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### **The Nottingham apprenticeship model: schools in partnership with artists and creative practitioners**

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Schools in partnership with artists and creative practitioners.**

**Morwenna Griffiths and Felicity Woolf<sup>1</sup>**

**Nottingham Trent University**

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This article documents the collaborative research and development of an apprenticeship model of learning for the arts. It focuses on teachers working in partnership with practitioners in the arts (visual arts, dance, music, drama, etc). The model was developed over two years in a three-stage qualitative research programme, each stage drawing on the outcomes of previous ones. The research aimed to (1) establish if the model was generally appropriate, adjusting it as necessary, (2) explore the impact on learning, and (3) assess if it enhanced schools' capacity to provide education in the arts. In its final form, the model was found to be useful as a guide to the organisation of children's learning in the arts. There was some evidence that it facilitated progression in children's learning, beyond observation and guided participation towards independence. The model was also useful in supporting the learning of adults, including the personal, professional development of teachers, thus enhancing the capacity of their schools to provide education in the arts.

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**Introduction**

The research focused on the development of a model to describe and guide the learning that takes place when artists (or other creative practitioners) work effectively

with pupils in schools. The research was carried out with 23 schools in the first phase of the Nottingham Creative Partnership, part of a national initiative to encourage creativity in learning. A preliminary version of the model had been developed before the schools were selected for participation in the scheme. This early version drew on research into the nature of apprenticeship and became known as 'the apprenticeship model'. It was presented to participating schools in Creative Partnerships Nottingham at the beginning of the scheme. The research was commissioned by Creative Partnerships Nottingham to explore and develop the model. It was designed to draw on the perceptions of all participants in the scheme, and to adjust the model in response to them. In particular, the research focused on the model's fit with the working practices of schools, its impact on learning for all participants (i.e. teachers, pupils, practitioners in the arts), and its contribution to capacity building in the schools.

It is in her what had known in the new aimed at you that you three that we are thank you day I'm not a very 324 to year We begin by placing the research in context. A brief overview is given of recent national and international concerns about the place of the arts and creativity in education, and the setting up of the Creative Partnerships initiative. We go on to explain the background and rationale for the initial apprenticeship model. The research was a three stage process, with each stage drawing on what had been learned in the previous ones. Each stage of research is described, before some general conclusions are drawn. Finally, the implications of the research are discussed.

## **Context**

The research focused on schools in the first phase of the Nottingham Creative Partnership, one of 16 partnerships funded nationally through the Creative Partnerships initiative. Creative Partnerships has an overall aim to provide schoolchildren across England with 'the opportunity to develop creativity in learning and take part in cultural activities of the highest quality' (Creative Partnerships, 2006). The bulk of the funding comes from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport rather than the Department for Education and Skills, although both Departments have been involved.

One of the driving forces behind the establishment of Creative Partnerships in England was a growing consciousness of the importance of arts and creativity in the school curriculum, and of the importance of establishing links between the educational and cultural sectors. The National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education presented an influential report to the government urging it to develop a national strategy for creative and cultural education (NACCCE, 1999). The committee was expressing a concern which was shared worldwide. Since the publication of the Delors report (UNESCO, 1996), UNESCO has repeatedly emphasised the importance of the arts and creativity in education. (See for instance UNESCO, 2001; Wagner, 2005, UNESCO, 2006.) Similar concerns have been expressed in many countries. A useful overview is provided by O'Donnell and Micklethwaite (1999).

It seems there is a growing consensus about the need to emphasise creativity in schools, especially when it is understood as essential for innovation in business and

industry. For example, in England, Paul Roberts was asked to present a report on creativity in education by the Minister for Creative Industries in the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and by the Parliamentary under Secretary of State for schools in the Department for Education Skills in 2006. However, this consensus masks considerable ambiguity about what is being proposed. In large part, the ambiguity arises because of the uncertainty surrounding the term 'creativity', especially as it relates to the purposes of education. It also arises because of the uncertainty about the status of the arts in relation to creativity. Creative Partnerships has become centrally concerned with creativity rather than arts education, while at the same time acknowledging that much good practice of teaching for creativity is in the arts. It is interesting that the UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education in 2006 was titled 'Building creative capacities for the 21st century'. There is a useful literature discussing this. (See especially Boden 2004, Craft 2001, 2005, Gibson 2005, Jeffrey, 2005.) However, it is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the issue.

