

Please cite the Published Version

Holmes, Rachel , MacRae, Christina, Moakes, Kerry and McNulty, Jo (2019) Specialist Leaders in Cultural Education (SLICE®) Early Years Fellowships 2019. Research Report. Curious Minds.

Publisher: Curious Minds

Version: Published Version

Downloaded from: <https://e-space.mmu.ac.uk/626685/>

Enquiries:

If you have questions about this document, contact openresearch@mmu.ac.uk. Please include the URL of the record in e-space. If you believe that your, or a third party's rights have been compromised through this document please see our Take Down policy (available from <https://www.mmu.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/policies-and-guidelines>)

Specialist Leaders in Cultural Education (SLICE[®])

Early Years Fellowships 2019



Photo: Jake Ryan

What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity, and cultural education underpinning the relationships between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?

Report by Rachel Holmes, Christina MacRae, Kerry Moakes & Jo McNulty,
Manchester Metropolitan University

Contents	Page
1 Executive Summary	3
2 Project reports	12
2.1 <i>Moving together: a dance collaboratory in the nursery</i> Martenscroft and Company Chameleon	13
2.2 <i>Will there be fragile things?</i> Ribblesdale Nursery School and Manchester Museum.....	18
2.3 <i>Ebbs and Flows: moving through the nursery day</i> Newtown Nursery School and Primed for Life	23
2.4 <i>Our Nursery School is in an art gallery</i> East Prescott Nursery School and Tate Liverpool	27
2.5 <i>More than Music: Language, Literacy and Laughter!</i> Stoneyholme Nursery School and More Music	38
3 References	44
4 Appendices	46
4.1 Appendix I Manchester Metropolitan University SLiCE Project Proposal	46
4.2 Appendix II Manchester Metropolitan University Ethical Approval Forms	50

Executive Summary

Introduction

This project, involving five nursery schools across the North West of England is part of a larger scheme run by Curious Minds, Arts Council England's North West Bridge organisation. SLiCE is a one-year fellowship programme for middle and senior leaders within Teaching School Alliances and Multi-Academy Trusts, and is focused on developing the fellow's capacity to strategically support cultural education in their own school and across the alliance.

This report brings together the findings from the five SLiCE research projects that were run specifically in Early Years settings from 2018-2019. All five SLiCE fellowships had an overall enquiry question:

“What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity, and cultural education underpinning the relationships between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?”

Curious Minds, who provided the funding resources, were clear that “thinking differently” produced by the collaboration should flow both ways and the role of the SLiCE fellows was to provoke generative practice through this two-way encounter, between a cultural organization and a school.

Manchester Metropolitan University were commissioned by Curious Minds to support the research aspect of the projects. *Appendix I* (page 44) outlines the programme of activities and outputs the researchers planned in order to support the SLiCE Fellows and their cultural partners.

SLiCE Fellows and Cultural Organisations

Project one: *Moving together: a dance collaboratory in the Nursery*

SLiCE Fellow: Lisa Taylor (Headteacher at Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre)

Cultural Partner: Sam Broadbent (Company Chameleon)

Early Year Practitioner: Shabnam Amin (Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre)

Project Two: *Will there be fragile things?*

SLiCE Fellow: Sue Allan (Headteacher at Ribblesdale Nursery School)

Cultural Partner: Elaine Bates (Manchester Museum)

Project Three: *Ebbs and flows: moving through the nursery day*

SLiCE Fellow: Tara Entwistle (Headteacher at Newtown Nursery School)

Cultural Partner: Anne O'Connor and Anna Daly (Primed for Life)

Project Four: *Our Nursery School is in an art gallery*

SLiCE Fellow: Colette Bentley (Headteacher, East Prescott Road Nursery)

Artist: Denise Wright

Film-maker: Jake Ryan

Early Year Practitioners: Jess Tinsley; Craig Bolton; Moira Kelly; Joan Buckland; Lynne Higginson; Bev Moran; Colette Byrne; Jenn Keeley; and Lesley Addley (East Prescott Road Nursery)

Cultural Partner: Debbie Goldsmith and Deborah Riding (Tate Liverpool)

Project Five: *More than Music: Language, Literacy and Laughter!*

SLiCE Fellow: Shamim Ashraf (Headteacher at Stoneyholme Nursery School)

Cultural Partner: Ben McCabe and Anni Tracy (More Music Morecambe)

Research leads: Dr Christina MacRae; Professor Rachel Holmes, Dr Jo McNulty; and Ms Kerry Moakes (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Ethics

Each setting secured all the necessary ethical permissions, including informed consent and assent from parents, carers, children and nursery practitioners. Some settings debated the challenges of data storage and sharing across partners, which is recorded in the projects' individual reports. The researchers from Manchester Metropolitan University secured additional ethical consent for their data sharing day (see *Appendix II*, page 48).

Methods

Using a qualitative methodology, the SLiCE Fellows used a combination of participant and non-participant observations, practitioner reflective log/journal, semi-structured interviews, a scrapbook to document children's experiences. Some of them also put visual methods to work, using children's photographs, drawings and paintings.

Data took the form of fieldnotes, photographs, children's artefacts (paintings, drawings, etc), video. Audio-recordings, observations from children's learning journeys

Reflection and data analysis - Laever's emotional well-being and involvement scales and Hart's ladder of participation were used in some settings to reflect on and assess the level of participation of the children in the focus group activities.

Out of the main SLiCE research question, each setting developed their own, more contextualised foci:

- *How might movement and dance shape nursery practice in addressing the ebb and flow of the day and children and staff well-being?*

- What could a sustainable and engaged form of CPD look like when a cultural organisation works collaboratively with an Early Years setting?
- How can we develop movement and dance work with a small group of two-year olds?
- What is the potential for of movement in relation to developing and enriching story-telling?
- How does musicality enhance children's well-being in a nursery setting?
- How does musicality encourage literacy development in the early years?
- What is the practitioners understanding of the concept of participation in relation to children's learning?
- To what extent can children be full and true participants?

Emergent themes drawn from across all five projects

Space of reciprocal and collaborative learning

With a challenging focus on the role of cultural organisations in supporting nursery schools to think differently about how the arts, creativity, and cultural education underpin the relationships between wellbeing and literacy in the early years, it was imperative that SLiCE Fellows and their cultural partners worked together. This focus required partners to draw on their own expertise, whilst honouring and embodying the expertise of others in order to generate new understandings of ways of working creatively and imaginatively with young children. This theme grew out of the collaborations and reciprocity apparent across a range of partnerships engendered by the project, including cultural partners, parents, children, SLiCE fellows, early years practitioners and researchers. A sense of being able to work together and share expertise emerged to different degrees within individual projects, with some cultural partners, for example, less familiar with the early years age range or the cultural demographics of the nursery settings. A collaboratory model (combining the idea of collaboration with experimentation in a laboratory) at Martenscroft nurtured a range of open and exploratory learning relationships through diverse participation and commitment to suspend a focus on outcomes,

Working within an Early Years setting for the first time, we acknowledged that research had to sit at the heart of the project, allowing opportunity for trial and error, taking the most creative learning forwards. This year's SLiCE project offered us the opportunity to be vulnerable and explore our practice in an encouraging and supportive environment using the knowledge of the SLiCE Fellow and MMU researcher to inform the development of our delivery. The project was delivered as a conversation as opposed to an exchange with both organisations keen to work outside of their comfort zones to explore something new and innovative (extract from Company Chameleon Case Study, 2019).

The opportunity to learn alongside each other and in-the-moment gave the nursery practitioners at East Prescott and the staff from Tate Liverpool time and space to attune to

the children's interests, their relationships with the material world and their interactions with parents in the gallery environment,

The key value was a common language to develop institutional practices which involved no experts but all working to common cause and same level (extract from Tate Liverpool's Case Study, 2019).

At Stoneyholme, the plan for each partner to engage with initial visits to each other's places of 'work' was useful to learn about the different contexts and begin to co-construct the research project. There was also a strong sense of 'learning from different communities' that emerged from Stoneyholme as the confidence of staff and children to engage with their own musicality grew and the geographical and cultural differences that initially seemed to separate the partners, began to dissolve,

From the start the project was going to be focused on staff training and require staff to experiment with support from artists rather than simply observing artist's methods. This is not the usual balance for Anni and Ben and helps More Music think about the value of taking a step back after an initial input in order for nursery staff to grow (extract from More Music Case Study, 2019).

Ribblesdale felt that learning was reciprocal between children and adults as their project unfolded.

While the SLiCE fellow at Newtown explicitly had staff well-being at the forefront of her research question, it was primarily the well-being of children that was initially at the forefront of all the projects. However, as the SLiCE fellowships unfolded, the sense of mutuality that emerged, meant that the well-being of staff increasingly also came to the fore,

The project has reminded us of the interpersonal nature of well being. That you cannot separate addressing children's well being without considering that of the staff in the setting. The interconnectedness which means children pick up on the pressure adults in the settings can be under to deliver particular curriculums or schedules, that less can feel like more to all involved (extract from Primed for Life's Case Study, 2019).

In the case of Newtown, it became clear that a focus on transitions and the ebbs and flows of the day entailed a recognition that staff well-being and child well-being are inextricably linked. In this case the cultural partners were building on a previous project and this enabled a closer and more open relationship, and the model of a week residency further foregrounded the potential of a residency model where artists build relationships through and over time. Equally, this more immersive approach, (which also was interwoven with the delivery of CPD twilight events), opened up the possibility of a residency model over either a short period of time, or spaced out over repeat visits, where relationships grew through an

experimental process. In all the projects, the involvement of practitioners in the documenting of the projects produced opportunities for shared reflection and experimentation. Over the duration of the projects, a strong sense emerged of how the partnerships across nursery schools and cultural organisations created opportunities for different questions to be posed and different things to be noticed.

The recent review “Getting it right in the Early Years Foundation Stage” (Pascal et al, 2019) finds that the expressive arts have a critical role in enhancing children’s well-being. In each of these projects this sense of well-being was a key factor that participants returned to again and again when they analysed data and talked about the projects. Sometimes it was clear that the research space offered practitioners the time to focus more explicitly on creating vital spaces, for example in Newtown where practitioners were experimenting with different ways of creating atmospheres by using materials, space and sound. Or sometimes it was the actions of children that made practitioners aware of how opening up space and time to children was producing a sense of well-being, whether this was the intense fascination of a child who had finally entered the castle, or the way that children found material ways of taking up residence and dwelling in the museum space of TATE Liverpool.

