

The eleventh of a series of articles looking at the work of Creative Partnerships outlines the citizenship agenda and considers how collaborations with creative practitioners are helping to deliver high-quality citizenship education in schools across the country. We also highlight Arts Council England's newly launched young people's Arts Awards, which will give thousands of young people the chance to enjoy the arts and build their citizenship skills.

# Inspiring creative citizens



people are distancing themselves from society. High-quality citizenship education can help combat this problem, giving learners the belief that their actions matter and they have the ability to change situations. Using a diverse range of external partners is a logical step towards ensuring every young person is engaged, informed and aware. Creative Partnerships programmes are playing a key role in making this happen.

Creative Partnerships has responded to the citizenship agenda in a range of creative ways. The case studies opposite illustrate just a few of the projects that have taken place and show how young people, teachers and creative practitioners can successfully approach citizenship education. ■

Citizenship became a compulsory subject in secondary schools in September 2002 and is part of the curriculum in most primary schools. Education in citizenship aims to provide young people with the knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values that will help them in three main areas. The first of these is political literacy – where students are encouraged to play an effective and active role in society in relation to the local, national and international community. Social and moral responsibility is designed to help pupils to become informed citizens, aware of their rights, responsibilities and duties. Finally, there is community involvement, which aims to help students realise that they can have influence and make a difference in their communities.

Citizenship is not simply a new

subject but a new type of subject. It requires schools to embrace new approaches to learning and focus on working in partnership with people such as politicians, activists, lawyers and creative practitioners. Forming creative partnerships is central to the delivery of effective citizenship education. There are also genuine overlaps between skills for citizenship and those creative behaviours which are key to developing young people's creativity. Citizenship and creativity have the potential to sit together as connected and shared agendas.

### Artist opportunities

Citizenship can be taken as a stand-alone subject but would lose its essence if it stopped at the timetable boundary and the ring of the school bell. It can progress through a mix of

discrete lessons, cross-curricular delivery and out of hours learning. The best practice emerges in those 'citizenship-rich' schools where citizenship is both learned within a curriculum programme and lived within the broader values of the school. Students need the chance to 'do' citizenship and it is here that events and activities have a key role to play. This is where there are opportunities for artists and other practitioners and organisations to work in schools.

Many young

*For detailed information about Creative Partnerships' work on citizenship, please visit [www.creative-partnerships.com/resources/resourcefiles/52165](http://www.creative-partnerships.com/resources/resourcefiles/52165)*



## What is Creative Partnerships?

Creative Partnerships is a government-funded programme delivered through Arts Council England, that aims to give schoolchildren in deprived areas throughout England the opportunity to develop creativity in learning, and participate in cultural activities.

Its vision is based on developing long-term partnerships between schools and cultural and creative organisations. These include architects, theatre and dance companies, historic buildings, musicians and online designers.

Sixteen Phase One partnerships were established in July 2002 as an initial pilot for the programme. The

programme was then extended to cover 36 areas, which are currently being rolled out. The programme is funded through the DCMS (with some additional funds from the DfES) and delivered by Arts Council England. Funding for the programme is currently confirmed until 2008.

[www.creative-partnerships.com](http://www.creative-partnerships.com)

### COMING UP.

In issue 110, we take a look at how children in Creative Partnerships schools are learning more about the creativity involved in growing and cooking healthy foods, as they cultivate fruit, vegetables and herbs in their playgrounds.

# Planning for real



The demolition of blocks of flats and redevelopment of a site close to Deansfield High School in Wolverhampton gave an opportunity for pupils to focus work on town planning and regeneration. Working with Wolverhampton City Council and the Neighbourhood Initiatives Foundation, pupils created a large-scale model of the site which became the focal point for extensive community consultation with over 300 residents. Designers, architects and planners have also been involved and house-building firm, Persimmon, has enlisted pupils to contribute to the creative development of the show home in this project supported by Creative Partnerships The Black Country. Although work began in geography and design, it quickly inspired other teachers in English, maths, art, music and ICT to explore creative learning. Pupils have produced a report in partnership with graduates from Wolverhampton University's School of Art and Design. At a Wolverhampton Housing Conference last month, they gave a presentation about the history of the site, the community consultation using Planning for Real, and subsequent work with the regeneration team at the City Council.

## Modern commandments



Creative Partnerships Durham/Sunderland supported Exodus 20 – a contemporary interpretation of the biblical ten commandments through the eyes of young people. Directed by Ian Cottage, it is the result of a collaboration between Airship Films, Creative Partnerships, Tyneside Cinema and The Forge (the Arts in education agency for Durham and Sunderland). Each of the ten participating

Creative Partnerships schools developed one film, working with a professional director and writer, exploring one of the commandments as a starting point. These stories were then scripted and filmed with young people from the participating schools. The films put the ten commandments into a modern context, for example the film for 'thou shall not steal' featured a child stealing a remote control car from school, showing the moral and wider issues associated with the act of theft. The premiere at Tyneside Cinema was seen by an audience of over 200 students, teachers, partners and others.

## Model General Assembly

Among the citizenship projects undertaken by Creative Partnerships Slough is the Model United Nations General Assembly (MUNGA) conference, which involved all 11 Slough secondary schools and Arbour Vale Special School. Last summer term, over 100 Year 9 Slough students gathered to represent individual countries and try their hand at international politics and peace-keeping through debating issues including poverty, children's rights and the effect of war and terrorism on children. All 1500 Year 9 students had role-play training with theatre practitioners Dave Farey and Catherine Lambert to help them imagine what is involved in representing a member state of the United Nations and in tackling complex global issues. Each school then selected nine 'United Nations delegates' to represent three countries at the MUNGA.

The experience gave students, teachers and creative partners the opportunity for discussion about many of the issues facing contemporary society. The project offered young people the opportunity to address global citizenship, deepen their understanding of world issues and become more confident, involved citizens through a practical creative experience.

## Arts Award for young people

Launched this month, Arts Council England's new Arts Award is the first accredited youth Arts scheme that recognises the development of young artists and arts leaders. It will offer young people aged 11 to 25 the chance to enjoy the arts whilst leading projects in the community geared towards building skills for active citizenship and developing self-confidence.

Designed to appeal to a wide range of young people with different backgrounds and cultural interests, the award will be run by arts organisations, schools, youth arts projects, youth clubs or community groups. The initiative will train teachers, youth workers and arts workers as young people's Arts Award advisers.

The Arts Award provides opportunities for collaborative work and leadership that will promote young people's broader personal development. Evidence gathered from participants in the two-year pilot of the scheme shows that they are very enthusiastic about this part of the award.

Every participant gets to go to arts events, meet local artists and visit arts organisations. In school settings, many are working with younger year groups or going out to primary schools. Young people decide which artform to explore, new or familiar, and what they want to achieve: whether it is improving their photography skills, discovering opera, or learning the basics of breakdancing. They each follow a personalised path of learning, which they themselves design to suit their aspirations.

The young people's Arts Award can be taken at three levels – Bronze, Silver or Gold – which are accredited at the National Qualifications Framework levels one, two and three. Uniquely, the award celebrates the creative progress made by young people, and not just their artistic skill. By April 2006 it is expected that Arts Award centres will be up and running throughout the country, supported by nine regional agencies in each Government Office region. ■

*The Arts Award is run by Arts Council England and Trinity Guildhall examinations. Canon (UK) Ltd is the supporting partner.*

*For further information on the Awards, e: [artsawardregister@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:artsawardregister@artscouncil.org.uk); t: 0845 300 6200*