This article focuses primarily on education in the arts, rather than on creativity more generally. The practice of Creative Partnerships reveals an emphasis on the arts, not surprisingly since education in the arts is assumed to contribute to creative education. (See, for instance, Robinson, 2005.) Most Creative Partnerships projects are led by artists, even when they involve subjects other than the arts in schools. Over the last 25 years, it has not been unusual to find artists working in schools in Britain. However, the scale of resources given to Creative Partnerships was unprecedented -- £40 million for the first, two year phase (2001-2003). Moreover, these resources were concentrated on a small number of schools, in 16 disadvantaged areas in England. The scheme has been rolled out to 36 areas during phase 2 and 3 (2004-2008).

In Nottingham, 23 schools participated in the first phase: three secondary schools, two special schools and 18 primary schools. The schools were organised into five clusters. Two 'Creative Development Workers' (CDWs) were assigned to each cluster. Their task was to facilitate the process, acting as a bridge between the educational and cultural sectors, and between the schools and the Nottingham office<sup>3</sup>. Participating artists included visual artists, sculptors, dancers, drummers, storytellers, potters, installation artists, video practitioners, landscape gardeners and others.

### **Apprenticeship**

Arts education is no stranger to the idea of apprenticeship. There is a long tradition that the arts -- like other creative practices -- are taught through some system of apprenticeship, in which beginners join an expert, and gradually learn to become experts in their own right, through observation and practice in increasingly complex activities. In mediaeval times in Europe, the arts, like other practical occupations, were taught through apprenticeship in the kinds of workshop in which Leonardo or Michelangelo learnt. Similarly, further East, miniaturists became proficient after long years spent practising with a master (Pamuk, 2002). During the last two centuries the Beaux Arts tradition in its various guises was a tradition of apprenticeship. Students not only practiced skills in a class but also served in the workshop of a master painter. Foxe (2002) argues that the history of education in architecture and music are also histories of forms of apprenticeship.

It is not clear how far models of learning drawn from the education of art students might be applicable to schools. To be sure, there is a tradition of artists working in

schools, sometimes in one-off workshops, sometimes as an artist in residence.<sup>4</sup>

However, the learning model underpinning this practice is undeveloped and implicit rather than explicit. The children are not learning to be artists; they are not studying a curriculum focused on producing professionals. Yet, like apprentices, they are expected to observe and take part in practical activities. It is not surprising if there is ambiguity about what kind of learning is going on.

Educational theory is not short of models of apprenticeship. The ground swell of support for the arts and creativity in education coincided with another growing movement towards using a learning model drawn from Vygotsky's model of social learning rather than from Piaget's individualistic psychology of learning. The social learning model emphasises the importance of the learner being 'scaffolded' through 'the zone of proximal development' by the teacher who then 'fades' as the scaffolding becomes less necessary. This articulation of the process comes from one particularly influential framework which is known as cognitive apprenticeship (Collins, Brown and Holum, 1991). It draws on earlier work relating Vygotsky's model to the learning of reading, writing and mathematics. Other allied frameworks are 'activity theory', 'communities of practice', 'situated learning' and 'guided practice' (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Pea, 1993; Engstrom, 1995; Guile and Young, 1998; Betts, 1999).

Cognitive apprenticeship is allied to but different from apprenticeship in the workplace. It is a framework which is suited to children learning in schools.. It is most commonly used in literacy and mathematics, and also in the teaching of classroom subjects as diverse as communications and information technology, modern foreign languages and business. As Collins, Brown, and Newman explain, the

students are not the same as traditional apprentices, in that they are not, typically, going to use their knowledge in a workplace (1989: 459):

Cognitive apprenticeship, as we envision it, differs from traditional apprenticeship in that the tasks and problems are chosen to illustrate the power of certain techniques or methods, to give students practice in applying these methods in diverse settings, and to increase the complexity of tasks slowly, so that component skills and models can be integrated.

Some social learning models put more emphasis on the student learning to be independent, or on the teacher also learning from the student. In this respect, social learning models of cognitive apprenticeship sit alongside commonsense understandings of apprenticeship, often drawn from trade apprenticeship, such as plumbing or bricklaying. In a useful overview, Guile and Young (1998) distinguish a number of different modern forms of apprenticeship, varying with the kind of knowledge involved, differences in degree of expertise needed and the nature of the workplace. At one extreme, apprenticeship can be a conservative and static transmission model of learning, where only the apprentices are learners, there is a fixed unproblematic body of craft knowledge, the expert is the only teacher, and learning is bound to the context of a single workplace and is not transferable. At the other, where there is a constantly developing body of knowledge, the kind of interventions made by experts acknowledge that both experts and learners can contribute to 'individual and collective "knowledgeability" ' (1998: 184). The apprenticeship of this article is closer to the second kind.

