National Creative Learning Network

*Annual Report 2015/16*

*Structured by local authority*

The NCLN is a strong community of practice with a leadership role in championing and advocating creativity across learning both nationally and in local authorities across Scotland. It consists of the group of coordinators leading the Creative Learning Networks for each local authority. Creative Scotland and Education Scotland are building on their strong partnership with continued support for the development of Creative Learning Networks in local authority areas across Scotland

Really Useful Knowledge

Published – November 2017

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**Introduction**

Education Scotland and Creative Scotland commissioned this report to evidence the impact of the Creative Learning Networks (CLNs) and the National Creative Learning Network (NCLN) on outcomes for learners across Scotland. The CLNs champion creativity, the arts and culture in schools and communities within the overarching context of Curriculum for Excellence. CLNs are building creative capacity; encouraging collaborative working across the Education, Culture and Communities sectors; bringing together learning practitioners and creative partners; providing high quality learning experiences, practical support and professional dialogue on creative teaching, creative learning, the development of creativity skills in learners, and the conditions in which they can flourish.

The overall purpose of the Creative Learning Network fund is to help support the development and sustainability of new and already established CLNs within local authorities across Scotland.

In 2015/16, the sixth year of the fund, 28 local authorities applied for funding to deliver on that year’s intended outcome which was to help unlock learners’ creativity, specifically: *increased levels of creativity skills being recognised, articulated and valued by educationalists, practitioners and learners.*

The report sets out how Creative Learning Networks are delivering on the intended outcome of the CLN Fund, to identify key strengths and provide examples of particularly successful approaches whilst identifying areas for development. The report’s findings are based on self-evaluation reports provided by CLN Coordinators relating to work carried out during the 2015/16 funding period.

“CLN has made a huge difference to my practice, on a professional and personal level. My mind-set has completely shifted from one that focused more on the end product to one which focuses on the process and the journey to completing a piece of work.”

(Teacher, Dundee)

**CLN Activity**

Creative Learning Networks have grown considerably over the past six years. In 2010/11, 7833 people participated in 189 CLN funded activities. In 2015/16, 23,413 people participated in 626 CLN funded activities. Over that period the range of participants has broadened to include local authority senior managers, employers, managers and staff from Higher and Further Education, and a broad spectrum of educational and creative professionals from local authorities and the third sector.

One of the strengths of CLN activity is that it varies across authorities, taking account of local context and need. Collectively they aim to increase awareness, understanding and value of creativity skills and their application in teaching, learning and creative change. Examples include CLPL training, Creative Conversations, Network meetings, creativity themed conferences and events, creative learning programmes in schools and informal learning settings.

**Aberdeen City**

This year the Aberdeen CLN focused on strategic work with curriculum and teaching colleagues across Education and Children’s Services at Aberdeen City Council including a set of focused CPD seminars and presentations targeting managers in Education, teachers and pupils to inspire action at school level and share practice. As a result of the development of a Strategic Group for Creativity and the development of the first Creativity Action Plan, creativity is now represented in the city’s Curriculum Handbook. This handbook, with each curriculum area and cross cutting theme, informs individual School Improvement Plans.

The events generated discussions around creativity skills and how creativity can enhance attainment in literacy, numeracy and supporting the use of technologies for learning.

Hywel Roberts led a seminar *Leap of Faith (Live in the classroom)* at the Aberdeen Learning Festival described by participants as the highlight of the festival. A three part CPD series focused on the creative practice of Hywel Roberts with modeling practice session led by Hywel with a class of Primary 4 pupils. Education consultant David Cameron provided a national picture of creativity within education. Teachers also shared the ways that their teaching practice has been influenced and developed through the discussions and pedagogy demonstrated by Hywel Roberts.

The CPD series was documented with a short film featuring interviews with Hywel, David Cameron and a selection of participating teachers. This provides a resource for teachers to use within their own school to share their experience and advocate on the effectiveness of creative approaches to teaching and learning.