Noticing

It is difficult to always be paying close attention to what we do in our daily work, as we are often surrounded by, as Jones et al. point out, “...customary behaviour that is standardized, normative and regular, ... as when driving down a deeply familiar route where we are suddenly aware that we have been on autopilot and that much of the journey has gone by unnoticed” (2010: 485). As people working with young children, Mason (2002) discusses the importance of being attuned to fresh possibilities when they are needed and being alert to such a need through awareness of what is happening at any given time. ‘Noticing’ is not only something we only do visually, but importantly also sensorily, kinaesthetically, in embodied and synaesthetic ways. For example, at Martenscroft, paying attention to the ways that children move, they, as adults, were moved.

As practitioners who work with young people and materials, to become more aware of what is happening in the moment requires a sensitivity to methods of noticing, what Ingold (2014) proposes as an engagement and perceptual attunement, which he suggests would allow practitioners to follow what is going on, and in turn to respond to it. These five projects note how working more closely with people from another discipline or field, such as across education and the arts, can cause a stir, productively disrupting the deeply familiar contexts and content of the agendas that narrowly define the parameters, indicators and measures of early literacy and wellbeing. It is important that the SLiCE work confronts already constituted fields of knowledge about literacy, wellbeing and the young child’s processes of learning, in order to create the conditions for collectively imagining “a “new” object that belongs to no one” (Barthes, cited in Clifford & Marcus, 1990: 1).

Colebrook (2017) notes how interesting it is to think about education, not as a discipline with a terrain of ‘know-how’ or ‘expertise’, but as a process of not knowing. It is refreshing indeed to insist on growing a culture of not knowing, when in the UK, pedagogy and schooling in the early years have become a series of ‘know-hows’, with prescribed practices and tick-box exercises that are steered heavily by a ‘what works’ agenda and finding quick fixes for things that don’t. Within such a fast-paced, metric-oriented nursery context it is critical to establish spaces to suspend the rush to fix and to halt tendencies to do more of the same to allow teachers and practitioners to notice and then “‘study the multiplicity of a thing’, without seeking to locate or construct universal principles or explanations” (Southerton, 2017: 125, cited in Coleman and Ringrose, 2013: 10).

The process of working collaboratively helps SLiCE Fellows, nursery practitioners and cultural partners to notice differently, so that, as Motzkau (2009) points out, they are able to examine the limitations of their particular habits, ways of knowing and being, recognising and taking seriously what interestingly perplexes, challenges, poses a problem to them and escapes their disciplinary knowledge. Newtown used technology to allow them a slower engagement with what was going on in the nursery as film took on a significant role enabling all participants to look very closely at children’s bodily responses. At the Tate in Liverpool, the week-long residency facilitated a sustained attempt to develop a more mindful pedagogy, borne from watching, listening, and importantly sensing how the young children experienced the gallery spaces, staff listening with all their senses to engage fully in this exploration. Ribblesdale were keen to use the time to explore the true extent of carefully listening and responding to, the child’s voice, whereas Stoneyholme’s report documents how the participants valued having the opportunity to notice differently and were now working towards embedding an on-going commitment to noticing practices.

Transforming and embedding practices

The notion of ‘embedding’ was something that came up across projects. It is, of course important to be mindful that to embed practice can carry with it problematic associations with fixing, maintaining familiar practices and establishing habits. The SLiCE programme is designed to develop the Fellow’s capacity to strategically support cultural education in their own school and across the alliance, which requires an element of firmly securing new practices into the nursery environment, whilst being acutely sensitive to the importance of diverse communities, local ecologies and partnership relevance. The SLiCE Fellow at Stoneyholme, for example was keen to embed music as part of the daily practice in the nursery, as the SLiCE Fellow was aware that the practitioners and local community were currently reluctant to engage with music at school.

Discussing how things become embedded, Dolphijn and van der Tuin (2012: 35) draw on the work of Moira Gatens and Genevieve Lloyd (1999) who argue that “socially embedded and historically grounded changes are the result of “collective imaginings”- a shared desire for certain transformations to be actualised as a collaborative effort”. The idea that change emerges from ‘collective imaginings’ requires financial and time investment as well as the

partners sharing a commitment to mutual learning and transformation. If the strategic support of cultural education in nursery schools can hold open possibilities of dismantling the limits of how adults currently understand and respond to young children's literacy practices and states of wellbeing, such an intellectual and empirical project requires us all to reach beyond the current fields of education and the arts to imagine new ways of being and doing those things in the early years. As Burnett points out, this would require a confidence and commitment to experimentation, as "a reliance on studies designed to generate 'hard' evidence limits understanding about innovations and interventions" (2017: 522). So, for example, forms of knowledge that are embodied become critical to the support cultural education can bring to the nursery context, as Leonard et al. explain,

Dance is literacy. It has vocabulary, uses grammar and relies on semantics, much like traditional forms of literacy that continue to be privileged in schools. However, dance as literacy also holds unique power and potential in schools as embodied knowledge, a form of enquiry, a means of developing autonomy and representing knowledge because the dancing body simultaneously serves as object and subject, enactor and action, writer and the written, speaker and the spoken, self and the expression of self (2016: 339).

The notion of being embedded in a place is something else that emerged from some of the SLiCE participants. Schools were encouraged to think about the children's sense of place and belonging to a place. Ribblesdale nursery for example, wanted to explore children's emotional connections to their local community and cultural resources. They used the research opportunity to work with Manchester Museum, and during the project the children expressed their attachment to a local historical site, Clitheroe Castle, with one child describing it as "my castle". Adapting the project to fit with what the children, school and community needed whilst drawing on the expertise and practices of the museum, takes us to Gallacher's (2017) discussion of adaptation as a way of also dismantling the dominant and often linear milestones that haunt traditional child development, as well as myths such as the 'word gap' (Sperry et al, 2018, Blum 2014) and other crises that currently plague perceptions of early literacy. She proposes a shift in thinking from milestones to wayfaring, retaining "the dominant motif of developmental journey while emphasizing the adaptation, flexibility, difference and diversity that characterize the more complex physical landscape and botanical metaphors" (2017, <http://nrl.northumbria.ac.uk/32784/>).

Budgets and planning time for cultural partners.

Most of the cultural partners were salaried and worked for established companies and National Portfolio organisations, while Primed for Life is a small company and work on a free-lance basis, which can make it difficult to attend meeting and training sessions. These differences highlight the need for the SLiCE fellows as commissioners to ensure that when allocating budgets these factors are accounted for. The SLiCE programme tries, wherever possible, to work with National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) as they are quality assured by Arts Council England (ACE), but in the case of Primed for Life, their early expertise was

critically important to this SLiCE programme and Newtown's choice of research project, so it was right to include them. The programme is also designed to develop SLiCE fellows commissioning skills as many do not know how cultural organisations and freelance artists work.

Timeframe

Some school settings found it difficult to co-ordinate the timeline in order to both fit with Cultural Partners schedules, to involve parents at the setting, and also to incorporate CPD and this meant that many projects took place later toward the end of the academic year rather than earlier on. In some cases this meant that projects were running into the transitions for children in the summer term and this meant it was hard to sustain staff engagement with the projects at this point in the year.

Matching the setting to the partner's research question.

In one sense, the matching of cultural partners with SLiCE fellows could have been more closely aligned, especially as the projects were short-term funded. For example, there were geographical distances to bridge in the case of two of the partnerships, and this made meetings and planning logistics difficult at times. However, the SLiCE programme tries to honour the choice of the participating school as well as encouraging interesting collaborations that open up opportunities for bridging potentially disparate experiences and expertise. So, for example, Ribblesdale Nursery School wanted to work with Manchester Museum, whilst locating the research local to their nursery school. Stoneyholme Nursery wanted to partner with a music organisation, so Curious Minds gave due consideration to this preference, whilst being mindful of NPOs and quality assurance. On that basis, More Music was the closest (based in Morecambe), however their limited experience working with Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities / beliefs / music was something that was a challenge to their pursuit of the nursery's chosen line of enquiry. Likewise, Company Chameleon did not have experience and expertise with working with children under 4 years old, and while there might have been scope for them to learn through the experience of other cultural organisations who have established themselves as experts in the Early Years, this partnership provided a rich and mutually rewarding series of learning moments. The opportunities presented by the SLiCE programme invited a challenge that required a two-way flow of information, sharing of experience and expertise. SLiCE Fellows and cultural organisations need to be open to learning from each other, which nevertheless at times can seem to present a range of complexities around geographical and demographic differences.

'Collecting' evidence

The use of the tools to measure participation and involvement

In all the projects different forms of documenting were the key method of research. This brought specific challenges in terms of the time that was need both the enable this to happen, as well in terms of time to process, store and share data. Early years settings needed to think carefully about ethics and their existing consent to observations and images procedures, in order to decide whether extra consents needed to be taken for their project. Where extra consents were needed this had the benefit that through the process of asking

parents for consent, practitioners found that they were engaging parents in the research. However, the downside was the time needed to talk to parents, often at the difficult drop off or pick up times of the day. Newtown and Eat Prescott Road Nurseries primarily used film data. This proved challenging both because of the time needed to view and archive film, but also raised problems about keeping data protected (for example when using film to show off site to staff at another school). We realised as part of such projects dedicated encrypted and password protected memory sticks needed to be costed in, as well as allocating practitioner time to collect and archive data.

Project Reports

Moving together: a dance collaboratory in the Nursery

Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre and Company Chameleon

Contributors

SLiCE Fellow: Lisa Taylor (Headteacher at Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre)

Cultural Partner: Sam Broadbent (Company Chameleon)

Early Year Practitioner: Shabnam Amin (Martenscroft Nursery School and Children's Centre)

Research lead: Dr Christina MacRae (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Context

In this project the SLiCE fellow (Lisa Taylor), was partnered with the Manchester-based Company Chameleon. Company Chameleon is both an internationally recognised touring company, as well as offering education-facing programming that has a strong record in working with school. It became clear that the organisation did not have a history of engagement with under 4's and had a desire to develop their practice for this age group, which presented Lisa, as the SLiCE fellow, with the possibility of creating a space of mutual experimentation. This offered Lisa a unique opportunity to participate and to reflect on a programme of dance sessions alongside an Early Years Practitioner from her setting; but equally, Sam, from Company Chameleon were offered a space in which to test ideas with a group of 2-3 year olds.

In this project each partner had a slightly different question:

Company Chameleon:

"How can we develop movement and dance work with a small group of two-year olds?"