The initial version of the apprenticeship model put forward in this article was developed by Felicity Woolf at the start of the Creative Partnerships scheme in Nottingham. She

drew on theorists influenced by social learning theory, particularly on the concept of "guided participation" proposed by Barbara Rogoff (Rogoff, 1990, 1995) in relation to how children develop their thinking as they participate in cultural activity. Also exceptionally useful was Roy Corden's synthesis of recent research on literacy in which he puts forward a framework of stages of learning, and suggests appropriate strategies at each stage (Corden, 2000). He proposes a model of scaffolded learning where both the teacher and the learner are active participants in the construction of knowledge. His model offers teachers a clear, practical framework for teaching and learning with pupils moving through four phases: observer, novice, apprentice and expert. Corden's model was strongly influential on the initial formulation of the apprenticeship model discussed in this article.

Woolf also drew on some of the conclusions from an extensive study of arts education in secondary schools in England, carried out by the National Foundation for Educational Research (Harland et al., 2000). She observed that the characteristics of effective arts education, suggested by the study, were close to the characteristics of practitioners using a cognitive apprenticeship model of learning. They showed an ability to give practical demonstrations, model, encourage risk-taking and experimentation, provide challenging activity, and make supportive practical interventions where necessary to allow pupils to make progress with their own work. The effective teachers focused on making the pupils independent creative practitioners, able to take risks, experiment and achieve satisfaction through completing their own creative work.

The Nottingham apprenticeship model was intended to guide teachers and artists in planning activities for children in schools. At its simplest, the model was a two column

matrix. (See Figure 1.) It proposed four phases in a learning cycle: observer, participant, novice practitioner and independent practitioner. In the first two phases, students watch an artist or hear a finished performance, and then try out simple activities under close guidance. The model aimed to get students to go beyond the phases of observer and participant - and to reach greater levels of independence. A more complex version of the model as a 4 by 4 matrix was produced and presented to schools. It identified the activities of each participant (teacher, pupil, artist) in each phase. It also included examples of particular creative activities at each phase. Creative Partnerships Nottingham decided to use the matrix as the basis for the planning document schools and artists were required to complete before a project. This became significant in the later development of the model. Figure 2 is a modified, and simpler, version of the early matrix.

Figure 1 here

## **The research**

### ***Methodology***

The overarching aim of the research and development programme was to explore and develop the initial, preliminary version of the apprenticeship model, based on the construction of practical, reflective knowledge using a variety of perspectives. This approach is rooted in an epistemology of practical knowledge, knowledge that cannot best be gained from a single perspective (Dunne, 1993; Griffiths, 2000, 2003).

Therefore the programme was designed to be carried out in partnership with the

participants and, for some parts of it, fully collaborative with some of them. As a partnership model, it was designed not only to elicit differing perspectives but also to work closely with participants. Their views, particularly those of the teachers, helped guide the programme, especially its developing conclusions, although the final responsibility rested with us. For instance, the model was reconceptualised early on, and it was this revised model that was the subject of further research and development.

The research was qualitative, and, drawing as it did on perceptions, was phenomenologically based. As is usual for such research, analysis was being carried out while data was being collected, affecting later data collection. The variety of perspectives is respected in the analysis where individual voices of participants are retained as far as possible, rather than synthesised. The research and development programme had some features of action research (Somekh, 2006): it integrated research and action in a series of cycles in which what was being researched developed during the research, and as a result of it; it was conducted by collaborative partnership of participants and researchers; it involved the development of knowledge and understanding in a specific context; it was not value neutral; it was focused on practice. One part of the programme was fully action research: it was classroom-based, teacher-led, context-dependent and action-oriented.