‘The learning that resulted from using this approach was outstanding.”

(Teacher)

**Angus**

Thrive HQ were commissioned to deliver a programme of engagement workshops to bring a range of stakeholders together to explore and develop a new framework for Creative Learning. A series of four ‘social studios’ ran from December 2015 to March 2016 aiming to broaden the conversation about creativity and learning with staff from Community Planning, Community Learning, Resources, Communications, Housing, Social Work and Health, Leisure and Culture. Significant progress was made in broadening the pool of stakeholders involved. The creative consultation and engagement tools offered by Richard Hewitt and his team are now used in planning, training and development contexts across the council. The Thrive programme of social studios produced a significant shift in thinking demonstrating that creativity is relevant and important for everyone. As a result, a community has been created, a conversation started and perceptions changed. This is something powerful to be built on.

**Argyll and Bute**

Through encouraging experimentation and inspiring opportunities CLN activity has increased levels of creativity skills being used confidently by learners. CPD sessions havebuilt the capacity and expertise of learning providers and creative partners to support the development of creativity skills and a shared language and understanding around creativity is developing.

Examples includethe partnership project built on the successful *Young Creatives scheme* *(not just for artists!)* which started in 13/14 and the *Colours* project in 14/15 with science, history and art pupils and teachers working with artists. Through a combination of practical ‘live’ experiences participants saw the effect adopting a creative approach had on their own teaching and on the confidence of their learners. These learning experiences were designed with professional artists to encourage constructive inquisitiveness, open-mindedness, ability to harness imagination and to identify and solve problems.

As a result, participants relied less on traditional teaching methods, with learners taking the lead. Learners were encouraged to develop their creativity skills through hands-on problem solving, investigating and reviewing possible solutions, communicating ideas to peer groups and providers. They became increasingly motivated and ambitious, confident in the validity of their own viewpoint, able to apply a creative process to situations and able to work well with others. The planning element of the programme supported an exchange of ideas and experiences between artists, learning providers, education management and youth workers. The subsequent film and report has been used to advocate development of additional activity, to further increase an awareness of creativity skills and their impact on employability with senior managers in schools, the education service and CLD practitioners.

This programme was strategically designed to engage a wide variety of learners and providers with the idea of building creativity skills during the Broad General Education years going into National 4/5.

**Dumfries and Galloway**

CLN activity this year focused on the application of small tests of change on new mathematical concepts, dance and the da Vinci Decathlon (www.davincidecathlon.co.uk).

The small test of change, developed in partnership with Kirkcudbright Primary School focused on raising attainment through creative approaches to teaching and learning new mathematical concepts. This work has developed a shared understanding between the pupils, the class teacher and the head teacher of what creativity skills are and how they contribute to non-arts areas of the curriculum. An increase in problem solving, use of imagination, open mindedness, curiosity and applying creativity skills resulted, together with improved Mathematics Assessment for Learning and Teaching (MALT) assessment scores. The class teacher and children recognise, apply and value learning from mistakes. This was a feature of the spider diagram evaluation tool.

The Ydance jump-in and Catalyst programmes provided an opportunity to develop curricular dance through two initiatives. Young people in the Kirkcudbright school cluster participated, contributing towards their Curriculum for Excellence entitlement of dance within the Expressive Arts. All 167 performed in front of an invited audience and eighteen primary and ten secondary pupils continued with the weekly sessions after the curricular input. Initially this was facilitated by a Ydance tutor, and through a recent meeting with a local graduate, the afterschool sessions continued after the summer break, in partnership with other local agencies.

The da Vinci Decathlon began in 2014/15 as a bi-annual schools’ competition. In 2015/16, this exciting piece of work has been developed to become a more sustainable model and to work with schools in the region to help develop the Broad General Education, particularly with S2/S3. Creativity, Teamwork and Enterprise skills are at the heart of all the da Vinci challenge does. The activity has reached nine out of sixteen secondary schools. Nine da Vinci days were delivered to over 700 pupils, four outdoor team building days to 60 pupils and one workshop preparation day to 70 pupils in partnership with da Vinci supporters and sponsors.