Lisa Taylor, SLiCE fellow:

"What is the potential for of movement in relation to developing and enriching story-telling"

Lisa and Shabnam (the room lead for the two-year class) took the role of participants as well as researchers. Shabnam documented the sessions by taking photographs and film (and made notes after sessions); Lisa wrote field-notes after sessions to create detailed case studies of three children, using the Laevers scales of involvement as a way to gauge children's engagement in the sessions. These observations provided the basis for a reflective discussion at the end of each session that in turn informed the planning of the next sessions. This practice-based reflective cycle echoed the approach taken by Pitt, Arculus and Fox in their SALTmusic project where early years music specialists worked with Speech therapists sited in a Children's Centre (2017). Christina (based at Manchester

Metropolitan University), acted to support the documentation and reflection cycle, and was able to join in as a participant at key sessions and in these sessions took notes during the post-session reflective discussions. The project consisted of 8 dance sessions delivered to a small group of 8 children (the same children each week as far as possible), and a further 3 sessions delivered to a nursery class in feeder primary school in order to take aspects of the sessions that had been successful and try them with children aged 3-4. Shabnam was able to document and provide fieldnotes for these sessions, and this also provided an opportunity for her to observe the response of these slightly older children in comparison to the sessions she had participated in with children from her room. In addition to these workshop sessions Sam spent a morning in the 2-3 room. The project culminated in a celebration day at Manchester Art Gallery where Martenscroft parents and children took part in a further creative movement session inspired by the gallery art work and in addition watched a short performance by Company Chameleon.

A Collaboratory space

This project did not unfold exactly as anticipated: while the intention of creating an open exploratory space was something that was kept at the heart of the project, as the weekly sessions and the reflection-on-practice of each session informed the next, the project took a slightly different direction than envisioned. The role of parents, who at the outset had been cast as co-researchers, was modified. As our focus was on very young children, the plan had been to work with parents all the way through the sessions. However, after the first session it became clear that the exploratory project brief offered a unique space for the practitioners (both the dancers and the early years staff) in which outcomes could be suspended which allowed for a deliberate experimental process. This would enable a Dance Company who usually had not worked with under 4's to work intensely with a group of 2-3s, (and then finally 3-4 year olds), alongside the SLiCE fellow, the researcher, and the 2-3s room leader as a space of reciprocal and collaborative learning. It seemed appropriate to call this space a **collaboratory**. It was **collaborative** since participants included dancers, early years practitioners, the SLiCE fellow, and a researcher; and it was also a **laboratory** because for all participants including the children, it offered a space where there was not an expectation that progress or learning outcomes were of primary concern (we deliberately were not researching this in order to evidence better progress).

Associated with the term 'collaboratory' is the notion of harnessing a collective intelligence, and while the concept is usually linked to science and technology, because of the particular research questions – we felt that the project could offer a possible exploratory space in which to open up our ways of acting in an education system that has been increasingly over-written by a policy-landscape where the notion of progress casts a long shadow. Although Lisa had started up with the intention of exploring how movement might enrich the story-telling practices, and Sam wanted to develop ways of working with a much younger audience than they were used to working with, a third underpinning question began to emerge: '**how can we resist walking on well-trodden paths when we act and re(act) in the company of children**'.

Ethics

At the outset questions around ethics and consents were discussed. The project proceeded in line with the schools policy of explaining to parents that their children were taking part in the dance sessions and therefore subject to as the usual practice the sessions being documented as part of the reflection cycle (any parents were free to request their children were not part of the documentation). Furthermore, as was also school practice, if children were reluctant to come to sessions there was no pressure for them to join and they could stay in their room, and if any children were upset or wanted to go back to their room during the session they could. There was an unexpected ethical dimension that began to surface over the duration of the project which was related to a growing awareness of how hard it was for us as adults to let go our habitual ways of interacting with children. The post-session reflections surfaced how these were often fuelled by anxieties about ensuring that children were demonstrating progress and the ways that we (as adults) privileged talk as the main way of demonstrating this. In these sessions there was also an increasing attention to what it was about certain materials or interactions that captured children. This emerging attention to children's encounters moved us, as adults, away from the performative pressure to always demonstrably moving children on developmentally appropriate ways and a particular pressure to produce verbal responses to children.

Another dimension of this growing awareness about our anxieties as adults under pressure to demonstrate learning and progress also emerged through the case studies that Lisa detailed. In one of these case studies it became clear that while a child might appear not to be engaged because they apparently were not taking part, this did not mean that they were not participating. While the Laevers scales of involvement were useful as a gauge of children's engagement, it was clear that when reading children's involvement, as adults, we can too quickly assume that because a child is watching from the side-lines they are not taking part. It was clear that this watching was also a form of participation. On reflection we agreed that we needed to expand our approaches to the concept of involvement both as adults and when we were responding to children. We discussed the term witnessing when we were thinking about the watching child, and how this witnessing was also a form of wit(h)-ness in the sense that it moves us as we are affected by our witnessing (Boscacci, 2018).

Methods

The reflective cycle, that we documented with photographs and field notes was less about seeking an efficacious intervention, or to find out what 'good practice' is – but rather we use them as a way to enact a particular type responsive practice, that might help us to unmoor some of the habitual responses. As Law writes; 'The argument is no longer that methods discover and depict realities. Instead it is that they participate in the enactment of those realities' (Law, quoted by Burnett, 2017, 526/7). Following a pilot project (MacRae, Holmes and Arculus, 2019), we were interested to explore the extent to which this more collaborative and co-produced approach to data collection might impact the "intuitive

scripts” (Powell and Gooch, 2014) that we use as adults when we talk to children. In a climate where there is much scrutiny given to the quantity of talk and the way that adults speak to children, this has the effect of producing particular linguistically-weighted scripts that mediate adult-child interaction.

Key themes that emerged through the reflective cycles:

1. Contact:

Within this theme were different form of contact that emerged as significant: contact with materials, contact with each other and the power of partner work, and contact with the ground.

2. Conversational bodies

While at the outset there was a focus on books that were familiar to children because of classroom planning, there was a movement towards a more improvisational practice that allows stories to unfold through imaginary starting points (like being in the park, or experiencing a particular weather type), and as the sessions progresses an attention to themuch more foundational level the way that bodies tell stories, express ideas, so that the **“the boundaries between moving through space and communicating through movement are blurred” (Hackett, 2014, 24)**

3. Dance: Moving in concert

“it’s about movement not dance: it’s a language of movement ... they couldn’t help themselves, they just started to move in response to the movement they were witnessing” (Shabnam, post-session discussion)

This simple observation helped us to re-orient some of our habitual scripts about what literacy looks like, particularly in the company of children. This emphasis on the collective act of bodies that turn together drew our attention to how bodies that move together are in conversation both with each other, but also in conversation with the space that they are in, as well as with materials, for example when they respond to a large chiffon scarf being wafted up and down.

4. Parental Involvement

Finally, although it had been decided not to invite parents to participate at the beginning of the project, it was clear that they needed to be involved as this would extend the collaborative sense of enquiry, and allow “parents see us in learning roles” and value their involvement as part of the developing curriculum and practice (Souto-Manning and Swick 2006, 191). Parents were invited to the final session, as well as to a celebratory event held in

Manchester Art Gallery. Parents involvement at this stage demonstrated a shift in power dynamics, where children know the routines and were able to lead their parents.

Conclusion

“How can we develop movement and dance work with a small group of two-year olds?”

The project answered this question through the themes that emerged about *contact* (with people and things). The reflection sessions offered a space in which to consider more deeply the terms ‘dance’ and ‘movement’ through the prism of *contact*. Dance is a term loaded with cultural baggage, which can be limiting; using the term movement seemed more open to an awareness of the communicative dimensions of movement at a fundamental level. We recognised that much of the moving was indeed a dance between bodies and materials and inviting parents to our final session allowed us to open up a discussion about culture/religious responses to ‘dance’.

“What is the potential of movement in relation to developing and enriching story-telling”

There is a danger that when we think of literacy and story-telling, the figure of the *book* becomes a cipher for exemplary ECE practice. Burnett refers to this phenomenon using the metaphor of ‘book as proxy’, where books become significant as related to their role in the development of literacy practices. Here, “books appear as proxies for the encouragement of shared reading which, in turn, is seen as a proxy for future attainment and ultimately life chances.” (2017: 532). However, we began understand the power of bodies to tell stories – but in minor ways – for example becoming a balloon that is being blown up and getting bigger and bigger.

“How can we resist walking on well-trodden paths when we act and re(act) in the company of children”

We discovered that that by paying attention to the ways that children move, we, as adults, were moved. We became aware that, **“it is only through slowing down and restraining our own competencies that young children’s abilities can emerge.”** (Bentley, 2012, p. 39). This resulted in an awareness about how the pressures on us to demonstrate children’s speech and communication skills could get in the way of our own responses to the child in the moment.

Will there be fragile things?

Ribblesdale Nursery School & Manchester Museum

Contributors

Sue Allan Head Teacher at Ribblesdale Nursery School

Elaine Bates Early Years Coordinator at Manchester Museum

Jo McNulty Manchester Metropolitan University

Overall Research Question

What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education underpinning the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?

A collaboration between Ribblesdale Nursey School & Manchester Museum

Aim: to explore children's emotional connections to community and cultural resources by allowing them to lead the learning and explore using a multi modal approach.



Research Questions

What is the practitioners understanding of the concept of participation in relation to children's learning?

To what extent can children be full and true participants?

Research Methods

A qualitative approach was taken. The participants were the head teacher, a key person and her key children as a focus group. The following methods of data collection were used:

Practitioner observation – participant and non-participant

Practitioner reflective log/journal

Scrapbook to document children's experiences

Visual methods including children's photographs, drawings, paintings

In addition, Laever's emotional well-being and involvement scales and Hart's ladder of participation were used by the head teacher and key person to reflect on and assess the level of participation of the children in the focus group activities. A CPD session with the practitioners at the Museum was originally planned for Spring 2019 but was postponed so this may now take place Autumn 2019. The focus of this would be to look at how to encourage participation in the museum, its learning opportunities and resources and as a democratic space for the practitioners to think about how the children might use the space.

Ethical Considerations

There was already a setting agreement in place in terms of the practitioners' participation in their career development. Informed consent was obtained, for research purposes, from both the children/parents and practitioners. One family asked that their child not be identified in any photographs.

Context

The head teacher, Sue Allan, wanted to develop the work that was already taking place through CPD, on observation of and self-reflection on practice. She identified that the practitioners were already very skilled at listening to the child's voice through their on-going observations but she wanted to extend this to explore the extent the children had ownership of their learning and whether there could or should be a more reciprocal model of planning for learning. The SLiCE remit of cultural education, well-being and literacy opened up possibilities to do this through the school's link with Manchester Museum as cultural partner. Sue identified that she could consider how, by facilitating the child's voice more, this might link to a sense of belonging and thinking about 'reading' in a broader sense, for example, developing skills of using artefacts to tell a story and/or developing skills of reading images and photographs.



