to build on what school delivers, it is not necessarily embedded in the curriculum, but adding something to what school provides.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

I have no idea why you're calling it enrichment. … I was like, what? What are we enriching? It's not like we're pouring Brandy into a cake. …if we are trying to say that we're trying to enrich a young person's life […then] I think that's a whole […] different concept.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

Enrichment builds on (but is not part of) schools' formal academic curricula

2.14 When describing enrichment in a school context, interviewees said that, in the best-case scenarios, enrichment opportunities should be additive, providing opportunities over and above those offered through a broad curriculum. However, increasingly, we heard that enrichment is used by schools as a means for compensating for reductions in the scope of school curricula and availability of specialist teachers and equipment. This might mean that, in practice, some pupils are not 'guaranteed' access to learning in subjects such as art, music and drama throughout their schooling, either relying on non-compulsory (and possibly less well-resourced) enrichment opportunities, or on locating opportunities outside of school.

*Enrichment is anything that develops [an] outlook and skillset that sits outside the mandatory curriculum. Something that is essential but is **on top** of existing provision.*

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

I might argue that actually if you had a more creative and engaging curriculum with more people working in it from different organisations, you might not need to have that separation. But it's [...] the curriculum in schools [that] is not great in terms of preparation for adulthood.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

2.15 By contrast, representatives from the youth sector tended to describe enrichment more in terms of young people's holistic development rather than about the specific content. Interviewees from the youth sector specifically emphasised how, in their view, enrichment should involve youth voice, provide informal learning opportunities, and give young people a degree of choice and ownership.

If I put my youth worker hat on rather than my teacher hat, for me, enrichment is about anything that enhances the holistic education and experiences of young people.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

For me, enrichment comes back to youth work capabilities, youth work principles about [...] not [being] preordained, [and being] voluntary, having a positive impact. I don't think schools would agree with that at all obviously.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

2.16 Youth stakeholders said that while much of the sector's work is 'enriching', not all youth work is 'enrichment'. They flagged a danger that associating youth work with enrichment too closely might imply both are 'extras' or too strongly rooted in the ambitions of the formal education system rather than the preferences of young people themselves. One interviewee said that both (youth work and enrichment) should be a right, not a privilege.

We wouldn't use the language of enrichment specifically focusing on youth work, because actually youth work is holistic, informal, non-formal education determined by young people's wants and needs, etcetera, so it could be argued depending on what definition you're using for enrichment that there's overlap, but we wouldn't probably use that language.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

We're just giving them their right, so to actually use the term enrichment implies it's a privilege. It's not a privilege. It's a right, so we shouldn't do it.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

2.17 Likewise, contributors – adults and young people alike – generally felt that enrichment should be non-compulsory and offer young people a degree of choice (although there was considerable variation in these views). Again, this helps to explain why similar activities achieving similar outcomes might – or might not – be deemed 'enrichment'. For example, GCSE Music might be enriching but is not itself 'enrichment' because it is a component of the National Curriculum and attendance is compulsory for pupils taking it. However, attending a school or community orchestra would 'count' as enrichment.

I think it is important to ensure that young people don't feel like they're being forced to take part in certain activities.

Adult consultee (researcher)

2.18 Young people went further, suggesting that enrichment should not be motivated (at least not primarily) by improving academic attainment and should sit outside of regular schoolwork. Relatedly, consultees suggested that enrichment should not be primarily motivated by formal academic qualifications. However, they acknowledged that enrichment activities might indirectly support academic attainment through improving engagement in learning, attendance and specific knowledge and skills, as well as more general, transferable skills.

[Enrichment is] something that isn't education that you can learn a skill from.

Young person

Exam preparation and practice would not be enrichment because it is so directly linked to the national curriculum. We need to train staff out of recording such activities as enrichment.

Adult consultee: Educationalist

2.19 Although in some instances enrichment activities lead to an assessment or qualification (e.g., DofE, graded music exams), interviewees generally felt that purely academic assessment (such as through GCSEs) would not constitute enrichment.

Enrichment is organised and intentional

2.20 Interviewees generally felt that enrichment should be structured, meaning there is an element of planning, design and intentionality to activities. For example, an afterschool football club would 'count' as enrichment, while a spontaneous kickabout in the park would not.

It's structured, it's supported places that they can go. Because that's the other thing about the term you use or the terms we use because technically and enrichment could just be going to the film, go to the cinema or watch a film that could be enrichment. But you don't need other adults around to do that. You don't need supervision. You could just go, but we're [instead] talking

about opportunities where somebody is delivering it and has an intention behind it. So, it's intentional, informal education.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

2.21 Some consultees felt that enrichment should generally have a universal access model, with the caveat that targeting young people with additional needs or from marginalised backgrounds was useful in some contexts. Some consultees further felt that schools disproportionately targeted academically high performing young people for enrichment.

My understanding is that it isn't really enrichment if it is too targeted, but some school provision and youth clubs do vary by age. I think we see it as an open access thing, but it depends on the schools and what they want to do.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

Lots of enrichment activities are for people that go to Oxford… they're thinking they're gonna go to university and they want something for their UCAS form. They see enrichment … as kind of targeted. … Schools will predominantly pick the G&T (gifted and talented). They won't pick the kid that's kicking the chair.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

Enrichment is led or facilitated by a trusted or qualified adult and/or accredited provider

2.22 In addition to being intentional and structured, enrichment should be led or facilitated by a trusted adult (who may or may not be formally qualified). In other words, even when young people co-design and largely deliver an activity (such as through youth social action), trusted adults (teachers, youth workers, skilled volunteers and others) help to quality assure the activities, ensure safety, and support a young person's emotional and social development. Notwithstanding debates about young people's voice within and choice of activities, generally stakeholders felt the question should be 'to what degree' rather than 'whether' trusted adults are involved.

You don't get [the benefits of enrichment] if all you're doing is kind of letting young people just run by it or do their own thing, or you're not trying to educate them about anything because you don't want to challenge their behaviour.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

When young people are involved and included in the design and perhaps even the delivery of the programme, access is also improved.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

Questions

These questions are intended to guide further discussion within and between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Education about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.

- Enrichment means different things to different people. Is this a strength or constraint in promoting enrichment?

- How can future reforms to the curriculum and assessment best secure access to enrichment opportunities for young people? (Should such reforms make their focus the 'curriculum' or 'young lives' more generally?)

3. Current enrichment initiatives and stakeholders

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Section summary

- Services for young people are a cross-governmental responsibility, for example with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) leading the government's work in supporting the youth sector and the Department for Education (DfE) responsible for young people's formal education.

- There is a connection between DCMS and DfE in terms of enrichment, particularly where school-based enrichment draws on the youth sector. Other departments also play a role, depending on the policy area.

- Although many funded initiatives in education and the youth sector support enrichment, relatively few of these use the term 'enrichment'.

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The context for policymaking in enrichment

3.1   Services for young people are a cross-governmental responsibility. For example, DCMS leads the government's work in supporting the youth sector, while DfE is responsible for young people's formal education enacted directly through schools and colleges, while the Youth Guarantee brings together DCMS with the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC).[14] There is overlap between DCMS and DfE in terms of enrichment, which is sometimes school-led and school-based but, at other times, draws on the youth sector to deliver enrichment either within or outside schools. Of course, other departments also play a role in supporting young people in areas such as youth offending (Home Office), and youth mental health and wellbeing (the Department for Health and Social Care (DHSC)).