**Dundee**

“CLN has made a huge difference to my practice, on a professional and personal level. My mind-set has completely shifted from one that focused more on the end product to one which focuses on the process and the journey to completing a piece of work.”

(Teacher Dundee)

This year’s CLN projects worked towards increased levels of creativity skills being recognised, articulated and valued by educationalists, practitioners and learners. To achieve this, key activities included the continuation of a CLPL model that has allowed staff to become more inspired, resilient and reflective, with a suite of practical creativity skills and a range of creative thinking strategies for classroom application. Working with partners such as Dundee College of Art (DCA), University of Dundee, WASPS Studios, Hat in the Cat and individual creatives, a pool of partners who are now confident in communicating and advocating for ‘creativity skills’ across the curriculum has been established.

Creativity Across Learning events focused on highlighting the context for “creativity in the classroom”. Primary and secondary schools teaching staff were given the opportunity to participate in innovative creative learning events aimed at exploring expressive art techniques. Sixty-five newly qualified primary and secondary teaching staff (across subjects) developed from having little or no understanding of creativity skills to evidencing increased knowledge and understanding around creativity skills. They were inspired and energised, using practical activities within the classroom, developing understanding about ‘risk-taking’, challenge and working with cultural partners.

Participants demonstrated increased awareness in accessing archive and museum collections to encourage interdisciplinary learning including the sciences, mathematics, health & wellbeing and social studies.

Based at DCA, with activity at WASPS Studios, Dundee University Archives and Museum Collections showcased ways to encourage interdisciplinary learning through the sciences, mathematics, health & wellbeing and social studies as well as the expressive arts.

Through CLPL courses staff have developed from having no confidence or awareness of creativity skills and lacking inspiration to being confident to peer share in school, include art/creativity skills weekly in class involving reflection, experimentation, self- evaluation and valuing process as well as outcome. A number have applied for career enhancements such as GTCS skills recognition in creativity and a V & A @ Dundee primary teaching secondment.

**East Ayrshire**

Over the last year, the Creative Minds Learning Network (CMLN) in East Ayrshire has grown both in numbers and scope of activity. The network has gained respect throughout the council, senior management and communities, with key achievements highlighted in this year’s excellence awards.

The principal focus of delivery has been through a programme of training sessions and follow up activity with a launch event in the autumn featuring Sir James MacMillan as keynote speaker and a celebration event lead by local artist Peter Tudhope.

The Skills Forum explored the connections between creativity and skills for work. An unexpected outcome was an invitation for the Forum to present at a skills for work day for S3 at St Joseph’s Academy alongside Skills Development Scotland and members of the business community. The pupil support team has asked for a return visit to next year’s events which will run more frequently.

Building on the experience last year of evidencing impact, the scope of evaluation has been extended to include the gauging of core skills for work as well as creativity attributes. As the Attainment Challenge is being implemented in East Ayrshire, the CLN is working closely with the attainment adviser and the challenge schools to research more tangible measures that link the evaluation frameworks to the monitoring and tracking systems set out by Education Scotland.

**East Dunbartonshire**

In Cahootz worked with eighteen East Dunbartonshire Primary and Nursery teaching staff over six twilight workshops to consult on a series of questions to inform the development of a Creative Learning Strategy:

‘What is creativity? What is a creative intervention? What external support/CPD would be helpful to explore and develop creative approaches? What are the gaps? How do teachers learn? What does a creative classroom look like? What is the ideal working space?’