The 20 month research programme was carried out in three overlapping stages. The first stage focused on the model's appropriateness. The research question used was: *'How appropriate is the Apprenticeship Model as a tool to understand learning which takes place during activities where creative practitioners, teachers and pupils work*

*together?'* The second stage focused on learning. The research question used was: *'What is the impact on learning of the use of the Apprenticeship Model for all participants in the Creative Partnerships programme in Nottingham?'* The third and final stage focused on sustainability. The research question used was: *What use is a (possibly modified) Apprenticeship Model in helping individuals in schools and supporting institutions develop sustainable links which support pupils and their teachers in the continuing development of excellent arts, creative and cultural education?'* The three questions are interlinked and evidence from all three stages contributed to all three questions. The first and third stages were carried out through interviews and observations, analysed by the researchers. At the end of the first stage a conference, open to all participants, contributed significantly to the direction of the research, especially the formulation of the revised model. The second stage was carried out through classroom-based action research. The action researchers all addressed the second stage question in the context of their own practice. We drew on the outcomes of these different action research projects in forming conclusions about the overall research questions.

Stage 1 began in early Spring 2003. Preliminary interviews were carried out with three of the schools, two primary and one secondary, with the aim of gathering enough information to design a useful interview schedule. They consisted of very open questions, probing how far headteachers, the school coordinators and other teachers were conscious of the existence of an apprenticeship model, and, if they were, what they made of it. It quickly became clear that we should not assume familiarity with the model. However, schools were well aware of the matrix form of the model since it underpinned the planning document and so directly affected how

they worked with the artists. Interview schedules were designed accordingly.

Questions were designed to probe the level of awareness of the apprenticeship model, how it had been put into operation, and to what effect. They included questions about the apprenticeship model, but without assuming familiarity with it. Some questions pertained to the learning of the participants, comparing it to previous learning in the arts. Questions were semistructured, in order to allow a respondent to expand in directions unforeseen by us.

All the schools were approached and asked to select at least two of the following groups of people for us to interview: headteachers, co-ordinators, teachers, pupils, parents and artists. Each of us visited half the schools. We realised that we might be talking to hand-picked (i.e. nonrepresentative) groups, but doing so allowed us to demonstrate we were serious about partnership, and about not adding to the burdens of these schools in disadvantaged areas. We found interviews with headteachers, co-ordinators, teachers and artists tended to be one-to-one, while interviews with parents and pupils tended to be group interviews. We judged this unimportant for the exploratory purposes of this stage. Care was taken to ensure that over the schools as a whole, a range of groups were interviewed. Where a group was under-represented (e.g. artists), extra interviews were carried out. We spoke to groups of pupils in 20 schools, a teacher in 14 schools, the headteacher in 12 schools, an artist in 7 schools and groups of parents in 3 schools. The interviews were all tape-recorded and transcribed. Notes were taken of informal observations immediately after the visit.

The second stage spanned April 2003 until September 2004, during which action research was carried out in seven of the schools. Schools were invited to submit

applications to be an 'action research school ' in order for them to research the impact on learning of the apprenticeship model, with the help of a mentor from the University. Seven schools were chosen to be not uncharacteristic of the 23 schools. They included: mainstream schools across the age range 3-18 and a special school; from the city centre and surrounding estates; ethnically mixed schools and predominantly white ones. Each of the five clusters was represented. Teacher researchers from each school identified their own research questions about the impact on learning. Each of the teacher researchers was visited regularly by a university mentor, and was also invited to regular meetings of the University where the teacher researchers could meet, and act as critical friends for each other.

More than sixty participants and other stakeholders attended a conference which was held in July 2003. The findings from the interviews and early findings from the action research projects were presented. Workshops were organised to bring together education based and arts based participants, and their views were elicited about what conclusions should be drawn, and how the model should be altered. The developing model was modified accordingly.

At the final stage, Stage 3, in Spring and Summer 2004, further interviews and observations were carried out. Structured interview schedules were designed to assess how far sustainable links had been created between schools and individuals and organisations from the creative and cultural sectors. They were also used to probe further into the appropriateness of the (now revised) apprenticeship model and its impact on learning. Interview schedules were designed for each different category of participant: teachers, headteachers, pupils, parents, artists and Creative Development

Workers. Each of us went to the schools we had not visited at Stage 1. The procedure for selecting interviewees was the same as at Stage 1. This time we interviewed 15 teacher co-ordinators, 14 teachers or teaching assistants, 8 groups of pupils, 5 headteachers, 4 artists and 3 groups of parents. Full notes were taken at each interview, both of the answers to the interviews and also of informal observations in the schools.