3.2   Local authorities also have a statutory duty to provide, "so far as reasonably practicable", a "sufficient quantity of 'youth services'" for young people in their area. This includes sufficient provision of both educational and recreational leisure-time activities.[15] These activities are described in terms of 'youth services' and 'the local youth offer' and do not use the phrase 'enrichment'. We know from the Youth Evidence Base research[16] that although local authority capacity in relation to youth services has shrunk by 73% since 2010, in many areas local authorities still actively support youth work and youth workers. Relevant to enrichment, local authorities often support (through funding or commissioning): spaces outside of schools for

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[14] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-outlines-ambitious-plans-to-level-up-activities-for-young-people

[15] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/statutory-guidance-for-local-authorities-youth-provision

[16] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-provision-and-life-outcomes-research

enrichment to take place; outdoor education and residential facilities, and local cultural educational partnerships.

Mapping the enrichment landscape, actors and funding

3.3 Enrichment comprises a diverse range of activities and, consequently, the policies and stakeholders associated with its delivery are diverse. Figure 3-1, below, summarises, in brief, some of the myriad actors and policies in the enrichment landscape, alongside how funding 'flows' from DCMS and DfE.

Figure 3-1: Stakeholders and key examples of government-funded programmes in the enrichment landscape

Source: SQW

Youth Enrichment
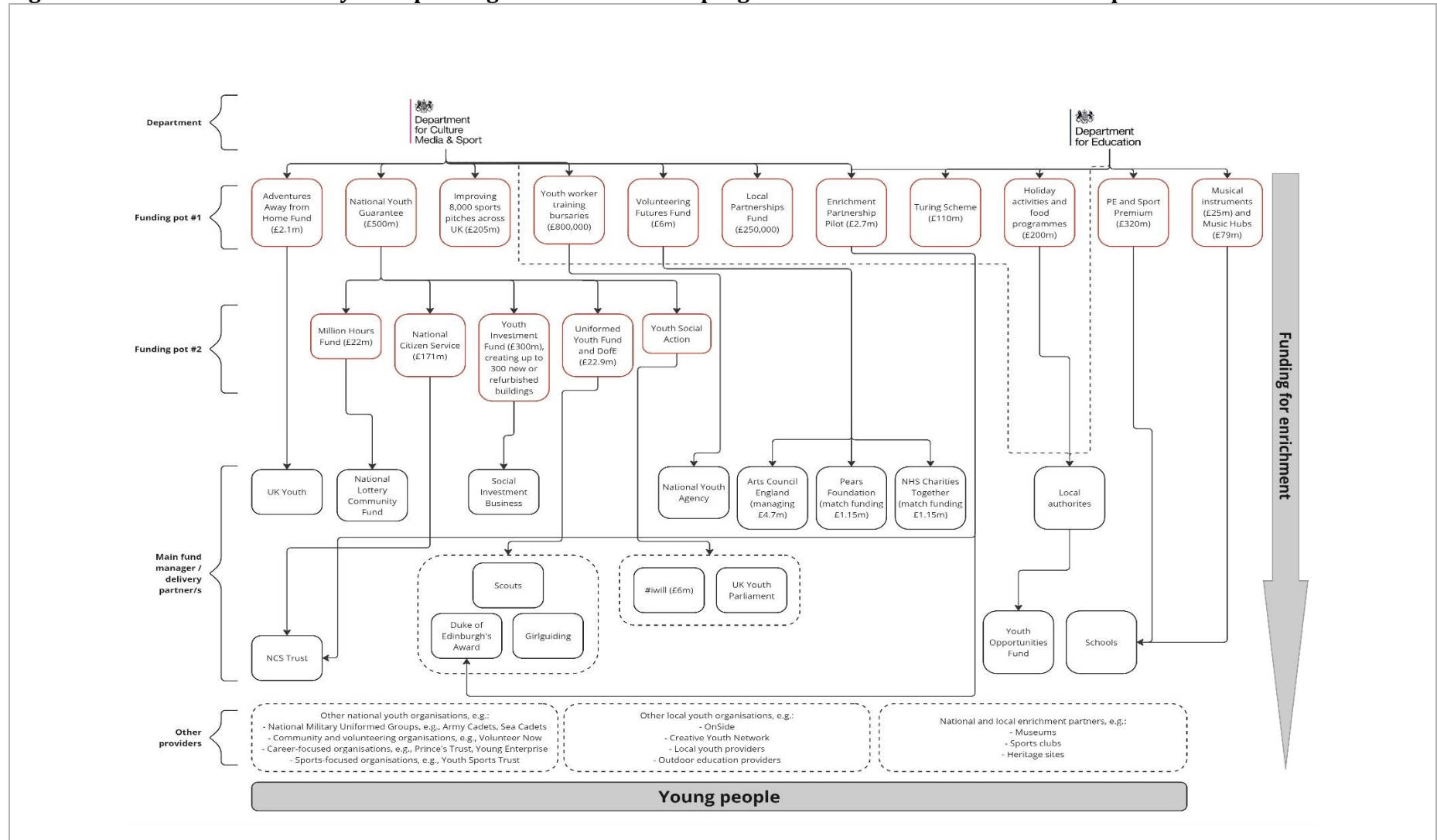
3.4 In 2022, the government published its Youth Review which highlighted how important youth services are in general to young people, and, specifically, the importance of weekly activities, trips away from home and volunteering opportunities.[17] In response, the government announced its National Youth Guarantee, approximately £500m of investment by DCMS divided between:

- The National Citizen Service (NCS) Trust (£171m) to increase access to its year-round programmes and residential experiences, and to begin piloting the Year of Service programme (work placements for 18- to 24-year-olds)

- The Youth Investment Fund (£368m), enabling local authorities in the 45 most deprived parts of the country to apply for funding to improve youth infrastructure by creating or expanding youth centres and providing more activities until 2025

- Organisations such as DofE, non-military Uniformed Youth groups and the #iwill fund (£22m), to expand access to these 'badged' programmes.

3.5 The government also stated in the Youth Review that it would support the building or improvement of 8,000 sports pitches across the UK with an investment of £205m. It also committed £7m to a new Volunteering Futures Fund.[18]

3.6 In 2023, DCMS announced the Million Hours Fund as part of the Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan which was created to support "an additional one million hours of positive activities from youth services".[19] In collaboration with The National Lottery Community Fund, £22m is available that youth organisations can apply for to help with additional staff, venue hire and resources.

3.7 DCMS also provided £2.1m to the Adventures Away from Home Fund to support approximately 12,000 disadvantaged young people to take part in outdoor learning and strengthen connections between youth organisations and the outdoor learning industry.[20] These bursaries can be used to cover the cost of residentials and transport. DCMS partnered with UK Youth to deliver the fund.

3.8 In Autumn 2023, £800,000 was made available by DCMS for youth worker training bursaries for Level 2, 3 and 4 qualifications. This sought to support 500 volunteers and youth workers who would otherwise be unable to undertake training. This seeks to ensure that young people have "someone trained to talk to outside of school". This comes in addition to £250,000 allocated to encourage local partnerships as part of the Local Partnerships Fund.[21]

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[17] Youth Review: Summary findings and government response - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[18] Youth Review: Summary findings and government response - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[19] Youth services set to benefit over summer through anti-social behaviour action plan - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[20] Adventures Away From Home Fund - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[21] Government funding to train 500 new youth workers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

3.9 The Enrichment Partnership Pilot (EPP) – a joint initiative between DCMS and DfE – was announced to support secondary schools with their enrichment activities offer. £2.7m of funding is being allocated through delivery partners (NCS Trust and DofE) working with coordinating organisations in local clusters to provide enrichment delivery support.

3.10 In 2022 DfE announced an investment of £200m per year for three financial years for its Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF), providing support to children in receipt of free school meals during holiday periods. The funding is spent by local authorities to provide free holiday clubs.