The Planning Day at MMU in November 2018, a joint meeting at Manchester Museum in December 2018 and a number of additional meetings between Sue and Elaine all contributed to the establishment of the focus of the project, the research questions, methods, ethical considerations and the roles/support that the Museum and MMU would provide. Elaine also supported Sue by sending her information about her own research and practice into working with young children at museums and other examples of research, other projects and relevant publications.

In conversation with Sue, she explained that, as children's reading skills were already developing well, she wanted to focus less on traditional literacy development and more on digital and multimodal literacy and exploring voice of the child in relation to literacy and wellbeing, through the lens of participation.

In practice, this was about exploring how to further facilitate the child's voice through the process of observation and planning. This also linked in with the focus on well-being, with a particular emphasis on participation and a sense of belonging. Sue had previously visited schools in the Reggio Emilia region and this influences the practice at the school and is particularly relevant to the SLiCE project. Sue cited Malaguzzi as influential in her desire to explore the true extent of listening to and acting on the child's voice, "Stand aside for a while and leave room for learning, observe carefully what children do, and then, if you have understood well, perhaps teaching will be different from before" (cited in Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 1998).

Elaine's role in helping to support the school to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education was evident through her sharing the good practice that the museum had already developed with local schools. Elaine uses a local place based model of bringing children to the museum to develop their learning outside the classroom, where the museum becomes the classroom. The objective of this work is to generate more sustainable engagement and deeper relationship with children, parents, families, schools and communities and the museum, where children engage with the museum over a series of supported visits rather than one off trips (MacRae, 2019). Elaine and Sue discussed how this model would link with SLiCE remit and Sue's interest in democratic practice and how such a model could be transferred to Sue's locality, Clitheroe Castle as a site of cultural interest and beyond in terms of Sue's alliance with other head teachers in the area. This reflects Kellet's (2009:49) view of participation for children, which has to be meaningful to them and facilitated by culturally appropriate contexts.

As a result, Sue decided to explore the value of the castle due to its proximity to the school. A decision influenced by Elaine's knowledge and experience of what works well in relation to sustaining relationships with families and local communities and by Reggio Emilia practices where community and locality is implicit in the children's lives.

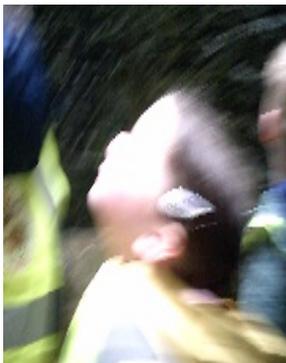
Chronology of the Children’s Participation

Step 1 In school Initial Investigation: the children looked at images of the castle and the view of the castle from the school and talked about it with the teachers. They identified it as theirs and in terms of its proximity to their homes and they talked about the flag and the flag pole, which was the only visible part at this time of the year.



Step 2 1st visit Journey to the Castle: the children took the lead and chose the route to the castle. They each had a camera and took photographs of what they were interested in around the castle grounds.

Step 3 Back at School: the children looked at their photographs and together decided that the old tree and the secret door were common artefacts of interest.



Step 4 2nd visit Outside the Castle: they returned to the castle and focused on the old tree, which they measured with string, collected its leaves, seeds and nuts and wondered about the secret door “there’s a witch behind it”; “it’s too high”; “we could get a ladder”; “we haven’t got a key”.

Step 4 Lines of Development back at school they used their bodies to measure the string to see how wide it was, they used books to identify the tree.

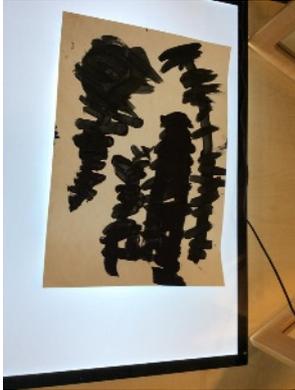
Step 5 Studio: the teacher projected images of trees and roots onto the walls and the children represented them in clay, charcoal and black paint.

Step 6 3rd Visit: Inside the Castle. The children made a 3rd visit and this time they entered the castle walls. One child asked “*Will there be fragile things?*” While they spent time interacting with the museum displays, the children were most fascinated and pleased that they could see the old tree from the castle window and found another secret door.



Key Themes

Participation and Democracy



To return to the first research question, Sue reflected that discussions around participation and democracy with her staff and the use of the tools to measure participation and involvement, had meant that there was a shared perception of participation in relation to children's learning. A fascination around roots and trees was reflected in children's interest at the castle and the images they reproduced at school.

This seemed to correspond with feelings of a sense of place and belonging to a place. The children expressed feelings of familiarity and security and Sue highlighted that one child in particular was more confident and keen to participate.

Collaborative Learning

In relation to the second question, Sue concluded that there are times when children can take the lead and others where facilitation by adults is necessary. This is reflected in a study by Kirby and Gibbs (2009), which looks at the complexity of participation and how power shifts constantly within any activity. Even within child-led initiatives, such as deciding on the route to the castle, adults still have a role to play, for example in ensuring the route taken is safe. It is how children are facilitated to participate and the fluidity of the support that is key. At Ribblesdale, a co-construction of learning approach was often utilised, whereby learning was reciprocal between children and adults.

Challenges

Some of the collective challenges that were encountered related to the logistical implications of the three collaborators finding convenient times to meet up on a more regular basis. In addition, Manchester Museum as the cultural partner meant that it was not local for the school in Clitheroe. This made it more difficult for the children and the staff to engage with the experience that the partnership might have afforded. However, Elaine and Sue worked with this and it ultimately led to the transfer of the local model of engagement from Manchester to Clitheroe.

Ebbs and flows: moving through the nursery day

Newtown Nursery School and Primed for Life

Contributors

SLiCE Fellow: Tara Entwistle (Headteacher at Newtown Nursery School)

Cultural Partner: Anne O'Connor and Anna Daly (Primed for Life)

Research lead: Dr Christina MacRae (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Context

Why

Tara, the SLiCE fellow, and headteacher of Newtown Nursery wanted the project focus on transitions, to engage with the ebbs and flows of the day, and in particular to focus on the end of day session for the children and staff who stayed after the school day between 3.30 and 6 pm ('the late shift'). Significantly, she hoped to explore the ebb and flow of the day in relation to the well-being of both staff and children; opening up an enquiry that might touch upon relationships, ambience and mood, touch and physical connection as well as movement.

How

It was decided to approach this through a week of intense participation by the cultural partners (Primed for Life) that would also include 2 formal twilight CPD sessions (involving two feeder Primary Schools). A series of full day sessions were planned where Anne and Anna from Primed for life would work alongside staff in the nursery setting. In the first instance Anne and Anna spent an afternoon alongside the Early Years practitioners to get a sense of the routines and flow of the day. They then spent 4 days intensively working alongside the staff in Newtown Nursery across the ages, but with a particular focus on the 'late shift'.

Two CPD sessions were held; one before Primed for Life spent time dedicated days in the setting, and one after. The first session provided an opportunity for Primed for Life to focus on the research and science behind movement and how this relates to child development. The second took place after the week of immersion. Before the final CPD session took place, staff from the two feeder Primary schools also had had the opportunity to visit Newtown while Primed for Life were working there; to and observe, participate and discuss. The final CPD event offered staff a hands-on movement session and data sharing through collective viewing of films taken during the immersive week. These provided a basis for staff from the different setting, who worked with different aged children to reflect on their practice and some of the different ways that they were experimenting with movement in their classrooms.

During the day-long immersive sessions where Anne and Anna worked alongside practitioners, Anne took the role of participant observer, filmer and facilitator, while Anna immersed herself in delivering movement sessions (on a spectrum of tightly directed, to very improvisational interventions and group activities) in different places (outside and inside), and at different times of the day. In other instances, Anna, would hand over to staff and invite them to initiate group activities that she had modelled. A key feature of this project is followed on from a previous project where Primed for Life had worked with staff a year earlier, this time specifically with children and staff in the toddler room. This project had been based around a dance performance produced by Anna, that used minimal speech (see MacRae, Holmes, and Arculus, 2019). As a result of this project Anna had gone on to produce a touring production called 'Duvet Dancing'. It was decided that at the end of the week Anna would perform Duvet Dancing to the children, and that staff would film children's responses as part of the project of enquiry around movement and dance.

The key research question

How might movement and dance shape nursery practice in addressing the ebb and flow of the day and children and staff well-being?

With a question that emerged during the planning stage of the project:

What could a sustainable and engaged form of CPD look like when a cultural organisation works collaboratively with an Early Years setting?

Ethics

As the key method of documenting and reflecting on this project was filming staff and children in order to attend more closely to movement, this threw up difficult tensions and practicalities around ethics, and consents. As the research data was being used as part of its reflective planning cycle, this not out of the ordinary as documentation consisting of photographs and films was always negotiated and signed off by parents when their children entered the setting. However, as the films were going to be shown to the staff at the local schools, the results of the project might be shared more widely in the professional context of wider training, conferences and professional magazines it was necessary to get parental consents. This was time consuming and an aspect of the project that the staff found challenging. However, at the same time it became clear that the process to explaining to parents about the project itself was a form of parental engagement and was a way to demonstrate to parents the experimental nature of research and the idea staff were learning themselves through the research process. This led to reflection both in discussions and in the interviews about building trusting sharing relationships with parents, and ways of involving parents in shared pedagogies. This also prompted discussions about reviewing the consent forms that parents sign when they start at the setting.

The most significant challenge on the project was the question of GDPR and storing data on encrypted pen drives: as soon as the data leaves the school setting this poses real

challenges in terms of both time (transferring data) and streamlining technology across different computers.

Methods

A participant observer approach was taken and data consisted of fieldnotes (Christina and Anne), film (taken by Anne and also by staff), and semi-structured interviews with staff from Newtown (Christina).

Film took on a significant role as it allowed all participants to look very closely at children's bodily responses: while there is currently much pressure on children to demonstrate their language skills, and associated with this an expectation that adults should be always modelling talk as well as asking questions that will produce speech from children, watching film has a singular affordance in terms of its ability to capture the movements of bodies in space. Films provided a rich form of data that offered a shared focus for discussing children's and staff's responses in the moment. At the same time film proved extremely challenging because of the time constraints and digital problems it raises (as previously mentioned)

Key themes

A residency model: relationships

Because the cultural partner already had a relationship with some of the staff members, and because the project was immersive, the power of this *residency* model – was something that emerged both in the discussions in the CDP sessions, but also in the interviews with staff. Here it was the informal and side-by-side nature of the participation that staff picked up on in interview: the mixture of information given in the formal CPD, alongside with the opportunity to observe and discuss with Anne and Anna during the day sessions.