### ***Stage 1: Initial interviews and conference***

Creative Partnerships Nottingham had begun working with schools in September, 2002. All the personnel were new, and relationships were being forged at the same time as all the participants were working out what their roles were. In the words of the director this meant that: 'We were trying to deliver the goods while we were building the factory.' In some cases there was considerable misunderstanding between different parties, including about the apprenticeship model matrix. The first interviews were carried out at the beginning of February, 2003. Many of the comments related to these difficulties. By the time the last interviews were carried out at the end of April 2003, such difficulties were getting sorted out as this headteacher commented:

When we initially put the bid in, it didn't work out brilliantly in terms of people's understanding of what Creative Partnerships was. I think our initial bids were all about asking for money, which were bids we normally put in. Now I have much more of an understanding of the way that it is working and the way that it will work. It opens up our schools and gives our staff the chance to work with other people. (Primary headteacher)

The uncomfortable initial period was relevant to the development of the model, especially its presentation in a matrix. It meant that the development of the apprenticeship model was integrated with the development of the systems underpinning the scheme. Participants had a real opportunity to influence the co-evolution of the model and the scheme. Neither the model nor the scheme was constrained by predetermined systems.

The transcripts were analysed by identifying themes in what was said, and in what was observed. Initially we looked for themes related to the research question: reasons for using or not using the model; awareness of, interpretations of and attitudes towards the model; and whether learners were using all four phases of the cycle. We also looked for themes and concerns that emerged, most notably related to unexpected interpretations and uses of the model.

The four phase model of learning was recognised by many schools as 'what they do already' although few of them described the learning of the pupils in terms of phases of progression. It seemed that the model was successful in articulating an approach to learning which teachers recognised as appropriate. However it also seemed that only a few of them were interested in its explicit articulation. In many schools the model was being interpreted as if phase 4 was the end of the process. The cyclical, spiral nature of the learning had not been recognised. There was also a small minority of schools where the model was rejected in favour of one depending on 'free expression' by the pupils. The artists accepted the model, mostly with enthusiasm. However there was a minority of artists who rejected the model as interfering with their own creative

expression, wanting students and teachers as helpers rather than apprentices. These partnerships had been less satisfactory and the model was of use in diagnosing what had gone wrong.

As explained earlier, the model had originally been presented as a matrix, showing the roles of teachers, pupils, and artists during the progression of learning through the four phases. It looks complicated and it seemed that few teachers or artists had read it carefully. It was fortunate that this matrix had been used by Creative Partnerships Nottingham to design a planning pro forma which asked for information about what the teacher, the artist and the pupils would be doing during any particular Creative Partnerships project. This process of reading across the matrix to think about the contribution of each category of participant at the planning stage seems to have had a significant impact. Many of those interviewed for the research interpreted the active contribution of all participants as the key aspect of the apprenticeship model. It was sloganised as 'Everyone learns from everyone'. The following quotations come from all categories of participant: teacher, pupil and artist.

The teacher [in another class] said “Well that was brilliant! It was so simple – I would never have thought of doing that”. Silk scarves was a prime example. I have got 5 children that have been away this morning, but they are coming this afternoon and [the artists] are letting me use the stuff so I can do it with them myself. (Primary teacher)

She was experienced to know how to do it and I wasn't quite sure how to do it and I put my hands on and she was holding my hands so I was getting them into position. (10-year-old pupil)

The idea was it was a mutual learning process. We had a vision that we wanted to make a tree but to be as loose in that as possible. We'd run a series of workshops and we'd learn from them. Then the children would come up with ideas and we would teach them to use some of our artistic techniques. With this age – because the children are so young – they're fantastic! The stuff they produce is so inspirational. They all get involved; they are not inhibited by anything. Beautiful free pictures. So expressive. When you go to art college you have to try and forget all that stuff you have learned at school to kind of draw like a child again. They draw a person or a tree how they feel a person or a tree looks like rather than trying to copy it. And it is the way, they use line and colour. It's great. Our initial idea about this tree was probably going to be a lot tighter, probably a lot more traditional for a want of a better word. Now it is a lot looser, a lot more abstract and that's really come from looking at the drawings of the children. Hopefully it's got that Paul Klee? You know when he takes a line for a walk? It is like that. Almost like sort of scribbles in air. So we trying to capture that, really. (Sculptor)

Sometimes the learning was at a very basic level, but significant:

I have learned to appreciate the dance, which I always used to think was a complete waste of time. (Secondary teacher)

This way of understanding the model was an unexpected but welcome consequence of the way it had been presented. On the other hand, the matrix had not been wholly successful in presenting the four phase model as cyclical rather than hierarchical.