3.11 DfE also sponsors:

- The £110m Turing Scheme, providing around 35,000 students in schools, colleges and universities with opportunities to go on placements and exchanges overseas

- The PE and Sport Premium, investing £320m to help schools provide high quality PE lessons and sporting opportunities

- Chess in Schools initiative, under which primary schools could claim up to £2,000 to support chess provision among their pupils.

3.12 DfE also launched a Cultural education plan expert advisory panel to develop a cultural education plan, with objectives including: support all children and young people to access high-quality cultural education; tackle disparities in opportunity and outcomes in cultural education, and; connect relevant organisations to provide cultural and creative opportunities for children and young people.[22]

3.13 The 2018 Essential Life Skills Programme was part of the government's social mobility agenda, with nearly £22m allocated across twelve 'Opportunity Areas', helping children and young people participate in extracurricular activities. This ran from the summer term of 2018 until September 2019.

3.14 Local authorities can also use the Youth Opportunities Fund to provide grants to young people wanting to create youth-led projects for them and their peers.[23]

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[22] https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/cultural-education-plan-expert-advisory-panel#role
[23] Apply for Youth Opportunity Funding - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

SQW

Questions

These questions are intended to guide further discussion within and between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Education about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.

- How can DfE's Cultural education plan expert advisory panel support the development of enrichment more widely, across DfE and DCMS' activities?

- How can outdoor learning be systematically embedded so that all young people experience this form of enrichment?

- What is the vision for enrichment, post Spending Review and post a General Election? (Do DCMS and DfE have a clear ('ideal') vision for enrichment to shape conversations going forward?)

- Given that the National Youth Guarantee will end in 2025, is a new commitment on enrichment (such as an 'enrichment premium') needed?

- How can young people be involved in shaping enrichment offers going forward at all levels – national, regional and local?

4. Young people's access to enrichment

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Section summary

- Through the entitlements set out under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the National Curriculum, young people should have access to a range of enriching opportunities, but in practice, access to enrichment opportunities varies hugely among young people.[24]

- Generally, young people from disadvantaged backgrounds have less access than their more affluent peers, a trend that Covid-19 has exacerbated.[25]

- Many young people access enrichment opportunities through school. Schools often work with youth and outdoor learning providers to broaden their offer to their pupils.

- Furthermore, many young people access enrichment outside school through youth clubs or outdoor learning providers.[26]

- Young people's ability to access enrichment is influenced by a range of factors. These include cost, geography, and family circumstances.[27]

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Broader context

4.1 Children and young people's right to "rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts", is enshrined in the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to which the UK is a signatory.[28] Therefore, while there is technically no statutory obligation about children's access to enrichment in England, the UNCRC underpins the importance of play and culture in children's growth.

4.2 Access to enrichment is unequal. Research shows that young people from more affluent backgrounds enjoy more access on average to enrichment opportunities and that household income is an important factor in driving gaps in participation.[29]

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[24] https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child
[25] Ofsted (2022) Education recovery in schools: summer 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[26] https://cfey.org/reports/2024/04/education-and-enrichment/
[27] https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EC-and-outcomes-final-1.pdf
[28] https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child
[29] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/818679/An_Unequal_Playing_Field_report.pdf; https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22987208/; https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/25933638/

'Formal education' and enrichment

4.3 Throughout the education system, from the Early Years to post-16, educational settings provide a range of enriching experiences, both within and beyond the core curriculum. While in this study we do not 'count' the formal curriculum as enrichment (rather, it is activities outside the regular curriculum that we are focused on), the curriculum and young people's experiences of it are highly relevant, affecting young people's access in any form to opportunities in art, music and sport.

4.4 The Early Years Foundation Stage Framework emphasises the requirement for settings to provide children with activities that support their physical development and their understanding of the world, and the value of arts, design and cultural awareness activities in children's development. The National Curriculum outlines the learning that all pupils are expected to cover between the ages of 5 and 16 years. (While academies are not legally bound by the National Curriculum, in practice most use it as a basis for their own curricula.) The National Curriculum outlines pupils' entitlement to a wide range of subjects including Art, Computing, Design and Technology, the Humanities, Music and PE. However, while these wider subjects are considered 'enriching', they do not generally constitute 'enrichment'. It is worth noting that there is no statutory requirement for schools to provide extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, Ofsted assesses how schools "develop and discover their [pupils'] interests and talents".[30]

4.5 However, the theoretical breadth offered by the National Curriculum does not in practice apply throughout a young person's education: it is widely recognised that the curriculum 'narrows' as pupils approach formal tests and exams,[31] evidence demonstrates a decline in pupils choosing creative subjects at GCSE and in schools offering music and performing arts.[32] This was more acute in schools with a higher population of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This matters because, as stated above, this indicates a decline in young people obtaining experiences in art and music in any form either at school or via extracurricular activities.

4.6 Research by CfEY indicates a decline in young people's access to enrichment in schools over the last decade, and high level of support among teachers, parents and pupils alike for increasing enrichment opportunities.[33] Likewise, research by the Education Policy Institute (EPI) on 'extra-curricular activities' including sport, arts and music found that certain groups of pupils are less likely to access such activities.[34] Specifically:

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[30]https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-september-2023#provision-inspected

[31] https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/hmcis-commentary-october-2017

[32] FFT Education Datalab How has access to creative subjects changed over time? - FFT Education Datalab

[33] https://cfey.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/CfEY-Enriching-Education-V5.pdf

[34] https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EC-and-outcomes-final-1.pdf

SQW

- Vulnerable groups (including pupils from poor backgrounds or with SEND) were less likely to attend both sports clubs and clubs for hobbies, arts and music. Girls are less likely than boys to attend sports clubs

- Students' participation in extracurricular activities varies by school type and those at independent schools are much more likely to attend sports clubs and clubs for hobbies, arts and music than students from state schools

- Students in some regions (e.g., Yorkshire and Humber) are less likely to attend clubs for hobbies, arts and music that students from others (e.g., London)

- Students who attended clubs for hobbies, arts and music were more likely to progress to university.

4.7 Schools' teaching and learning decisions (and by extension some of the enrichment activities on offer to their pupils) are often driven by funding. Schools' funding between 2010/11 and 2022/23 has dropped by 8% in real terms (with small real terms increase in total spending outweighed by growing pupils numbers)[35] and research by CfEY shows many schools pay for enrichment activities using Pupil Premium funding.[36]

4.8 Post-16 settings – colleges and sixth forms – traditionally provide a wide range of extracurricular experiences that are considered 'enriching'. However, as research by NCFE and Association of Colleges notes, access to enrichment in post-16 settings is variable and inconsistent.[37] Post-16 settings have also experienced significant funding pressures since 2010 which, on a per pupil basis, outstrip schools' difficulties[38] – this affects decisions about curriculum breadth and extracurricular opportunities.

What is the role of schools in supporting enrichment?

4.9 Schools offer a range of enrichment including opportunities that are fully open to anyone wanting to participate, through to being fully mandatory. Interviewees told us that some schools make enrichment 'compulsory', with pupils selecting from one of a range of options during a school period – such as extracurricular sport, art, drama or music.

4.10 Furthermore, stakeholders described the difference between the state and private school sectors, with state schools having fewer resources (staff and financial) to support enrichment. They also have different priorities – the parents of private school students 'expect'

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[35] https://ifs.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-12/IFS-Annual-report-on-education-spending-in-England-2023-new.pdf

[36] Unpublished. Shared in confidence with SQW.

[37] https://www.ncfe.org.uk/media/wt0luacr/the-valuing-enrichment-project-emerging-findings-and-recommendation.pdf

[38] https://ifs.org.uk/sites/default/files/2023-12/IFS-Annual-report-on-education-spending-in-England-2023-new.pdf

enrichment as a core feature of school life and put pressure on these institutions accordingly; this may not be present in the same way in state settings.