A creative approach was used to consult on these questions using a drama facilitator and a visual art facilitator. An emphasis was put on the ability to reflect on practice and on how to appreciate the practice and work of others, especially children and young people. An integral part of the CPD was to introduce techniques/exercises, which could be used as creative interventions within the classroom. The teachers went through the process of first answering the questions, then working in groups to design a CPD programme which would help explore and develop creative approaches and then, assessing the final CPD proposal presented by the facilitators which resulted from the consultation. Overall, the sessions were energetic, creative and productive with all teachers engaging with the process and the consultation. Some teachers were skeptical as to whether their voice would be heard and acted upon so they will be kept informed regarding CPD developments that grow from this consultation.

Hidden Giants formed a partnership with two secondary schools in East Dunbartonshire to explore the role and impact of creativity. The intensive action based research project involved meetings, CPD sessions with staff and workshops with pupils. The focus was to discover how best to implement future funding and provision within the local authority. Key themes emerging included creativity as an ‘unlocking’ or ‘reimagining’ tool, creativity as a support to people to move through a process of play/questioning/disruption, to discover new approaches to teaching and learning, how creativity can ‘interrupt’ patterns of behaviour and, through a creative mind-set, can support change within different areas of a school.

The Kirkintilloch staff had a strong understanding of creativity skills but recognised they are hard to implement within an exam driven system. The Bearsden pupil improvement group demonstrated the connection between pupil voice and creativity. The space provided to the pupils has allowed them to think critically and creatively about their school and, in doing so, challenge the status quo constructively.

**East Renfrewshire**

This year the emphasis was on making a Creative Learning Network focusing on technology and design with community and school education links. The aim was to create a foundation for a community ‘makerspace’ for creative learning that bridged community and education. Staff and pupils in P6 in the local school, within an area of significant deprivation, designed a project with the class. As they had been studying architecture they designed a fictional project focusing on redesigning their school, the use and the physical design, and making a 3D print of their design. Pupils used their digital expertise to teach teachers, and teachers used their learning expertise to coach and facilitate pupils, resulting in a shift of focus from teacher led learning to everyone learning together.Pupils could demonstrate new strengths in specific areas, including problem solving, entrepreneurship, imagination, curiosity, design and team work. The understanding of the process of creative learning through design and technology with an end product was more achievable than many assumed. New partnerships across sectors have been formed and the project served as a foundation to build upon and to assist schools to make a more creative and fuller use of 3D printers. As a result, creative learning has an increased profile locally with an increased understanding of the potential and projects using technology and creativity are easier to initiate as there is now a successful example.

**Edinburgh**

There is a growing core of education and arts practitioners (including HE/FE) attending Creative Conversations. Some schools now have their own mini creative conversations and people talk about Creative Conversations as an approach to be used in many contexts. Participants encourage colleagues to attend which is increasing the numbers of practitioners who are thinking about creativity skills. Creativity features in more school improvement plans and the team is increasingly asked for support and guidance. Some schools have brought significant numbers of staff to Creative Conversations such as; the entire Senior Leadership Team; all Curriculum Leaders (all subjects); all staff (primary schools). Some teachers talk about Creative Conversations in their PRDs and describe their impact within their submissions for Professional Update.

East Lothian/Midlothian and Edinburgh authorities continued to provide strong strategic and operational support to the CLN. Colleagues shared information and encouraged practitioner participation. High quality creative learning is taking place in schools and is being shared and celebrated across the authority. Plans are in place to ensure Creative Conversation dates are available for inclusion in the local authority CLPL programme. The Steering Group continues to discuss strategies for ensuring creativity is given prominence in each authority.

The creation of the Creativity Skills progression framework provides teachers with a way of planning and assessing creative learning in all curriculum areas and embeds creativity across learning - particularly when used in conjunction with the Significant Aspects of Learning.

“The creativity in this project was not about the making of model farms. Rather, the creativity lay in the pupils’ response to disruption, challenges and dilemmas, requiring them to think, negotiate, act, and experience the consequences of their own decisions.”