These findings were outlined at the conference, together with suggestions for how the model might be modified. As a result of discussions on the conference workshops, the model was revised. The revised model explicitly included both a matrix diagram and a cycle diagram.

Figures 2 and 3 here

### ***Stage 2: School-based action research***

The research in these phases was carried out by the teacher researchers in partnership with the university researchers. The overall research question about the impact on learning of the use of the apprenticeship is very broad. Each action research school focused on an aspect of it relevant to itself. The secondary school was unable to complete its study. In two of the schools, a primary and special school, the research looked at how the partnership developed children's capacity to choose, design and carry out projects autonomously. In three others, the question related to how best to negotiate the relationship between teachers and artists. In another, the research investigated how participation in the arts impacted on children's learning generally.

The different schools chose action research methods appropriate for their own focus as it developed. Two of the schools carried out highly reflective studies in which the

focus of inquiry was progressively sharpened and clarified. The inquiry proceeded through a series of critical conversations which identified areas for reflection and which led to the identification of critical incidents. These formed the basis for the formulation of expression of pedagogical principles for working with artists. In one school this was a leaflet for outsiders and in the other, a video. In the other schools, the approach was somewhat less reflective and more investigative: a cyclical process of structured observation followed by analysis followed by reflection followed by action followed by observation, etc. Data was collected, variously, by means of journal keeping, questionnaires, interviews, transcribed discussions and, in one school, focused observations carried out by different teachers in their own classes.

Each study produced outcomes which were relevant to its specific circumstances. In most cases, the outcome was to influence policies and strategies within the school, either through formal policy documents or through meetings. It might appear that each study had little relevance to the others. However discussions revealed that the processes and outcomes of each study had resonances in the other schools. Each school recognised the relevance of the other schools' investigations for their own situation. This is particularly striking in view of the fact that the schools had been chosen to be representative of all areas of the city, of different age phases, and included a special school. It was unfortunate that the one school which was unable to complete the research was the one secondary school, so it is impossible to say how far these areas of commonality would apply at the secondary level.

A common theme for all the schools concerned we opportunities for professional development when working with the Apprenticeship Model. The basic understanding

of the matrix as 'everyone learns from everyone' meant that creative practitioners and teachers have developed professional relationships of benefit to both. The different studies document different ways in which this has happened. Related to this, is the common theme of planning. It is unusual for schools to have 'protected time' to plan a lesson with somebody else. Two of the studies demonstrate that while such planning is of huge value, it also needs to be learnt and pitfalls avoided. One teacher researcher encapsulated the process from first introduction to the exit strategy in a flow chart which has been used in other schools. (See figure 4 for an excerpt from the chart.<sup>5</sup>). Also related to the theme of professional development is the theme of sustainability. Four of the studies show how sustainability has been helped by the Model: teachers have learnt more techniques, creative practitioners have produced materials that teachers can use, relationships between creative practitioners and schools have been developed and all these factors can contribute to school policies and strategies for creative learning. A perhaps unexpected theme for many of the schools has been the impact on 'children on the edge': disaffected pupils and other pupils who find it difficult to join in with school activities. This has not just been a focus on behaviour or behaviour management. Rather, it is a focus on children's learning. Three of the studies demonstrate how such children are drawn in and then able to learn more, sometimes excelling and often seeing the point of going to school more clearly. The studies endorsed the emphasis of the Apprenticeship Model on autonomous expression as the endpoint of a clear progression from observation, and as the starting point for further observation and learning.

The degree of common understanding and the overlaps in experience of the different action research schools is significant for the research programme as a whole. It

appears that the experience of the schools is unlikely to be idiosyncratic. It must be remembered however that they are more likely to be generally positive, partly because they opted in as action research schools and partly because of the extra support they received as a result.

Figure 4 here

### ***Stage 3. Final interviews***

This stage of the research focused on sustainability and capacity building in the schools. In many schools the required joint planning exercises were found to be enjoyable and valuable. There were many comments about the high level of professional development which had been achieved throughout the scheme as a result. It was acknowledged that this would have an impact on the sustainability of the scheme, as it had sometimes contributed to building a different ethos and culture in the school, in support of creative learning.

A lot of the impact of the apprenticeship model is at the planning stage. It has been very interesting planning the curriculum with artists. Every teacher that has had the opportunity to do this joint planning has been really excited.