Performance, improvisation, intimacy and the creation of atmosphere

Staff discussed and experimented with the specific performative techniques that Anna demonstrated. These included the notion of 'playmating' (O'Connor and Daly, 2016); an attention to how children respond physically to the capacities of materials – for example the wafting of a scarf, or the comfort of a duvet; the power of facial expression and gesture to direct children; how to create atmospheres in spaces using music and materials; and finally performance and improvisation, which some staff said they found the most challenging.

Movement and agency

In the interviews many staff talked about giving a new-found attention to children's bodies, gestures and propensity for movement, for example staff who said it had made them "show" as well as, or sometimes instead of, tell children. This in turn made staff think about the ways we communicate with babies and a recognition that these more demonstrative, but intuitive, ways of communicating with young children can be eroded when there is

pressure to get children 'ready for school'. In the early years research there is an increasing recognition that good early years practice encourages children to be active agents, however this is often conceived of in terms of children expressing choices, rather than the very physical agency of a moving body.

Conclusion

The relationship between Primed for Life and Newton is close and a follow-CPD event is planned to build on the reflection on the residency and film data in the Autumn term of 2019. However, at a time of an existential threat to nursery schools, it is hard to see how this relationship can be maintained without external funding. The project has demonstrated the mutual learning that can take place between an arts organisation and a nursery school to expand and develop the qualities such as intimacy, improvisation, the significance of movement, both in relation to well-being, as well as communicative intent, which all crucial factors in early years practice. It was referred to in one interview as:

“a continual process, all you can do is grow with it, it’s like a rock, I just imagine it in my mind, you are just rolling along and picking things up, a bit like a piece of sticky back plastic, you’re picking it up as you go along, and I think that a nice way, its little things that feed in”

The Ebbs and Flows project has opened up an exploration into the temporal quality of the nursery day, one that is generally overlooked: how the days ebbs and flows in terms of pace, energy and transitions from one activity or room to another. This emphasis and attention to time raises questions about the future possibilities for practitioners to create the time and space to reflect on practice and to actually use the rich documentation that they collect to attend to the children they are caring for, and ways to open the daily routine to a continual process of experimentation.

Our Nursery School is in an art gallery

East Prescot Road Nursery School and Tate Liverpool, 1 – 4 April 2019



Photo: Jake Ryan

Contributors

Colette Bentley (SLiCE Fellow, Head Teacher, East Prescot Road Nursery)
Denise Wright (Artist)
Jake Ryan (Film-maker)
Jess Tinsley (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Craig Bolton (East Prescot Road Nursery teacher)
Moirra Kelly (East Prescot Road Nursery teacher)
Joan Buckland (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Lynne Higginson (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Bev Moran (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Colette Byrne (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Jenn Keeley (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Lesley Addley (East Prescot Road Nursery early years practitioner)
Debbie Goldsmith (Curator: Early Years and Families, Tate Liverpool)
Deborah Riding (Programme Manager: Children and Young People, Tate Liverpool)

Ethics

The nursery School secured all necessary ethical consent and ascent from parents, carers, children and practitioners prior to the Tater visits.

Context

This project built on East Prescot Road Nursery’s innovative early years practice involving a long-term residency with an artist (Denise Wright) and filmmaker (Jake Ryan), who also have established and ongoing relationships with Tate Liverpool. Colette Bentley applied and secured a SLICE Fellowship. Colette, Denise and Jake, met with the cultural partners Debbie Goldsmith and Deborah Riding and the collaboration with Tate Liverpool was formed.

Influenced by *My Primary School is at the Museum*, a project developed by Wendy James (Partner at Garbers & James Architects) in collaboration with the Cultural Institute at King’s College London (see <http://myschoolatthemuseum.site>) and the Tate’s previous involvement with this, a week-long SLiCE nursery residency at Tate Liverpool was planned. The format of the residency was designed to support practitioner research & development, as well as promoting children and parents’ sustained engagement with gallery and arts-based education.

	Monday 1.4.19	Tuesday 2.4.19	Wednesday 3.4.19	Thursday 4.4.19
9.30 -10.00	Clore Space Intro Toilet Snack	Clore Space Intro Toilet Snack	Clore Space Intro Toilet Snack	Clore Space Intro Toilet Snack
10.00 -11.00	Studio	Studio /Gallery	Studio/ Gallery	Studio/Gallery
11.00-12.00	Studio	Studio/Gallery	Studio/Gallery	Studio/Gallery
Lunch 12.00 -1.00	Packed Lunches Walk around Albert Dock	Restaurant Mermaid Court	Packed Lunches Pier Head	Restaurant Mermaid Court
1.00-2.00	Clore Space Studio	Clore Space	Studio/Gallery Clore Space	Studio/Gallery Clore Space
2.00 -3.00	Gallery Clore Space Leave	Studio/Gallery Clore Space Leave	Studio/Gallery Clore Space Leave	Studio/Gallery Clore Space Leave

Each day started off the same, and there were the usual familiar markers throughout the day such as arrival on the coach, gathering of coats and lunch bags in the Clore space, introduction activity with Denise and collective lunchtime.

The rest of the day’s structure was loose enough to allow for improvised gallery and/or studio sessions, often initiated and led by individual or groups of children.



Research and Development

A number of things emerged over the four days that seem to consolidate into particular themes: being unplanned and learning-in-the-moment; residency as process of discovery; provocations; place-making: ribbons, literacy and wellbeing; and embedding practices.

Learning to be in-the-moment

East Prescot Road Nursery were interested in undertaking a small piece of qualitative research that was both relevant and meaningful to a range of stakeholders. They planned for 20 children to take residency in Tate Liverpool for four days 1 – 4th April 2019 with a focus on running their own explorations and learning alongside the children at the gallery and reflecting on the outcomes of that process. By taking the children’s lead, they were investing in a sense of speculative personal, professional, cultural and organisational developmental potentialities. For example, allowing themselves to be taken by the children’s interests in the gallery on a moment-by-moment basis, necessitates a kind of planning-in-the-moment, where resources are provided but how, when and why they are used, or indeed whether they are put to work at all, is all determined by the children. Colette hoped that this approach would afford staff opportunities to reflect on ways nursery planning for the future might develop as a result of this. Debbie Goldsmith (Curator: Early Years and Families, Tate Liverpool) comments on the affordances of learning-in-the-moment,

The SLICE project enabled us to immerse ourselves in children’s learning in the gallery, I found ‘learning at the same time’ empowering to both the children and staff, it was a really powerful and genuine partnership between the Head and Tate which we hope to continue to develop further. Working with Denise Wright the artist involved in the residency we’ve made an addition to our family resource rocket packs, inspired by an encounter with a little boy from the residency ‘Joe and his lion’ (see Appendix I Case Study).

This particular encounter took place in the gallery where Joe took up a story around a particular painting by Carel Weight titled, Allegro Strepitoso in the Art Depot display. Joe had earlier showed an interest in playing with the toy animals in the studio and had focused in particular on a small toy lion. In the gallery he was drawn to the painting of a lion chasing a woman and launched into a beautiful story about his own toy lion he had with him in the gallery and the lion in the painting, taking his fellow classmates along with him in the story. I was so taken with Joes interpretation I wanted to add some small wooden lions into our resource as provocation for stories for families and as a way to engage small children to our Art Depot display. I’ve used a natural wooden lion that is lovely to hold and carry around for small hands.



Another aspect of the residential experience was the sustained engagement by staff with the gallery spaces, sounds, architecture, range of artefacts and their affordances. It was intended that this may contribute to staff’s changing perspectives about how the gallery space might be used with, and of broader interest to children and families, creating a different type of ownership for nursery staff, as well as for the East Prescot Road Nursery families.

Residency as process of discovery

Early discussions with cultural partners at Tate Liverpool highlighted the need to focus on preparation as a key element of professional development. Children and staff from East Prescot Road regularly visit galleries and museums, and it is recognised that the preparation for a ‘visit’ was critical, but rather different when a residency was planned in relation to how expectations and experiences were managed. Reflecting on their own knowledge and experience of galleries, whilst being open to contemporary work in those spaces, Colette’s thinking had been influenced by the work of Hackett (2014), MacRae, Hackett, Holmes & Jones (2018), particularly being prepared to understand that the gallery may not have the

same meaning to children as adults. Developing a mindful pedagogy, borne from watching, listening, and importantly sensing how the young children experienced the gallery spaces, Colette accepted that the things the children were interested in may not correspond immediately with the cultural elements of the gallery; their behaviour around the spaces also may not be seen as ‘acceptable’ to other gallery users and to some of the gallery staff and may need considerable reflective work, opening up these issues with East Prescott Road nursery staff as they actively explore the difference between a ‘visit’ and a ‘process of discovery’. It was acknowledged that risks needed to be taken in order to step into an unknown situation with an open mind that enables thinking about problem solving in a new way.

Provocations

Colette was interested in how the less familiar environment of the gallery with its different artefacts, architecture and acoustics had the potential to augment practitioner behaviour, alter practice habits and routines, unsettle exchanges of power and ensure the range of children’s voices and modes of communication were integral to the experience. Driven by a curiosity around young children making meaning through movement in the gallery and museum spaces, East Prescott set up a series of provocations that might afford young children’s “multimodal communicative practices” (Hackett, 2014: 5):

- What are the tensions that arise in between ‘freedom and control’ of children’s explorations in the gallery spaces? How much power were staff prepared to relinquish? How realistic or possible was it, to let the children follow their own lines of enquiry and for staff to follow and facilitate?
- How can staff unstructure children’s gallery time to allow for possibility thinking? How could they ensure that school practices and provision were not repackage and represented in the gallery?
- An unfamiliar place can be daunting, off-putting and even stressful for a young child. How do we make the unfamiliar more familiar, safe, whilst also making familiar things seem strangely exciting, full of risks and challenges? How much risk were staff prepared to take? How can an unfamiliar place, shift relationships and foster a shared interest in discovery and adventure?