4.11 Young people's locations (and wider enrichment activities available in their communities) may affect the degree to which they interact with enrichment provided through their schools:

If you look at Cornwall as a location the rurality and the economic variables caused by living in a sort of tourism economy in a coastal region would mean that they might say that [they] get better opportunities [at] school because they get transport etc. A young person who lives in the middle of Coventry might say I really hate [enrichment activities] in school and I get lots more exciting opportunities outside of the school environment.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

4.12 However, some young people do not like school; their school might not offer the enrichment they want, or they might feel excluded by school (for example, if they are bullied) and not want to attend enrichment outside regular school hours. In this event, such young people may seek (or need but not seek) enrichment outside school. However, young people themselves noted that enrichment outside school may be more informal and relaxed (which they see as a good thing), and something that young people have actively chosen to do (rather than having to participate). Young people also generally felt that while meeting new people outside school can be intimidating, it presents important opportunities to meet a more varied group of people and develop confidence and communication skills. Indeed, meeting new people is itself enriching.

4.13 Most young people involved in our focus groups said that the location of an activity was less important than who is providing or facilitating it. They noted teachers might have less time and capacity for enrichment, in comparison with youth workers, instructors or volunteers providing activities outside school. Furthermore, there is an inherent power dynamic between pupils and teachers in schools which might impede the development of more equal and rounded relationships. (This can be a benefit of external youth workers or instructors providing enrichment on school premises.)

4.14 Young people said in focus groups that they wanted sustained opportunities over time, and that the inclusivity of the setting or activity (in terms of catering for a variety of physical and health needs) is paramount.

Youth provision

4.15 CfEY's research found strong crossover between the terms 'non-formal learning' and enrichment.[39] Consequently, while young people often access enrichment through their schools, the youth sector (broadly conceived, and including national programmes run by NCS

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[39] https://cfey.org/reports/2024/04/education-and-enrichment/

Trust and DofE) plays a vital role in supporting access to enrichment and often in partnership with schools.

4.16 The Youth Evidence Base research[40] led by SQW found that youth provision provides young people with access to a range of important opportunities which, in many cases, can be considered 'enrichment'. These include 'badged' provision such as DofE, Girlguiding and Scouts. The research finds that involvement in enrichment-type activities has a range of beneficial effects for young people, both at the time and later in life. However, the local level analysis shows that, amidst significant cuts by local authorities to their youth service budgets since 2011, access to open youth provision through local authorities has declined. A consequence of this is that many youth centres have closed, and local areas have prioritised targeted and specialist services for young people over and above open access services. This, in turn, means young people in some areas have access to fewer enrichment opportunities to begin with or that their families now pay for services which previously would have been free. This makes attendance challenging (and in cases impossible) for families with limited mobility or disposable incomes.

COVID-19

4.17 The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns impacted young people's access to enrichment activities, both within school and out of school. In 2022, DfE commissioned Ofsted to report on how schools are managing the recovery.[41] Their report said that:

Leaders continued to mention the negative impact of the pandemic on pupils' well-being and behaviour. Schools had resumed many curriculum enrichment activities. This included clubs, inviting external speakers into school, day trips and residential trips. Some schools had difficulties staffing enrichment activities, either because of COVID-19 or because staff were already busy delivering tutoring and catch-up sessions.

Ofsted

4.18 Furthermore, academic catch-up activities tend to take place after school reducing the available time for enrichment even where schools want to prioritise this. CfEY's research with UK Youth for NCS Trust and DofE observes a similar trend.[42]

Why do young people *not* participate in enrichment?

4.19 Whether young people access the enrichment opportunities they want or need depends on a range of factors. Interviewees and focus group participants highlighted factors including:

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[40] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-provision-and-life-outcomes-research
[41] Ofsted (2022) Education recovery in schools: summer 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[42] https://cfey.org/reports/2024/04/education-and-enrichment/

- Cost. While some activities are free for the young people attending, others – such as music lessons or sports activities – often incur a nominal charge. This can inhibit access by young people from poorer families.

- Time. Some young people do not have the time to participate in enrichment activities. Despite wanting to, they may need instead to prioritise school or paid work or caring responsibilities. Likewise, some schools cannot prioritise enrichment in the face of more immediate and pressing priorities, including covering the core curriculum.

- Geography. Young people in rural areas might be less likely to access the enrichment opportunities they want, owing to fewer and more disperse opportunities and limited transport.

Small areas and rural towns will face completely different challenges to big cities, both in terms of access to location and public transport and making sure that it's close and accessible to a wide range of young people.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

I think we need to make sure that there is diversity of activities across the country and make sure things are accessible, open to everyone, and provides young people with choice.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

- Family circumstances and, specifically, parents' social and financial situations. Young people from poorer backgrounds are more likely to have limited access to enrichment.

When I was playing games, I had to pay, and it was quite expensive. … A few friends complained about the cost and did eventually stop because of the cost.

Young person

We do know that those from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds don't have that same level of opportunity and that that could be because they may have other commitments in terms of part time jobs and bringing some money for the family and lack of transport, lack of financial resources.

Adult consultee (researcher)

- Family prioritisation of enrichment. Interviewees noted that different families place different values on enrichment. Some prioritise activities such as sport, music, Scouts, etc., highly and 'push' their children to participate even when children are initially sceptical.

- Wariness about peer group participation. Some young people said their participation depended upon the friendship groups that they saw participating in enrichment activities, and that this could either encourage them, or make them want to avoid participation.

- Disabilities or poor mental health. Young people with additional physical needs or poor mental health may struggle to access enrichment opportunities available to them. Where existing provision is not accessible for them, this further limits their choice. One young person noted that opportunities in her local area were sometimes 'inflexible', for example, convening large groups over extended periods of time, where she needed the option to attend smaller groups and take regular breaks.

I didn't really do any of the enrichment or extra activities (at school) because of chronic illnesses that caused a lot of fatigue. At school, they often put enrichment activities at lunchtime… but at lunch I had to eat and rest, so there was never a time that was specifically set aside for that at my school… It would be nice if it was more accessible.

Young person

- Marginalisation. Young people said that a negative experience during activities (for example, feeling inadequate at sport) could cast a long shadow, and put them off attending activities later in life.[43] This in turn emphasises the importance of relationship building between the trusted adults and young people, and the imperative of creating a friendly, supportive environment.

Questions

These questions are intended to guide further discussion within and between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Education about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.

- How can DCMS harness its work across its remit – including sport and culture – to support access to enrichment?

- To what extent is ensuring universal access to enrichment among young people a priority for policy, versus guaranteeing access for certain more targeted groups of young people?

- What measures help to ensure young people from disadvantaged backgrounds can access enrichment inside and outside school?

- How can adults (family and teachers) be supported to know which offers are safe, accessible and good value?

- What good practice exists for schools to manage their enrichment offer so that it promotes open access while encouraging young people to take advantage of opportunities?

- How can departments work together and with their stakeholders to improve fair and equal access for all young people?