Usually, planning is done on your own, and this individual planning can feel forced and boring. And then plans don't necessarily work. Doing it with artists and other people, it's fun. Partnership teaching is a joy. You both kind of know where you want to go. (Co-ordinator, primary school)

It also meant that teachers acquired new skills and developed greater confidence in leading creative activities. There was a great deal of evidence that teachers, teaching assistants and school technicians had gained skills and confidence which will enable them to operate independently in new areas. The participants were enthusiastic about what they had learnt from each other. Just like the pupils, the adults observed artists, worked alongside them, tried out new techniques and ideas and then felt prepared to try out related or similar activities on their own, or with minimal support.

The staff have learned too. They have watched somebody else, and seen some simple ideas working well. (Primary teacher)

In one school, a dance artist worked with every teacher and pupil in the school to develop teacher confidence and skills and the dance curriculum. The dancer is making a resource pack and will come back as a consultant to support teachers as they begin to teach dance themselves (Coordinator, primary school)

Although the main focus was on sustainability, questions also probed the appropriateness of the apprenticeship model, especially its impact on pupils' learning. It appeared from the answers to the interviews that the apprenticeship model describes effective learning during artist-led projects. It was clear that pupils and teachers were engaging with the process at all four phases, and enjoying and benefiting from it. There was, however, little sign that the four phases were understood *as* phases of a cycle linked together in one learning process on. Neither teachers, artists nor pupils described episodes of learning in these terms.

The observation phase had been very powerful, often contributing to what teachers and some parents called the 'wow' factor. This phase did not always occur at the start of the process. For instance, in one school a dancer would demonstrate a dance after the pupils had gained some proficiency of their own.

Pupils, in particular, were appreciative of how the creative practitioners guided them during the participant phase. They frequently mentioned how creative practitioners helped them and showed them what to do. Teachers and parents also commented on this phase. For example, a four-year-old child was described by his parent as very cautious and quite shy, and someone who tended to hang back and be hesitant about joining in. The nursery made a video which showed how he gradually joined in Creative Partnerships sessions with confidence and enjoyment, working with artists in the 'magical space' and singing and drumming.

The novice phase was distinguishable by the degree of consultation reported upon by pupils and their teachers. This was apparent across all the age phases.

The children had wanted to do something that let them do the kind of cotton nets that had been used for the big faces. The class was doing light at the time, so they suggested they make a sun and planets. Children have put a lot of their own thoughts forward. (Early years teacher)

They asked us what we wanted, and we would respond. They didn't tell us what to do. We were really good. We wouldn't like to let them down or ourselves down, because we really wanted to do well. (17-year-old pupil)

Some pupils appeared to be reaching the stage of independent practitioner, proposed in the model. There was much evidence from the interviews that pupils were reaching levels of competence and independence which were new, and which their teachers found surprising. Many teachers also commented on the high quality of work which pupils were able to produce.

The artist took their skills and independence further than I thought they would be capable of. The children experienced taking an idea through from conception to production. (Primary Teacher)

We have talked about the children getting chances to work independently. Some students have worked with younger pupils. We like them to see that they can pass on their skills. Sometimes we notice that a pupil has worked on their own for 10 minutes. They have been able to make their own decisions. (Lead artist, special school)

An artist, who had been very successful in the projects which he undertook, described in the interview how he had succeeded for the first time in his career in teaching a particular, very complex rhythm. He went on:

Creative Partnerships has enabled us to go beyond the formula - inevitably your work becomes formulaic. You can take the children to a new depth and intensity. (Artist)

There was also evidence of unsuccessful partnerships. These had seemed to occur where either the school or the creative practitioner was not using the model, either because they did not understand it or because they rejected it. Some teachers -- and schools -- worked with theories of individualistic learning and free expression and neither they nor the pupils learnt so much from the artists, though they drew on their skills. So the pupils did not progress through a cycle of learning nor did the teachers learn from the artists. In some cases the model was used to forestall problems. It seemed that it was providing a useful diagnostic tool to understand successful and unsuccessful partnerships. A Creative Development Worker described how she used the cycle when talking to an artist whom she was considering for work in a school. She talked him through the cycle, and explained how he was going to facilitate the children's creative experiences. He then decided not to take on the project, as he did not want to use the children's ideas.