(Evaluation Report)

“This is great because it is so closely aligned with the Career Education Standard and is making the links really explicit, creativity and employability, for teachers and learners”

(16+ Manager, Edinburgh)

**Forth Valley**

Through the work of the CLN over the past four years it was identified that a growing number of teachers and head teachers were interested in creative approaches to learning but needed training to develop creative pedagogy and understanding of creativity skills. Practitioners can find it hard to implement and develop practice due to additional pressures or expectations within their school. Through the 2015/16 programme the CLN worked with a range of schools to support the development of skills and knowledge and to highlight creativity as an integral part of learning, not be seen as an additional subject, but a methodology to encourage and develop learning. Head teachers have also been interested in exploring creativity to use within meetings, staff development and events.

Staff within the schools worked in partnership with Hidden Giants to develop their understanding of creative learning and how they can implement this within pupil learning. They worked with two class groups in a primary school The project involved three teachers and the challenge was to introduce creative learning strategies to compliment and support the existing curriculum-based work on ‘food and farming’ through a concentrated five-week intervention. Pupils were invited to design and operate their own farms, allocating themselves roles and responsibilities. At 6 and 7 years old, the pupils were unable to articulate that they understood the project was open, and without a pre-existing ‘correct solution’ to be arrived at through instruction. The pupils’ concentration, industriousness and negotiation skills indicated that the pupils had engaged deeply and meaningfully with a project that had an authentic sense of purpose, to the benefit of all involved.

“Across all curriculum areas, the major influence on the development of creativity skills is the approach taken by individual teachers.”

(Participant)

To support the work in schools and with creative practitioners a programme of training for creative practitioners and teachers included Philosophy for Children and De Bono Six Thinking Hats / Lateral Thinking. These programmes were set up to help develop creative thinking, lateral thinking, questioning and problem solving skills.

**Glasgow City**

The goal of the CLN was to introduce the teachers to Philosophy with Children (PwC). The CLPL opportunity established links between the members of the CLN and staff from the University of Strathclyde to improve understanding of creativity as a higher order thinking skill, increase confidence in teaching creativity and to increase the levels of creativity skills being used confidently by learners. All sessions were held in the University of Strathclyde with the follow up session being hosted in a Glasgow Primary School. Twenty teachers were involved in the sessions from across the city. The role of the classroom teacher was recognised as crucial and integral to the initiative.

The programme supported development of creativity in curricular areas beyond their ‘natural home’ in Expressive Arts and Technologies. In addition, it increased levels of creativity skills being recognised, articulated and valued by educationalists, practitioners and learners.

Particular focus was on allowing yourself to make mistakes and knowing which ones to keep and inventing, experimenting, growing, taking risks, breaking rules, making mistakes and having fun.

**Highland**

The CLN engaged practitioners and learners through the (Anti) Careers Day Road Show. Participants were given the opportunity to immerse themselves in current creative learning language and explore the rise of creativity as an essential attribute for the future jobs market. The Road Show sessions were delivered using an immersive format, allowing for active engagement to stimulate the participants’ creativity. Using the NCLN spider diagram, baseline scores were taken before the Road Show session began and a second score at the end of the session, the outcome demonstrating an increase across participants’ understanding and recognition of their own creativity skills.

Participants, on average, felt that imagination was the strongest of their creativity skills before the Road Show session, and there was an increase in the exit score for imagination. The lowest score from the baseline was open mindedness. However, both open mindedness and applying creativity had greater increases in the exit poll

Feedback from teacher evaluations was very positive across the board. 100% of schools felt that the event raised awareness of the core creativity skills and their links with employability and positive destinations, developed an understanding of the current job market and what employers are looking for and provided an introduction the future job market and what careers may look like in the future.

**Inverclyde**

This year’s CLN fund helped the Beacon Arts Centre in continuing to build strong partnerships between Inverclyde Education Services and schools across Inverclyde. This enabled the Beacon to further develop Inverclyde’s CLN through a programme dedicated to providing access to the good quality creative learning opportunities and experiences. This led to an increase in the number of practitioners, children and young people delivering and engaging in activities which promote creative learning and thinking.