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[43] This is consistent with research on the long-term impacts of negative experiences of PE: https://www.mdx.ac.uk/news/2017/09/report-finds-negative-experiences-of-pe-can-put-people-off-exercise-for-life

5. The value of enrichment
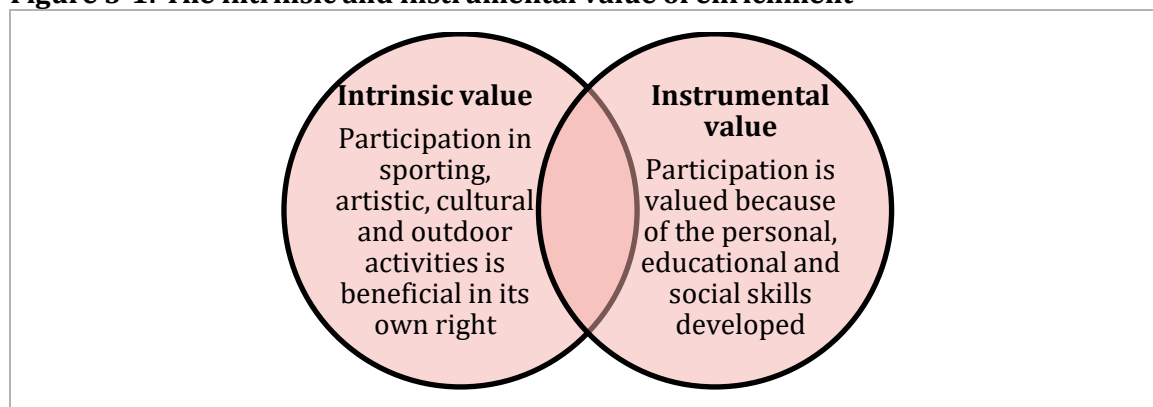
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Section summary

- Adults and young people sometimes describe the benefits associated with enrichment in terms of their intrinsic value i.e., activities are worth doing in and of themselves.

- Sometimes, the benefits of enrichment are viewed in more instrumental terms, wherein it supports young people to develop in a range of ways such as in terms of their skills, confidence or identity.

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The intrinsic value of enrichment

5.1 The purpose of enrichment can be described either in terms of its intrinsic or instrumental value. Some interviewees and young people said enrichment is inherently valuable, i.e., that activities are worth doing in and of themselves. However, interviewees also explained that enrichment is instrumentally valuable insofar as it helps young people develop other, useful skills and experiences such as improved confidence, communication, or building CVs. Both can simultaneously be true, and most stakeholders saw enrichment as being both intrinsically and instrumentally valuable (see Figure 5-1).

Figure 5-1: The intrinsic and instrumental value of enrichment

Intrinsic value
Participation in sporting, artistic, cultural and outdoor activities is beneficial in its own right

Instrumental value
Participation is valued because of the personal, educational and social skills developed

Source: SQW

5.2 Describing the inherent value of enrichment, one interviewee said:

In its simplest form, it's about making things richer, therefore adding quality and value to an experience in some way, shape or form… If my life was enriched, then by definition my life has become richer, by virtue of that experience or opportunity.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

The instrumental value of enrichment

Improve young people's experiences in school

5.3 Many interviewees and young people felt that enrichment activities could bring joy to participants in a way that might not be associated with routine classroom learning and that this might, in turn, help improve learning outcomes.

I do think that from a school perspective it's … how can this improve my student performance or behaviour or whatever in the class?

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

Develop confidence and social connections

5.4 Enrichment gives young people opportunities for social mixing, and to socialise with peers and young people from different backgrounds or of different ages. Young people said that, in their experience, meeting new people and navigating different social environments could be 'daunting' but, overall, was beneficial for their confidence. It helped them develop 'essential skills' such as communication, teamwork and managing conflict.

[You can] gain confidence and communication skills [through] talking to other people in settings like this. I came [to] football because I enjoyed and liked playing it. I've had struggles in my life and football has been an escape. It's a great escape. I can escape from reality for an hour or two a night.

Young person

People feel better about themselves with the skills they accumulate through these activities.

Young person

You feel happier and more yourself. You get to spend time with your friends. The Girls' Club is a social club and it takes place in school. I got involved because it was an escape – at first I thought it was a normal club, but it was fun so I continued going.

Young person

It's a lot easier in school. You already know the people. Outside school, if you don't know people, it can be a lot scarier. But it can also be really beneficial for that reason – you meet new or different people.

Young person

Develop existing and new skills

5.5 Young people and adult interviewees said enrichment activities provide opportunities to develop existing (or new) skills. Young people noted that some enrichment activities (e.g., expeditions, cultural visits) give them opportunities to experience things they would not otherwise encounter. They felt this would make them more rounded individuals with broader life perspectives. In many cases, it is involvement in enrichment activities (such as orchestras or sports clubs) that leads to hobbies and interests in these pursuits, rather than the other way around. Young people said they sometimes participate because their parents, grandparents, carers or schools want them to, rather than because they have a pre-existing interest in the activity.

5.6 Certain types of enrichment may also develop technical career-relevant skills either directly, e.g., computer coding, or indirectly, such as outdoor expeditions supporting teamwork.

It's about doing fun things but also doing things you might not have done otherwise.

Young person

Doing new things was important because they had facilities here where [I] could try stuff out. I'm not going to go out and buy a guitar to see if I like it but, here, I can just pick one up and have a go.

Young person

5.7 Young people did not feel that enrichment is necessarily directly linked to improved academic performance – indeed, this is one of enrichment's strengths. However, it provides experiences and instils characteristics (such as perseverance) that may indirectly support academic and professional outcomes. Furthermore, adults and young people told us that enrichment may support future prospects including access to university and employability.

I think the main thing it can really boost is young people's employability, particularly by helping them develop their transferable skills.

Adult consultee (researcher)

Identity, safe space and community

5.8 In some settings, enrichment can provide young people with a 'safe space', physically or emotionally. In some instances, enrichment enables young people to get "off the streets". In others, it provides an emotional environment in which they feel more able to 'be themselves'. Benefits vary depending on where enrichment is delivered. In particular, some young people value opportunities to participate in enrichment outside school.

A lot of the benefits are to do with confidence. I didn't have an easy time in school – having somewhere outside to get away for a bit is helpful.

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It means you get close to people around you. You can be yourself and make people more likely to reach out for help if they're struggling. It gives you support systems.

Young person

Forcing young people into activities can be triggering. …. For example, being forced onto the wrong team can cause gender discomfort.

Young person

5.9 Consultees highlighted the importance of enrichment across different spheres of young people's lives. Enrichment was seen as able to fill gaps in young people home lives (where they do not have access to a safe home environment), school lives (where there are gaps in school provision), and community lives (where they do not have access to safe community spaces or are at risk of involvement in crime). The role of enrichment was seen to have expanded in response to changes such as reduced funding for youth centres and an increased emphasis on core academic subjects such as literacy and mathematics in schools.

The broader community can benefit from enrichment. For example, engaging young people in enrichment can prevent them from participating in anti-social behaviour, thus improving safety for both the young people engaging in the enrichment and the wider community. There can also be more direct community benefits if the enrichment is volunteering based.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

5.10 Enrichment activities provide varied forms of physical and emotional benefits, ranging from being outside and exercising, to developing interests and skills, or even providing an escape from schoolwork and everyday life. In some cases – such as social action and volunteering – enrichment provides an opportunity to improve their local communities.

Social justice and equity

5.11 For interviewees across the sectors we consulted, enrichment is also an issue of social justice, providing opportunities for young people – particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds – to expand their horizons and give them access to places, spaces and activities that some young people have in abundance. This need has become more acute, interviewees felt, since the COVID-19 pandemic when disadvantaged young people's access to enrichment opportunities were diminished.

Enrichment is also about access and giving young people a broader range of learning opportunities than they would usually have, allowing them to develop skills they would not otherwise and connecting them to the wider community.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

[Referring to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds] The young people's family will benefit from the young person building skills, social skills and confidence, making them more likely to engage in activities that can help their wider life chance.

Adult consultee: Educationalist

Questions

These questions are intended to guide further discussion within and between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Education about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.