## ***Conclusions***

The model is best described as a simple matrix in four columns, to be read in conjunction with a cycle diagram, which shows how a learner develops towards independence. (See figures 2 and 3.) It has been found to be generally appropriate. It fits well with the normal working practices of schools. It appeared that the use of the model resulted in a positive impact on both children's and teachers' learning. The

partnerships appeared to result in both children and teachers working at all four phases of the cycle. This has proved significant with respect to sustainability and capacity building in schools. They were reached after Stage 1 and in a preliminary way, and subsequently strengthened. Four of the studies in Stage 2 show how sustainability has been helped by the model: teachers have learnt more techniques, creative practitioners have produced materials that teachers can use, relationships between creative practitioners and schools have been developed and all these factors can contribute to school policies and strategies for creative learning. Answers at Stage 3 indicated increasing confidence and skills on the part of both teachers and artists, and that long-term relationships had been forged.

These results are the more convincing because the research took place in real schools, in real time, in ordinary circumstances, remembering that for these schools 'ordinary circumstances' are challenging because the pilot Creative Partnerships were set up in disadvantaged areas. Due to the collaborative design of the research, the model and the practices it generated are firmly rooted in the discourses and the concrete practicalities of both schools and artists. Any research method has advantages and disadvantages. This research is suggestive and illuminative rather than based on randomised trials and countable performance indicators. It has the advantages of being insider research, rather than the advantages of being outsider research.

Inevitably, the conclusions are more robust in relation to primary schools, since Stage 2 became focused on them. Other research shows that there are significant differences between primary and secondary schools in relation to working with external artists. This is noted by Barrett and Wills (2006) who remark on the 'limited cross curricular

links and cross departmental curriculum delivery arrangements' in secondary schools. Similarly, Cutler (2006) talks of the 'more flexible environment, access to children and participation of entire staff engaged in the project' characteristic of primary schools. However as Cutler also notes long-term programmes in secondary schools have led to significant educational change across a whole school. Jeffrey et al's (2005) detailed examination of a two-year project in a sixth form college documents an example of such change.

The model is not a panacea. The partnerships were expensive to set up. They require time. Time for joint planning is indispensable, and so is time for building/negotiating relationships. They usually require mediation. In Nottingham this was provided by the Creative Development Workers. Any partnership takes time to build, but the partnerships in Nottingham also required time to understand, if only implicitly, the model and its rationale. Teachers (though, generally, not artists) did not appear interested in any explicit theorising. There was, therefore, a danger that they merely assimilated their perception of the model to their current practice. The Creative Development Workers were in a position to prevent this. An alternative would be to introduce such a model as part of teacher education, and in courses for artists wanting to work in schools.

The model can be compared to other arts partnerships in schools. Jeffrey (2005) discusses the nature of partnership between artists and teachers in a sixth form college. Their conclusions fit with ours. Successful partnerships arise from 'dialogical frameworks for learning', and need time to evolve. Craft (2005) focuses on creativity, but explicitly includes the arts. Drawing on work by Bob Jeffrey, she notes

the significance of locus of control in different models of partnership. Her review of research on partnership in the UK and USA shows that that our research is helping to build a body of research, documenting and analysing what makes arts partnerships successful and how they contribute to sustainable change in schools (140-1). Another study, also drawn from creative partnerships work, like ours points out the importance of joint planning, delivery and evaluation in order to develop a real understanding between partners (Barrett and Wills, 2006).

The article has put forward a suggestion for a way for artists to work effectively in schools, building capacity in the school as they do so. It shows how young people can become more independent practitioners and a more educated audience for the arts. At the same time it indicates how doing this leads to other benefits in the schools. For instance the notion of planning that is built into the model means that learning in the arts is related to specific areas of the curriculum, or to particular kinds of pedagogy, that will be useful more widely in that school. In an under theorised area, the model offers one way of theorising pedagogy of arts education in a thoroughly practical way.

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## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> This research could not have been completed without the help of Karen Chantrey Wood and the teacher researchers: Sonja Adams, Judy Berry, Anne Holt, John Naylor, Jo Reid, Philippa Weekes and Holly Wilson

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<sup>3</sup> Similar arrangements in other Creative Partnerships are described in Best, Craft and Jeffrey (2004).

<sup>4</sup> In secondary schools the subject specialist in art or performing arts is often an artist in their own right.

<sup>5</sup> The complete planning chart can be obtained from Creative Partnerships Nottingham.