Through the Big Event and Skill Up activity teachers and artists collaborated and delivered high quality creative activities which incorporated the overarching aims of the Curriculum for Excellence. This stimulated and developed creativity skills in both the learner and practitioner, enhancing the learning and teaching experience and supporting learners in achieving their aims. Practitioners came away from the project equipped with new lessons plans, ideas and an understanding that creativity is a cross cutting theme embedded within curriculum areas including health and well-being and science.

Additionally, workshops which were delivered in schools allowed teachers to see how best to utilise the school environment and resources to deliver creative activities. Evidence shows that the pupils who took part in The Big Event programme were continually generating new ideas, finding innovative and creative solutions and had complete ownership of their own learning. Through discussions and exercises the pupils were able to form opinions and were confident in making decisions. Keyworkers and teachers were exposed to new creative experiences which were delivered by creative specialists. These experiences have raised their levels and standards of creativity in learning and teaching in both formal and community learning contexts.

“Pupils really enjoyed the Road Show and were engaged throughout, the pace and time of the event was good and everyone joined in, it certainly made them realise that they do possess a lot of the skills required in the job market”

(Teacher)

**Moray**

This year was the first year re-establishing a Creative Learning Network (CLN) in Moray with a focus on the strategic development of the CLN and raising awareness of creativity with senior managers across the authority. The Network also worked on developing the practical application of creativity as a higher order thinking skill, as a cross-cutting theme of Curriculum for Excellence, as a core employability skill and as a tool to raise attainment.

An initial one-day “Creativity Conference” was held for senior leaders in educational establishments, key strategic partners and local employers, to explore and develop their understanding of creative learning and the importance of developing creativity skills.

The conference enabled professional dialogue around creativity between senior leaders in Education from early years, primary, secondary and further education backgrounds. A common understanding and definition of creativity and creativity skills was discussed and embraced.

The event also stimulated discussion across services in the authority around the importance of creative learning, using creativity to effect change and developing creativity skills with children and young people and its link to employability and closing the attainment gap. As a result of engaging in professional dialogue with colleagues from across other services, new cross-departmental working is emerging from connections made at the conference. There is increased interest and support from Senior Managers for Creative Learning

Every school in the authority invited a local employer partner to the conference and had the opportunity to network and hear from guest speakers that had engaged with schools about the benefits that were perceived from the employer’s perspective. Schools now have at least one employer partnership established to take forward the Developing the Young Workforce agenda.

In addition, Moray has produced a Skills Framework for schools and creativity has been included as a core skill to develop with Learners.

**North Ayrshire**

The intention this year was to further develop the CLN and further raise awareness of the importance of creativity across learning. This year there has been a particular focus on this area as the launch of *How Good is our School 4* highlighted an increased expectation in relation to creativity, particularly in relation to skills development and Developing the Young Workforce agenda. The CLN continued to share information across the council area in relation to creativity and support for small scale projects, helping to evidence the impact of creativity in relation to pupil attainment.

The work to extend the scope of the CLN is underway and it now meets at least three times in the session as part of the planning process. The Network works more closely with local businesses and chamber of commerce and several small-scale events have taken place building towards the delivery of a large scale, pan-Ayrshire event.

A number ofCLPL opportunities, on a range of subject areas, were delivered with a clear focus on creativityanda close working partnership with the Barony centre, established to develop relationships with local artists and producers. This had resulted in work withSt. Bridgets in Kilbirnie and consideration is being given to how best to further develop links across the authority.

**North Lanarkshire**

The CLN aims to provide access to arts and creative activities, remove barriers to participation and carve a path of learning opportunities for children, young people, families and individuals. Through providing stimulating, high quality cultural and artistic experiences, the programme established foundation working relationships with targeted learning communities that harnessed imaginative thinking, unlocked creativity, promoted confidence and ultimately untapped participants’ potential.