- To what extent do DCMS and DfE agree on the function of enrichment?
- Would a shared definition in policy ensure that all young people have access to enrichment?
- If enrichment is a term that young people use only when adults expect them to, should it be used at all?
- Should publicly funded enrichment be *both* intrinsically valuable and instrumentally effective?

6. Providers of enrichment and funding

Section summary

- A wide range of enrichment providers offer different sorts of enrichment. These include national award schemes, youth social action, outdoor learning providers, uniformed provision, arts and cultural organisations, and parent-led sports activities.

- Interviewees said that enrichment is generally underfunded and, therefore, under-resourced. However, it is difficult to quantify this, because of both the wide variety of activity providers and types involved, and the myriad sources of funding.

- In general, we heard from interviewees that funding is short term and competitive, which stymies organisations' abilities to support enrichment.

6.1 Enrichment activities from a range of providers are commissioned nationally by government departments, by local authorities or through individual schools or multi-academy Trusts. The same providers may deliver several commissions to different clients in the same area. Commissioners may work in partnership to target interventions to provide enrichment to particular groups of young people in specific areas or with specific shared characteristics. Here, we provide some additional description about the sorts of enrichment on offer to young people from a selection of different organisations.

Enrichment providers

6.2 In overall terms, the enrichment landscape comprises a complex mixture of activity and provider types. Table 6-1 summarises key characteristics of different categories of enrichment providers. These organisations use a variety of delivery models and personnel. Young people can experience enrichment offered by many different organisations.

Table 6-1: Illustrative examples of enrichment provider partners

Category	Examples
Schools and Multi-Academy Trusts	• Internal school provision (e.g., PE or drama department) – delivered by qualified practitioners (teachers) • School partnerships with other providers – delivered by a range of personnel including professional youth workers, outdoor instructors and skilled volunteers • Includes pre- and after-school clubs (e.g., breakfast clubs, academic clubs, sports, hobby and interest clubs), school trips, events (e.g., sports days)
National infrastructure	• Delivered by qualified practitioners (youth workers) and skilled volunteers

Category	Examples

with local providers	• NCS Trust
	• Onside
	• Outdoor education providers, trained teachers delivering core curriculum using the outdoors
	  • Institute for Outdoor Learning
	• Key infrastructure organisations for supporting the accessibility, quality, and sustainability of youth work include:
	  • NYA
	  • UK Youth

National uniformed organisations	• Delivered by a range of personnel with a variety of delivery models
	• Military uniformed groups:
	  • Army Cadets
	  • Sea Cadets
	• Uniformed non-military youth groups:
	  • Scouts (Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers)
	  • Girlguiding (Rainbows, Brownies, Guides, Rangers, Inspire)

National non-uniformed organisations	• Delivered by a range of personnel with a variety of delivery models
	• Community and volunteering:
	  • Volunteer Now
	• Arts and cultural:
	  • Stagecoach
	  • Debate Mate
	• Sports and outdoor activities:
	  • Youth Sport Trust
	  • The Duke of Edinburgh's Award (DofE)
	• Employability-focussed:
	  • Prince's Trust
	  • Young enterprise
	• Youth groups (often delivered locally)

Other partners	• Delivered by a range of personnel, including community partners such as gallery curators, artists, faith leaders, etc. • Private clubs, classes and tuition • Museums and cultural centres • Faith-based providers

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Category	Examples
	• Local volunteer-led clubs, such as parent-led sports groups

Funding context

6.3 Funding comes from a range of sources for enrichment, including: school budgets (including the Pupil Premium); local authority and central government budgets; standalone grants, and; participant fees. Interviewees felt the funding available probably falls short of what is needed to ensure all young people can access a range of quality enrichment activities.

6.4 More generally, many consultees discussed further issues in terms of the resources available for enrichment provision, including a lack of facilities (particularly given closures of spaces such as youth centres), equipment and adequate staffing (including qualified professionals and skilled volunteers).

Our biggest problem is [enrichment is] underfunded. But it's not just that – I could always argue for more money… But it's actually the nature of that funding that's really difficult because it's often for a year or two years, and therefore we can't employ apprentices… And funders will only fund for delivery, which means that they only fund for the three hours that you're working with those kids. The rest of your job – preparing, going to safeguarding meetings, going to networking meetings, doing the stuff you think we should be doing around telling the world what we do and what we offer – that isn't funded.

Adult consultees: Local/regional youth worker/support

Funding from government

6.5 Funding is often responsive to the investment (or lack thereof) in other parts of the system. For example, central government funds a range of initiatives to support enrichment. Yet because local authority budgets have been squeezed, limiting their ability to fulfil their statutory duty to provide young people with suitable leisure time activities and facilities, young people's actual experiences of enrichment opportunities in their localities may have become more limited despite this central investment.

Schools 'buying' enrichment

6.6 Schools are 'buyers' of enrichment, and one arguable advantage of this is a reasonably diverse enrichment 'marketplace' comprising different, independent enrichment providers. Sometimes schools can offer 'in kind' payments, such as providing the physical space in which providers can then deliver enrichment activities (within or outside school hours). Purchasing or arranging enrichment provision from external partners also reduces single person dependencies within schools, and means teachers do not become enrichment 'gatekeepers', able to provide – or not – access to enrichment that they themselves run.

6.7 However, this means schools become the arbiters of what enrichment provision is considered 'quality' and 'suitable' and may limit young people's ability to exercise choice over the activities in which they participate. School budget and workforce pressures have contributed to a narrowing of the curriculum in many settings, demonstrated by reduced entries for GCSEs in 'creative' subjects such as art and music. Therefore, while it is true that many schools invest staff time or budget in providing or commissioning enrichment, this may fill gaps left by a narrowing curriculum. Furthermore, external providers of enrichment – including youth organisations, arts and cultural venues, outdoor learning organisations, etc. – have also faced significant funding and budget cuts in recent years.[44] So, while schools may on occasion be purchasing their services, this does not on its own maintain a breadth of choice for young people.

Accessing grants

6.8 Another way to fund enrichment is through grants. We heard about relevant grants being made available through central and local government, national and regional funding organisations (such as Arts Council England or the National Lottery Community Fund), and philanthropic organisations and grant makers. However, interviewees outlined a series of challenges relating to grant funding for enrichment. This included:

- **Awareness of these funding opportunities among potential grant recipients**. Interviewees explained that, often, schools and other organisations that might apply for such funding are not aware of relevant opportunities.

- **The competitive nature of the funding**. Even when potential grant recipients are aware of relevant funding opportunities, often such opportunities are competitive, meaning applicants must spend time compiling bids. This entails risk (they may not be successful) and funding does not tend to enable applicants to recoup time spent preparing bids, even if successful. The competitive nature of funding can also stymie competitiveness between potential collaborators.

- **The scope of funding**. Often funding reflects the funder's priorities rather than the recipients. For example, interviewees said that funding is often allocated to target particular groups of young people, such as those facing disadvantage or with specific learning needs. This limits recipients' abilities to devise more open, universally accessible opportunities. Funding can also dictate specific desired outcomes from enrichment provision, which can prevent some providers from facilitating youth led activities.

- **The length of funding**. Funding is often short term, for a couple of years. This makes it challenging to sustain or embed access to enrichment opportunities within communities.

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[44] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-provision-and-life-outcomes-research

Workforce challenges

6.9 Consultees also reported that limited and short-term funding can restrict organisations' ability to recruit and retain staff. Short-term funding means that some organisations are unable to offer permanent contracts (or paid contracts at all) to staff. This can undermine staff capacity to effectively plan and organise activities, provide quality assurance, manage payments and build in youth voice. Crucially, it can also undermine their ability to form stable trusted relationships with young people. High staff turnover can also increase providers' recruitment and training costs.