“This is a different way of not seeing” (comment made by a child watching the film ‘Blindly’ 2010, by Artur Zmijewski, fieldnotes, 1st April 2019)

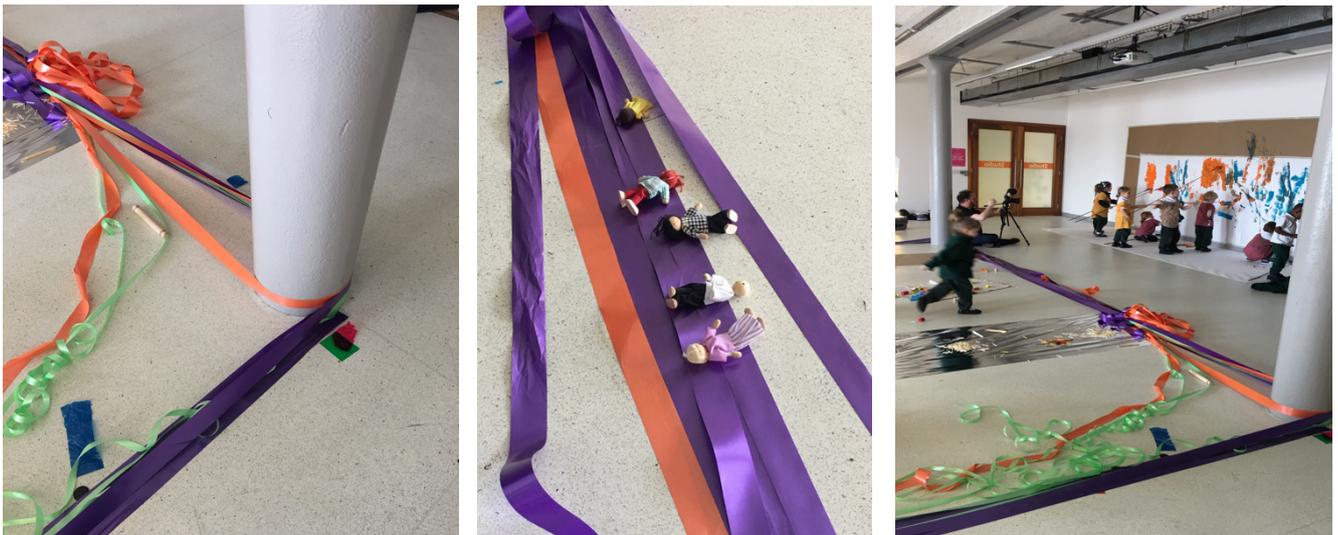
- How is the gallery a place for sustained shared thinking? Would this sense of agency impact on the children’s wellbeing and literacy?
- Together with in-the-moment planning, being steered and led by the children, is it possible to develop a way for practitioners to reflect-in-, and on-action? Could staff listen with all their senses to engage fully in this exploration? Could we use the experience to explore something new about our practice and gather evidence of how that worked?



Place-making: ribbons, literacy and wellbeing

Focusing on children’s movements as fluid representations of their ideas (literacy), we noted how children began using ribbons as they moved around the space in the Clore Studio and seemed to be marking out the topography of repetitious and different movements.

“A child used some ribbon to mark out a square around the central activities. Before long lots of children joined in. Almost needing to explore the space, define the parameters in this new, large and open environment.” (fieldnotes, 1st April 2019). They seemed to be defining their own place within a space, as Fog Olwin and Gullov (2003) argue, observing those places constructed by children is a way to sense something about their perspectives, as they produce a place through their social and cultural activities. The children’s bodies were making a dwelling place, as Ingold writes, “the forms people build, whether in the imagination or on the ground, arise within the current of their involved activity, in the specific relational contexts of their practical engagement with their surroundings” (2000: 186).



These ribbons at times extended to become seat belts.



As we observed the children over the four days in the Tate spaces, they were in continual active learning modes, exploring and investigating, creating and thinking critically. The children in the images spent long periods “wayfaring” and constructing important lines of communication, as Ingold suggests, “place-making” (2007: 101),

Ingold’s (2007, 2008) concept of place as a meshwork of paths of movement, both human and non-human, coming together, intertwining and so creating place puts emphasis on the significance of lines of movement, over and above the bounded places illustrated on modern maps and plans. ‘Wayfaring, in short, is neither placeless nor place-bound, but place-making’ (Ingold, 2007: 101). Therefore, the experiencing and creating of place through walking is not only a physical but a communicative activity (Hackett, 2014: 11).



Embedding practices

Colette was keen that the process at Tate would provide practitioners with real experiences to reflect on and evoke changes in practice. The residency would stimulate a community of shared or collective enquiry as the children, the Tate practitioners, herself and the nursery practitioners generated new learning about materials, about space and place that would move back to East Prescott Road Nursery. She hoped the questions raised would lead to ongoing learning. Colette was interested in how a shift in pedagogical approach in the gallery would have an impact on the practitioners' embedded understandings of the children as co-constructors of experiences. For example, as the children and nursery practitioners gathered together in different formations over the week, a collective sense of place was made as people experienced the gallery world through their bodies. There were lots of moments of shared time as space and perspectives were unsettled.



Jim Lambie, Zobop

Concluding thoughts

Our contributions could potentially:

Galvanise the understanding of the important role of artists in schools

Develop the role of practitioners in galleries and cultural organisations

Acknowledge the importance of movement and use of space in relation to children's meaning making, communication and multi-modal representation of ideas

Reflecting retrospectively on the role of practitioners in leading cultural experiences and sharing their findings along with any implications for practice would be planned and delivered with others through CPD sessions across two other settings and via articles published in early years professional magazines.

Appendix I

Case Study: Joe and The Lion

Colette Bentley, Head teacher, East Prescott Road Nursery school

Throughout his time in Nursery school Joe had demonstrated a fascination with animals from a resource perspective and an imaginary perspective often talking about horses and dinosaurs he was playing or imagining as part of his play.

As part of our preparation for the Tate residency we had discussed providing familiar within unfamiliar as a transitional support for our very young children. We did this through the provision of objects and materials from school in the new and unfamiliar environment the model lion was one of the objects.

Jo was initially observed playing and interacting with Jake using the lion and a range of small world characters and furniture. He was playacting the role of the lion by facial expression and gesture in a highly involved way.

On his visit to the gallery with a small group of children and staff Joe chose to bring the lion with him. After looking at a range of artefacts they were asked if they had a preference Joe told one of the practitioners (Jess Tinsley) that he had seen a lion picture in the gallery. He had the lion in his hand and said

“I’ve just got the lion”

the practitioner was unaware of the picture and asked:

“do you think the lion would find the lion picture”?

Joe said: “the lion will sniff him out”

Jo took the group to the location of the picture (which was immediately outside the entrance to the Clore studio where we were located).

Still holding onto the lion Joe began to describe in great imaginative detail his interpretation of the story within the picture. The practitioner punctuated Joe’s story with a range of open-ended questions and comments designed to reaffirm Joes narrative. In this way the practitioner followed Joe’s lead and adopted the role of facilitator. Throughout the episode Joe appeared highly absorbed in the telling of his story. Another child who had been listening as part of the group remained highly involved throughout, even choosing to sit down next to Joe whilst continuing to focus on Joe’s imaginative narrative.

Joe demonstrated many signals of emotional wellbeing and high level involvement and in terms of facial expression, body, precision and persistence. He appeared totally relaxed in this situation talking confidently and responding to questions without hesitation.

Interestingly, Joe focused on the injury to a woman’s arm in the picture.

“he’s (lion) broken her arm” and responded that he knew this was so “because it has blood on it.”

In recent years Joe has very bravely undergone several operations on his arm and reconstructions of his hand. Observing Joe’s interest and response to this observation I wondered if Joes connection was related to his own personal experience.

Evaluating this clip we were able to identify many of the anticipated research themes such as; meaning making; freedom and control; learning not leading; possibility thinking, mindful pedagogy and reflective practice. It is intended our practice will evolve as a result of these findings.

More than Music: Language, Literacy and Laughter!

Stoneyholme Nursery School and More Music

Contributors

Shamim Ashraf (Head Teacher at Stoneyholme Nursery School)
Ben McCabe and Anni Tracy (More Music Morecambe)
Kerry Moakes (Researcher, Manchester Metropolitan University)

Overall Research Question

What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education underpinning the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?

Aim: to inspire and reinvigorate musical practices through Professional Development and support from More Music

Research Questions

How does musicality enhance children's well-being in a nursery setting?
How does musicality encourage literacy development in the early years?

Context

The three nursery schools involved in the project are situated in Lancashire. Two nursery schools are situated in Burnley and one in Nelson. The demographic of the children is interesting to note. In 2011 Census 12.6% of residents of Burnley were BAME however, in the Stoneyholme area this is 82%, in Nelson, this is 29.2% are Pakistani. A significant number of children are eligible for the two-year old offer and there are a high number of children who arrive at nursery with little or no English language.

Research Methods

A qualitative approach was taken. All nursery staff across 3 nurseries participated in a Twilight CPD session. Two colleagues from More Music, Ben McCabe and Anni Tracy were involved. Ben spent three half days in Stoneyholme Nursery School and Woodfield Nursery and Anni spent three half days at Basnett Street Nursery School. There were two half day evaluations held at Stoneyholme which were attended by Ben and Anni and the nursery headteachers.

The following methods of data collection were used:

Practitioner observation, observations from children's learning journeys (including photographs), audio-recordings from evaluation group

In addition, Laever's emotional well-being and involvement scales was used across all of the settings to reflect on and assess the impact of musicality on children's well-being and involvement.

Ethical Considerations

There was already a setting agreement in place in terms of the practitioners' participation in their career development.

Project Overview

1. Initial Visit to More Music

The initial visit to More Music in Morecambe was an opportunity for each partner to learn about the different contexts and begin to co-construct the research project. The MMU partner attended this session to support the development of the research design. Some time was spent observing a 'clapping song' session and exploring the spaces and places in the centre. Later in the day, More Music and Shamim (HT Stoneyholme) shared knowledge of the work they do and why a musical project was so important to the staff and children in Burnley. Shamim had previously worked with More Music as part of a Pennine Arts project in 2014.

A central discussion point was in relation to the types of children and families More Music and Stoneyholme work with. Shamim explained the diverse and varied attitudes to music within the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities in Burnley. In the particular region of Burnley in which Stoneyholme is situated there are some families who hold the belief that music is, according to the Quran 'haram' meaning forbidden.

Sound, music and experimentation is important for children's literacy development and their well-being. This is acutely important for children who are learning English as a second language. There was a desire that the SLICE project could facilitate work with parents, practitioners and children in order to develop a holistic experience of musicality for children in the nursery and their home-learning environment. However, this was realised to be too extensive within the timeframe, so it was decided that focussing on practitioners and children would be the initial step within the project.