Challenges for families with limited disposable incomes

6.10 Consultees also reported that young people from families with limited disposable incomes face increased barriers to participating in enrichment activities, with some providers reportedly scaling back their offer or attempting to absorb some of these costs in response to this. Some consultees highlighted hidden costs for families such as the cost of kits, uniforms, and equipment, the cost of washing kits and uniforms, paying for transportation to activities, etc. One consultee said that a school they worked with had reduced its sports offer as exercise made pupils with limited access to food hungrier during the school day. It had purchased washing machines to enable pupils to wash their kits at school.

If you're just about managing and you're washing kit because you're having PE 2 hours a week, but suddenly you wanna go to an enrichment or an extracurricular club on another day, hang on, I've now got to try and wash that kit while I can't afford to wash what I've got already.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

6.11 Young people's experiences of enrichment are hugely varied reflecting the nominally-universal nature of some activities delivered or commissioned through schools, or nearby open access youth provision. Such provision may in fact be targeted or require families to make a financial contribution, rendering the provision inaccessible to some young people.

> ## Questions
>
> These questions are intended to guide further discussion within and between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Education about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.
>
> - Should schools be the 'locus' for enrichment? How can schools be supported to make good decisions about enrichment provision? (e.g., regarding choice of external providers?)
> - How can other local providers of enrichment opportunities be supported so that young people can access enrichment outside their schools?

7. Factors that support and impede enrichment

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Section summary

- A variety of factors can support or impede the implementation of – and young people's access to – enrichment activities:
  - ➢ Senior leadership buy-in, staffing, adequate resourcing, partnerships and accessibility (including physical access and meeting wellbeing needs) were all cited by interviewees and young people as factors that can support enrichment. Conversely the absence of these factors impedes enrichment provision.
  - ➢ Participation data varies by quality and availability. While some organisations collect data about young people's participation, this is often not systematic or comparable between providers. Furthermore, because enrichment activities take such a diverse range of forms, data on outcomes varies considerably (in terms of outcomes specified, mode and quality of data collection).
  - ➢ Partnerships are an important feature of the enrichment landscape. They can unlock opportunities for enrichment, meaning partner organisations can deliver more together than separately. Schools tend to be the locus for enrichment activities, and interviewees and young people described benefits and downsides associated with this.

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7.1 So far this discussion paper has explored the different forms that enrichment can take, how it is experienced by young people in different settings and through a wide range of organisations. It is also clear that there are barriers to its provision and its access such that some young people do not participate and may miss out on potentially important positive experiences and benefits. This section draws together discussion strands that focus on those factors that can support both provision of enrichment and its access by young people. We do not then elaborate the potential barriers to enrichment because these are most often the absence of enablers.

Factors that support and impede enrichment provision

Multi-agency partnerships

7.2 During interviews we heard that enrichment is often delivered through partnerships between organisations. For example, DofE is a national enrichment programme commonly enlisted by schools, which provides licenses to other organisations and volunteers to deliver their enrichment model. Features of effective enrichment partnerships are the focus of CfEY and UK Youth's research for NCS Trust and DofE, and of the EPP. The enrichment landscape is often characterised by partnerships between different providers and organisations. Partnerships offer the ability to:

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- Co-deliver activities

- Commission enrichment activities from external providers

- Secure funding, e.g., through partnerships with businesses ('contribution in kind' and other funding)

- Share resources such as staff or physical space

- Share information and expertise, for example around suitable funding opportunities

- Signpost to other enrichment providers.

7.3 Interviewees and young people who participated in this research outlined some of the factors they thought helped to support organisations build their enrichment offer (summarised in Table 7-1). It is worth noting that many of these align with CfEY and UK Youth's research for NCS and DofE.[45]

Table 7-1: Summary of factors that are features of delivery partnerships

Support factor	
'First principles'	• Practitioners believe in the intrinsic benefits of enrichment and staff are consistently committed to this vision • Enrichment provides something young people want to participate in
Senior buy-in	• Senior leadership in schools buy-into the importance of enrichment
Staffing	• Staff have expertise, and are willing, to deliver enrichment • Enrichment 'champions' (especially within schools) or trusted brokers (such as local authorities and Multi-Academy Trust central teams) help to coordinate, broker and/or deliver opportunities
Resourcing	• Enrichment is supported by adequate funding (to cover staff/facilitator time, equipment, travel, venues, etc.) • Staff have the time to design and deliver quality opportunities • There is adequate premises and equipment such as sports gear
Relationships	• The delivering enrichment have strong, professional, trusting relationships with young people
Partnerships	• Organisations develop strong, trusting and professional relationships

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[45] https://cfey.org/reports/2024/04/education-and-enrichment/

Support factor	
Provider 'mix'	• There is a mix of local and national providers • There is awareness between organisations of other opportunities and an ability to signpost young people to these wider opportunities • Young people are aware of opportunities available to them
Space	• Conveniently timed and located activities enable young people to attend at times that suit them, ideally in locations that are easy to get to by walking or public transport

7.4 While interviewees felt that partnerships can improve young people's access to enrichment (in contrast to organisations trying to 'go it alone'), they acknowledged tensions in partnership arrangements. Interviewees felt that partnerships were often fragile owing to funding constraints and turnover of staff involved. Competitive grants can inhibit collaboration where organisations are bidding for the same funding.

In competitive funding environments, though, people often think first and foremost about themselves/their organisations. The funding environment can make collaboration difficult.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

It's very patchy. In some places, people recognise the benefits of working in partnership. For example, summer programmes might involve a number of providers collaborating for a particular programme and are greater than the sum of their parts.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

The role of education providers in enrichment partnerships

7.5 Schools and colleges provide a 'natural' locus for enrichment because pupils' attendance is mandatory. However, there can be tensions in how schools and the youth sector approach enrichment. For example, there may be differences of opinion in what enrichment is for – is it to develop young people 'in the round', or to support improved academic outcomes? Practically, an important dimension to youth work and outdoor learning is their opt-in nature; however, pupils' attendance at school is mandatory (and sometimes this extends to enrichment activities).

I think often, even if the activity is not at the school or in school time, the school is involved in either organising or bringing people together. There's often a school link.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

One of the things that we're hearing is that maybe the youth sector could be quite helpful in engaging young people because I think the school sector has their ways of doing it and they obviously have a lot of access to young people .... So maybe there's a little bit of shared learning

that can happen, like between sectors around how you go about involving young people and like best practice around that.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

7.6　For practical reasons, schools are an important stakeholder in enrichment partnerships. They have the most contact time with pupils and, in most cases, have equipment and facilities that can be used. They are also the primary funder in many partnerships. However, interviewees said this can result in schools 'calling the shots', with some referring to a perceived 'hierarchy of professions' that gives teachers and schools greater power and professional legitimacy than other, adjacent professions and settings.

If you're a statutory youth worker, you can generally get into a school. You can kind of hammer down the door. I think if you're a voluntary sector youth organisation, it's much, much, harder. Schools don't trust you. There's a hierarchy of professionalism in the sector… teachers, social care, youth workers.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

I think there is a gap in coordination – not only just schools with youth workers and organisations but I think creating this ecosystem of activities and support. We know that enrichment activities are a gateway and are creating channels of communication and support – we should leverage that as much as possible.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

7.7　Furthermore, because schools are important commissioners and enablers of enrichment, they have substantial sway over the sorts of activities provided (external partners must be responsive to schools' needs, rather than vice versa). Interviewees debated the extent to which this presents a problem: some argued schools should be arbiters of enrichment; others said this might limit pupil choice or the purview of activities on offer.

Schools often put in barriers, either the cost of renting a space or caretakers that want to go home and rattle keys at you…

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

7.8　CfEY and UK Youth's research for NCS Trust and DofE about educational enrichment partnerships highlights steps that schools (and partners) can take to ensure collaborative activities work effectively. These include, for example, having clear expectations about the activities' objectives, and having defined responsibilities or – even better – an enrichment 'lead' in each partner organisation to coordinate the activities. Indeed, some schools have enrichment champions. These may be middle or senior leaders with explicit responsibility for enrichment across the school or specific elements of it, such as debating or extracurricular music. However, these might also be 'informal' champions who are passionate about

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enrichment in some form and lead activities such as DofE, expeditions or specialist clubs such as chess. In either event, stakeholders described how having someone to "spearhead" enrichment can be very useful, although it might mean the enrichment on offer relates to their – rather than students' – interests, and schools are vulnerable to single-person dependencies.

Departmental partnership working

7.9 Another dimension to enrichment partnerships raised by interviews was in relation to alignment and joint working between DCMS and DfE. Stakeholders acknowledged that the two departments are working together on initiatives such as the EPP. They said the departments should deepen their relationship, possibly post-election, and 'join dots' across the education and youth sectors (both with enrichment and other areas of provision for young people in mind).

The main gap is the lack of collaboration between formal and informal education.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

Using participation and outcome data

Data availability

7.10 Interviewees defined 'data' broadly. It might include, for example, attendance data, a record of activities undertaken, or young people's satisfaction or reflections on these activities. However, we heard that data on enrichment is highly variable across different institutions. Schools often collect some limited data about enrichment in their settings, such as which pupils attend what activities. However, interviewees hypothesised that data collection amongst other, smaller enrichment providers may be limited or in some cases non-existent.

The vast majority of enrichment organisations are small, local operations. In terms of the information they collect, this will be the bare minimum of information they need in order to operate e.g., parental consent, safeguarding documents.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

Lots of programme delivery organisations don't really record anything.

Adult consultee (national youth organisation)

7.11 Schools and larger, national providers do at a minimum normally collect attendance data, although the extent to which outcomes data (for example, relating to activities' benefits) is collected varies considerably – both in terms of whether outcomes data is collected at all and, if so, what it covers. Organisations often rely on anecdotal or self-reported survey evidence. Several interviewees said it would be challenging to agree – across organisations – what sorts of outcomes data should (or could) be collected about enrichment. However, it was recognised that better data can help create the evidence base for better enrichment.

I think the issue that we have is that there is not a shared understanding of the type of data that we collect and that we need. Even in the demographic data, everyone kind of collects different things and have a different understanding of what those things mean.

Adult consultee (policy expert)

Using data for outcome evidence

7.12 Other strategic approaches were discussed regarding the use of data. It was suggested that if it were possible to add enrichment participation to an individual's learner record this would provide better data about *which* young people attend *what* enrichment activities. Such data would be valuable in understanding the spread of opportunities and access across the country. One interviewee suggested this would help to backfill a gap in knowledge caused by local authorities' retreating roles:

The mapping stuff (enrichment provision in local areas) has really drifted away. There wasn't the funding, and a lot of local authorities don't have somebody in charge anymore to actually do that process.

Adult consultee (youth practitioner/support)

7.13 Secondly, this would then open the possibility of linking longer term outcomes with participation in enrichment. It may potentially be possible then to link with national administrative datasets (such as the National Pupil Database). Longer term outcomes could then be examined through analyses of these administrative datasets (rather than individual organisations' data), providing a more rounded view of the impact of such activities. Another suggestion was to incorporate further questions, more regularly, about enrichment into large-scale surveys (such the Parent, Pupil and Learner Panel survey).[46]

Factors that support and impede enrichment participation

Diverse range of enrichment opportunities

7.14 While stakeholder consultees and youth focus group participants did not identify an 'ideal' combination of opportunities, they generally agreed that a broad offer with different facets – e.g., sport, music, art and culture, outdoor learning, volunteering, etc. – would give young people choice to select activities that appeal most to them. Most stakeholders – adults and young people alike – felt that greater choice (among quality opportunities) would increase uptake.

7.15 Across England, a wide range of enrichment activities are available. However, stakeholders expressed some concerns about the degree of choice young people have in any given location.

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[46] [Parent, pupil and learner panel omnibus surveys for 2022 to 2023 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](www.gov.uk)

Young people in certain locations or from certain backgrounds (such as families with greater financial means) may be better able to exercise choice than their peers.

I do think there needs to be… more effort… put into and ensuring that young people have a wide variety of options to choose from.

Adult consultee (researcher)

Empowering young people

7.16 Young people should also, according to most stakeholders we spoke to, have a say in the design of the enrichment offer developed by their school or community. Youth voice brings legitimacy to activities and can improve their design. Furthermore, if young people have had agency in designing or even implementing a programme, it may make the opportunity more appealing to peers.

When it's extracurricular it is more democratic and controlled by the people. When you're doing something optional, it can be less standardised and you feel less like there's something led by someone 'above' or less like the activities are 'lip service'.

Young person

7.17 However, a couple of interviewees said that relying on young people to make all their own choices about what enrichment activities they undertake should be avoided. This is because they might either stick with what they already know (thus reinforcing inequality because this would not open them out to new or different opportunities) or they simply may not know what they want.

I don't have much time for the idea of students saying what they want, partly because students don't know! Schools' jobs are to help students navigate the offer.

Adult consultee: Educationalist

Communicating with young people about opportunities

7.18 Young people do not tend to use the word enrichment themselves. They understand it to be some form of activity that is not directly related to their school subjects, and they also consider that it should be enriching for them. Young people hear about enrichment opportunities through word of mouth and parents', siblings' and friends' recommendations were described as being particularly influential on young people because of the close degree of trust in these relationships. This is also true for faith-based organisations, cited as another source of trusted information about enrichment (and other) activities available.

7.19 Schools use a range of methods for promoting enrichment opportunities, including through assemblies, posters, newsletters and word of mouth. These opportunities will promote both school-led activities and signpost commissioned or external activities. School is an important

means by which young people hear about national programmes such as DofE and the National Citizen Service.

7.20 Feelings about promotion via social media were mixed. Interviewees described some instances where this has been effective, such as sharing information through parenting groups on Facebook, but warned its effectiveness with young people was ambiguous and possibly overstated. For example, the platforms used by schools and adults differ from those used by young people. Furthermore, advertising digitally can be expensive, raising questions about cost efficiency and benefits.

7.21 That said, the lack of – in many areas – a single directory outlining the available enrichment and wider youth opportunities (such as 'Notts Help Yourself'[47]) was seen as a barrier to young people and families locating relevant opportunities in their areas. CfEY and UK Youth's research found that schools can be overwhelmed with the number of suppliers pitching themselves, and sometimes do not feel equipped to assess the quality or relevance of providers.

Questions

These questions are intended to guide further discussion within and between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and Department for Education about possible next steps for policy relating to enrichment.

- How can DfE and DCMS make the most of the EPP evaluation to reflect not only on delivery, but also on their inter-departmental collaboration and how this supports access to enrichment opportunities among young people?

- What additional data collection activities would help central government understand which young people are attending what enrichment activities? Should enrichment providers collect forms of standardised data?

- How can the barriers impeding access to enrichment – and most importantly, cost and location – be addressed?

- What could be done to address a perceived 'hierarchy of professions' which may, in some instances, impede effective enrichment provision?

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[47] https://www.nottshelpyourself.org.uk/kb5/nottinghamshire/directory/home.page

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