2. CPD Session

The project aimed to stimulate interest in musical experimentation. With acute recognition of the importance of personal stories in relation to music and the need to explore issues of culture, religion and confidence, Ben and Anni from More Music provided a Twilight CPD session. The session introduced staff across three nursery schools to some tunes, songs and sound games that can easily be adapted in the

context of children's everyday routines. The use of materials and objects to create sound games were practiced. The CPD session was alive, there was laughter and smiling, staff were having fun and sharing thoughts and ideas about things they could try. There was a sense that staff were reconnecting with their own childhoods and their passion for children's creativity.

There were diverse levels of participation in the session. There was some practitioners who were passionate about the importance of nursery rhymes, singing and sound play with young children and others who were quietly observing and listening. Interesting discussions took place around personal experiences of music in the home. Furthermore, some conversations explored the importance of valuing children's experimentations with sound, even when the sounds were unrecognisable or obscure. This was particularly important for children whose first language was not English. It was also felt that the immense pressure on children to speak could be affecting their well-being. It was intended that a more experimental, playful approach to sound would reduce children's anxiety and therefore increase well-being and involvement.

Although each nursery school participating in the SLICE programme were situated in slightly different areas there were some similarities particularly in relation to the focus on language and the relationship this has with well-being.

At the end of the CPD session there was a conversation with the practitioner in the 2 year old room. She explained...

"I used to sing Bengali nursery rhymes in this room all the time... but I just stopped... I don't know why..."

I asked if she felt that the session had given her some permission to try again and bring her songs back into her daily practice in the nursery?

"yeah... probably... the children bring in rhymes all the time and we have to look them up on YouTube and learn them... it's a good way of staying up to date"

The significance of learning from the communities who attended the nursery was emphasised. Although the CPD session involved many tunes adapted from traditional western nursery rhymes there were some staff who had a significant awareness of music used within their own families for celebratory or ceremonious events.

3. *More Music Visits*

Over the course of the project each setting has been able to utilise the support and mentorship from More Music in order to support their particular needs. The ultimate intention of the project is to embed music as part of the daily practice in the nursery in order to support speech and language development through raising levels of well-being

and engagement. Each nursery setting is at different points in relation to this endeavour.

In terms of the project so far, the following themes seemed worthy of exploration; experimentation, inclusive practice, confidence and noticing and embedding. I will briefly discuss these in turn.

Experimentation

In the early days of the project, there was discussion about the documentation which underpin many of the approaches to practice in the early years. These included consideration of Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Development Matters and Musical Development Matters. As a cultural provider, More Music were in the position to suggest that these were perhaps something that could be disregarded at this point in the project. For some staff this was a little frightening and unsettling.

Inclusive Practice

At multiple points in the project, and within each of the settings staff reported that the focus on musical practices was having a significant impact on the children with diagnosed and undiagnosed special educational needs.

During a session at Stoneyholme, Ben was delivering a carpet session for the children. A young boy was very restless at the start of the session – he kept standing up and looking around – a member of staff kept trying to get him to come and sit with her on the edge of the carpet. He sat down with her and she held onto him next to her. When the songs introduced rhythmic clapping he became fixated on Ben, he clapped to the rhythm, he was smiling and he moved his body... he was totally engaged.

Studies have explored the value of music for children with various special educational needs but particularly children with autistic spectrum conditions (Alvin and Warwick, 1992). One of the central benefits of music for children with special educational needs is that it offers the child an opportunity for non-verbal social engagement. This can be seen to promote a child's sense of well-being in the context of the classroom environment.

Many children in the nurseries have English as a second language. Many children arrive at nursery with little or no command of English language. During the course of the work with More Music, children who were often reluctant to engage vocally were observed participating in activities. Some children were seen to be mouthing the words or moving their bodies to the music. For children with EAL, music can enable them to tune into the sound, rhythm and melody of English language, which in turn can influence their development of literacy and enhance their ability to engage in learning across the curriculum (Fox, 2000).

Confidence

At the mid-point evaluation one of the headteachers commented:

“we need to build staff confidence... not to be afraid... to be adventurous...playful in fact...”

Confidence was a fundamental factor in the project for both adults and children. The project sought to inspire and reinvigorate musical practices in the nursery. The initial CPD session was intended as a starting point, to offer practitioners some examples of songs and musical activities they could try and how they may adapt them to suit their own needs. Inevitably, some practitioners felt more comfortable than others. Some practitioners were nervous of the children becoming too giddy or silly whereas others felt that they were unable to sing and felt embarrassed or nervous doing this publicly.

The Programme of interventions provided by More Music offered a range of interventions including input sessions and mentoring support and debriefs and discussion slots. Over three months, the sessions provided opportunities for staff to build relationships with More Music and begin to feel able to experiment with the practices they had been introduced to. Practitioners were finding their own individual ways into musical practices, noticing objects that made sounds, valuing children’s sound-play, and being able to use song as part of the daily routines.

For the children, musical activities were often empowering, allowing spaces for children’s contributions and suggestions to be valued. For example, children could introduce their own ideas to the ‘walking down the street song’ or engage in interactional sound-play with adults for a sustained period without pressure to engage with words. Craft (2002) explains the significance of adults in creating a playful environment, which supports children’s self-confidence and self-esteem. Through such playful experimentation children’s well-being is positively impacted and evidenced through the Leuven scales.

Noticing and Embedding

Drawing the themes together and reflecting on the project overall the significance of noticing and the importance of embedding musical practices stand out. Relinquishing the ties to Development Matters opens up spaces for spontaneity and improvisation this can be exciting and scary. There are significant demands on practitioners to notice, evidence and highlight children’s progress, this can feel more difficult when the taken-for-granted strictures are loosened.

At Basnett Street Nursery the second visit by More Music was set aside for paired observations of practice and the opportunity to provide suggestive feedback on ways to integrate music further. This was a fantastic opportunity to co-construct ideas between

nursery managers, practitioners and the cultural partner, offering the opportunity to notice differently. Anni observed practitioners singing rhymes, experimenting with sounds, and children who would sing whilst engaging in their play. There was perhaps a feeling that some of these practices were performative, however, this was an exciting starting place for further work in the next session.

Being in a position to notice and recognise that learning is taking place is significant in terms of embedding practice. In the initial stages of the project, developing confidence to experiment and try new things was key, it is possible that there may be opportunities moving forwards to create spaces to discuss observations and suggest ways of introducing or developing musicality within daily routines.

Of significant importance in this project is the engagement of the headteachers, senior management team and governing bodies. Creating a supportive culture within the settings where staff feel that senior management are behind their endeavours is a means of raising confidence and their personal sense of well-being. Feeling trusted to experiment and try new things in the knowledge that managers will be inspired and supportive is of genuine significance to the impact of the arts on practice as well as the practitioners overall sense of well-being.

Ensuring that the practices introduced by the cultural partner become embedded into the culture of the organisation is a fundamental aspiration of the project team. The senior management commitment to the significance of the arts in raising attainment and increasing levels of well-being for practitioners and children was palpable. The project provided time and space for discussion and reflection upon practice. The dialogic encounters help to focus attention, they promote an on-going commitment to noticing practices which evidence the impact of the cultural partner's work which simultaneously works towards the desire of situated and embedded practice.

References

Bentley, D. F. (2012) Making Messes and Taking Your Time: Art Making in Infancy, *Childhood Education*, 88:1, 36-44.

Blum, Susan D. 2014 'The Language Gap'—Liberal Guilt Creates Another Not-So-Magic Bullet. Huffington Post. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/susan-d-blum/language-gapliberal-guilt-creates-ano_b_5233638.html#es_share_ended

Boscacci, L. (2018). Wit(h)nessing. *Environmental Humanities* 10 (1): 343–347.

Burnett, C. (2017). 'Acknowledging and interrogating multiplicities: Towards a generous approach in evaluations of early literacy innovation and intervention'. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*, 17(4) 522–550.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G. (1990). *Writing Culture: The poetics and politics of ethnography*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Colebrook, C. (2017). What Is This Thing Called Education? *Qualitative Inquiry*. Vol. 23(9) 649–655.

Coleman, R. and Ringrose, J. (2013). *Deleuze and Research Methodologies*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Dolphijn, R. and van der Tuin, I. (2012). *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*. US: Open Humanities Press.

Edwards, C., Gandini, L. & Forman, G. (1998) *The Hundred Languages of Children: The Reggio Emilia Approach*. Advanced Reflections. 2nd ed., London: JAI Press Ltd.

Gallacher, L. (2017) *From milestones to wayfaring: Geographic metaphors and iconography of embodied growth and change in infancy and early childhood*. *GeoHumanities*. ISSN 2373-566X

Hackett, A. (2014) Zigging and zooming all over the place: Young children's meaning making and movement in the museum, *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. Vol. 14(1) 5–27

Ingold, T. (2014). 'That's enough about ethnography!' *Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 4 (1): 383–395.

Ingold, Tim (2000). *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*. London: Routledge.

Jones, L., Holmes, R., MacRae, C. and MacLure, M. (2010). 'Documenting classroom life: how can I write about what I am seeing?' *Qualitative Research*, 10 (4): 479 – 491.

Kellet, M. (2009) 'Children and young people's participation.' In Montgomery, H. & Kellet, M. (eds) *Children and young people's worlds: Developing frameworks for integrated practice*. Bristol: Policy Press, pp.43-60

Kirby, P. & Gibbs, S. (2006) 'Facilitating Participataion: Adults' Caring Support roles withing Child-to-Child Projects in Schools and After-School Settings.' *Children and Society*, 20 pp 209-222

Mason, J. (2002). *Researching your own practice: the discipline of noticing*. UK: Routledge.

MacRae, C. (2019) 'At the Museum.' *Nursery World*, 18-31 March 2019, pp.3-131

MacRae, C, Holmes, R, Arculus, C (2019) 2-Curious: the potential of performance-based arts-practice in dialogue with early years practice, *Impact*, Autumn Issue

MacRae, C., Hackett, A. Holmes, R. & Jones, L. (2018) Vibrancy, repetition and movement: posthuman theories for reconceptualising young children in museums, *Children's Geographies*, 16:5, 503-515.

Motzkau, J. F. (2009). 'Exploring the transdisciplinary trajectory of suggestibility'. *Subjectivity*, Volume 27, pp172-194.

O'Connor, A, and Daly, A (2016) *Understanding Physical Development in the Early Years*, Routledge: Oxon.

Souto-Manning, M. and Swick, K. (2006) Teachers' Beliefs about Parent and Family Involvement: Rethinking our Family Involvement Paradigm, *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 34 (2),

Sperry, D. E., Sperry, L. L., & Miller, P. J. (2018). Reexamining the verbal environments of children from different socioeconomic backgrounds. *Child Development*.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cdev.13072>

Pitt, J., Arculus, C., & Fox, S. (2017). SALTmusic - Speech and Language Therapy and Music Practice: Emerging findings from action research. In J. Pitt & A. Street (Eds.) *Proceedings of the 8th Conference of the European Network of Music Educators and Researchers of Young Children*, 20-24th June, 2017, Cambridge, UK. ISBN 978-1-5272-0922-0

Powell, S. and Goouch, K. (2014) *Two-Year-Old Children in Three Counties: Improving provision through research-led development*, Canterbury: Canterbury Christ Church University



Appendix I

Manchester Metropolitan University SLiCE Project Proposal

SLiCE / Manchester Metropolitan University Project Proposal Specialist Leaders in Cultural Education (SLiCE[®]) Fellowship

Summary

Manchester Met will undertake both a consultancy and research role in this SLiCE project.

Between September 2018 and August 2019, Curious Minds will fund 5 early years SLiCE Fellows to work with 5 partner cultural organisations. Each partnership will research '*What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education underpinning the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?*'. Nurseries will secure appropriate and necessary ethical approval from their respective early years settings to carry out this research.

On 27th June 2019, the MMU researchers are contracted to invite the 5 nursery schools, together with their cultural partners to MMU to gather data about the range of collaborations that have emerged; the varied approaches they have taken to interrogating the research question and summarise their data, 'findings' and 'evidence' gathered via their partnership research.

Project Outline

Supported by Curious Minds and MMU, early years SLiCE fellows (and cultural organisation partners) will propose a research project that addresses:

What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education underpinning the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?

Each SLiCE Fellow with their cultural organisation partner will be supported to plan the following:

- (i) How they are planning to collaborate;
- (ii) How this collaboration will help them respond to the research question above;
- (iii) Details of their approach to investigating the question and why;
- (iv) What they want to use the findings for, what are their intended audience(s) (CPD, partners, parents etc);
- (v) Methods of data collection;
- (vi) Nature of (consultancy) support they envisage over the year from Manchester Met staff (equivalent to 4 days per setting)

Consultancy role of Manchester Met

- Hold a ‘Developing Research Proposals’ day session with the early years SLiCE Fellows and cultural organisation partners to discuss and offer feedback on points i – vi above.
- Provide literature on early years wellbeing/early years literacy and approaches to arts, culture and creativity in early years schools and settings and provide documents for SLiCE fellows and Curious Minds as background reading ahead of the induction on 27/9.
- Attend the SLiCE fellow induction day in Liverpool on 27/9 to gain programme background and meet the early years SLiCE fellows and their cultural partners.
- Offer advice and support to Early Years SLiCE fellows and cultural organisation partners who will be carrying out the research, documenting and collecting their own data.

Research to be undertaken by Manchester Met

Rationale

To provide research evidence of the value of the two-way flow of expertise between cultural organisations and nursery schools, but also the challenges encountered when working in collaboration.

Aim

To draw from the research undertaken by SLiCE Fellows and their cultural partners to interrogate the range and nature of collaborations and the diverse approaches each partnership has taken to interrogate the research question.

Research questions

- How have the nursery schools and cultural partners collaborated?
- What were the details of their approach to investigating the question and why?
- How has their collaboration helped them respond to the research question?
- How was knowledge of the early years and of the arts shared and / or passed between the nursery practitioners and the cultural partners during this research?
- What was afforded by this new relationship?
- What were the challenges of working together?
- What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education?
- How do the arts underpin the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?

Methodology and methods

This research is based on the idea of a qualitative snap-shot, or an instance of collaboration as outlined by the funding body, Curious Minds. We will use a day on 27th June 2019 to gather data from 5 SLiCE Fellows and their 5 cultural partners. Methods will include the collection of primary data from the 10 participants via focus group work. We will take

photographs, record discussions and make notes. As we are researching the nature of 5 different collaborations, we will undertake a thematic data analysis that draws information and clear themes that emerge from across the partnerships. Simultaneously we will be sensitive to those affects and flows of intensities in discussion that are in excess of categorisation.

Activities and outputs

- Hold a collective 'Data Sharing Day' (x 4 people) on 27th June 2019
- Manchester Met (x 4 people) will spend 1 day writing up at the end as a report that collates the range of collaborations, varied approaches to researching the question.
- To produce one 4* publication (co-authored by MacRae, Moakes, McNulty & Holmes)
- To produce one professional publication (co-authored between Manchester Met staff, SLiCE fellows & cultural organisation partners)
- To produce a Research Report (co-authored by Holmes, MacRae, Moakes & McNulty)

Appendix II

Manchester Metropolitan University Ethics Forms for Data Sharing Day

SLiCE: early years and cultural organisations in collaboration

Participant Information Sheet

Over the past 8 months, you have been involved in collaborative projects interrogating the question *'What role could cultural organisations have in supporting schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education underpinning the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years?'*

Over that time, you have planned:

- (i) How you will collaborate with each other;
- (ii) How this collaboration will help you respond to the research question above;
- (iii) Rationale underpinning, and details of your approach to investigating the question;
- (iv) What you want to use the findings for, what are your intended audience(s) (CPD, partners, parents etc);
- (v) Ways to share information with, and seek ethical permissions from parents, children and staff at early years settings;
- (vi) Methods of data collection;
- (vii) Nature of consultancy support you envisaged from MMU staff

Your research project has now been completed and you are in a position to reflect on the affordances and challenges of working in partnership with one another in order to think about how this Curious Minds SLiCE scheme can be developed further for other potential Fellows and cultural organisations.

We would like you to take part in a data sharing day at Manchester Metropolitan University on 27th June to contribute to a research report that closely examines the nature and realities of your collaborations.

On that day we will be working in two small focus groups to tease out your experiences of:

- How nursery schools and cultural partners have been collaborating
- Your approach to investigating the question
- How your collaboration helped you respond to the research question
- How knowledge of the early years and of the arts was shared and passed between the nursery practitioners and the cultural partners during this research
- What was afforded by this new relationship
- What the challenges were when working together
- What role cultural organisations have played in supporting nursery schools to think differently about arts, creativity and cultural education
- How the arts underpin the relationship between wellbeing and literacy in the early years

Over the course of the day, we will be making notes, taking photographs, and making some digital video recordings. We will also invite you to draw from any of your own research journals / diaries during discussions.

The data we accumulate on this day will be used to produce:

- A research report focusing on the nature, affordances and challenges of your research collaborations
- One academic international journal publication about early years/cultural organisations partnership working
- One national and one international conference to disseminate the findings
- One professional publication, co-authored by MMU staff, SLiCE fellows and cultural organisation partners about the co-production of community knowledges in early years and the arts sector

We want this research to contribute to national and international debates about how collaborations supported by organisations such as Curious Minds and the Arts Council forge generative co-produced ways of working in the early years, as well as produce complex challenges for the early years and arts sectors.

We will keep all the information gathered during the day stored in a safe place. When this information is used in reports, publications or presentations, and participants names will be anonymised so your identity will be kept confidential at all times.

We will analyse our notes, the photographs and video, and use some fragments to write about them in the research report, as well as publications such as research journals, and conference papers. We may include stills of the video in these publications.

Aspects of the research will go on beyond the lifetime of the workshops, for example the dissemination of information about the project at conferences or through the writing of bids for further funding or journal articles. Your informed consent will cover this further potential use of data.

The participant consent form is to ask you for this permission.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a complaint about the research study, your experience, and/or the members of the Man Met team, in the first instance, please contact Rachel Holmes on 0161 247 2059, who will do her best to answer your questions. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally you can do this by contacting Ricardo [Nemirovsky](mailto:r.nemirovsky@mmu.ac.uk) on 0161 247 2023 or by emailing him at (r.nemirovsky@mmu.ac.uk).

Will your taking part in the study be kept confidential?

Your confidentiality will be safeguarded during and after the study. All photographic data (both still and moving images) and written notes will be transferred onto a password-protected hard drive.

The data will be kept for 3 years in total and then all files will be deleted, except for any data that is already in circulation (for instance in research reports, or edited videos that have been shared at conferences).

What will happen with the data you provide?

All the data obtained will be anonymised, which means that no personal information (such as name, address) will be connected to it. We do not plan to collect, store or use any personal data that you may have provided when enrolling to this event.

You can contact the project lead if you are interested in seeing or reviewing any data.

No piece of the data will be shared with any third party. The data will only be used within the confines of this small study.

The data from the research will be stored in an external encrypted hard-drive for 3 years.

This hard-drive will be kept under a locked cabinet in the project's lead office. The data will be curated during this lifecycle by the project's lead. After this 3 years, the data will be disposed safely following the designated institutional procedures described in <https://www2.mmu.ac.uk/isds/information-security/policies/data-destruction/>

When you agree to participate in this research, we will collect from you personally-identifiable information.

The Manchester Metropolitan University ('the University') is the Data Controller in respect of this research and any personal data that you provide as a research participant.

The University is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University's Data Protection Policy.

We collect personal data as part of this research (such as name, telephone numbers or age).

As a public authority acting in the public interest we rely upon the 'public task' lawful basis.

When we collect special category data (such as medical information or ethnicity) we rely upon the research and archiving purposes in the public interest lawful basis.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained.

Can you choose to withdraw from the study?

If you give initial consent to taking part in the research, you can decide to withdraw, at any point.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The research will feed into the ongoing practices of the arts organisations and the early years network at Curious Minds. It will also provoke thinking and discussions about the value of the arts in nursery schools.

More information

If you have any questions about the study at any stage, you can contact Rachel Holmes (r.holmes@mmu.ac.uk) at the University. [If you have any concerns about the ethics of this research, please contact Ricardo Nemirovsky \(\[r.nemirovsky@mmu.ac.uk\]\(mailto:r.nemirovsky@mmu.ac.uk\)\)](#)

Participant Consent Form

Title of Project: SLICE: early years and cultural organisations in collaboration

Name of Researchers: Rachel Holmes, Christina MacRae, Kerry Moakes, Jo McNulty

Please initial all boxes

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated **22 May 2019** (version 1) for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions and have had these answered satisfactorily.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason, without my legal rights being affected.
3. I understand that relevant sections of my data collected during the study, may be looked at by individuals from **Manchester Metropolitan University** and **Curious Minds**, where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records.
4. I agree to take part in the above study.
5. I give permission for quotes, video clips and images, to be used in national and international conference presentations, publications, seminars and teaching
6. I give permission for quotes, video clips and images, to be used in national and international funding proposals to extend this research.

Name of Participant

Date

Signature

Name of Person
taking consent.

Date

Signature

Any questions, or for more information, please contact Rachel Holmes
r.holmes@mmu.ac.uk