Strategic partnerships made through the programme allowed the local authority to collaborate and communicate with educators, artists, local service providers, parents, carers, children and young people. Working within a multi-agency inter-disciplinary environment enabled the local authority to build the creative capacities of staff, children, young people, older people, and those with disabilities.

Key activities included participatory workshops promoting creative play and imaginative thinking delivered across North Lanarkshire early years centres, allowing children to harness their imagination and suspend disbelief by interacting with fictional characters in imaginative worlds where they solved problems, showed initiative and thought inquisitively. Workshops contributed to early creative engagement, encouraging habitual engagement later in life.

Primary 5 pupils from across the authority were tasked with creating a play to be performed in their schools to audiences of pupils, parents and teachers in a bespoke two-day interdisciplinary learning experience. This experience addressed the four capacities of the Curriculum for Excellence, allowing experimentation across art forms, independent and collaborative thinking, formulating and asking questions and engaging in an exciting, wholly participatory programme which provided challenge and enjoyment as well as personalisation and choice.

Young people were nominated by the service *Volunteering Matters* to participate in a programme of weekly workshops that culminated in a short performance installation piece for a selected audience of key workers and family. The process used drama and arts and crafts to encourage participants and increase confidence through the thematic exploration of well-known fairy tales.

A full day interdisciplinary event was held for children and their guardians within the Families First service. The day supported and developed creative capacities through participation in messy, sensory and creative play as well as arts and crafts, storytelling, active movement and dance. These activities encouraged participants to develop their own creativity skills whilst understanding the methodology behind fostering these skills in others by providing ideas and resources that could be later applied in a home situation.

The programme reflected a commitment to equality, recognised the impact of the Curriculum for Excellence and encouraged lifelong learning.By encapsulating a broad range of relevant experiences, each tier of the project aimed to provide activity that would resonate with participants, promoting creativity and entrepreneurial skills.

**Perth & Kinross**

The CLN programme of activity has challenged pupils and educators to engage in projects that challenged them to question and re-evaluate their own creative abilities and critical thinking skills (pupils) and their own creative practice and methods of delivery (creative practitioners and educators). Through accessing training and then delivering projects in partnership with teachers, creative practitioners were able to put their new theories and findings into practice in educational settings.

This included delivering a partnership training programme with four other local authorities and creative production company Hidden Giants to understand and develop the role of the creative practitioner in schools and education, including two action research partnership projects in schools and two creative practitioners collaborating with teachers. The CLN worked in partnership with teachers to share and deliver training, and widened and interlinked networks through CLN / Pedagoo / Teach Meet sessions. This has been an exciting development and one that is planned to continue.

Teachers were offered the opportunity to trial different models of delivery through CLPL sessions and then encouraged to put this approach into practice with the ‘What’s in the Box?’ CLPL.

A whole school creative learning approach was supported by modelling enquiry based learning, by having a consistent presence and by being flexible and listening to pupils while working in partnership with both teachers and pupils to visualise learning.

In partnership with four other local authorities the Artworks/CLN training programme was delivered. One unexpected outcome was the uncovering of a definite skills gap between artists and creative practice in the classroom. This programme did much to close the gap and the project gave an opportunity to work with colleagues from other local authorities as it enabled them to peer learn and support each other.

Across the year, the CLN has evolved into a stronger partnership of educators from a wider sector of teachers and artists who have all fed into and shared their practice. This sharing of innovative and good practice has deepened participants’ understanding of the principle of the CLN approach.

**Renfrewshire**

This network intends to provide a forum for dialogue between teachers, artists, educators and those interested in further developing creative learning opportunities for young people. The focus of the work this year was around unlocking the creativity skills of learners. Renfrewshire announced ambitious plans to substantially regenerate Paisley town centre, focusing on its heritage assets. The CLN’s role in this regeneration programme formed a central part of the work over the year. From this process, a wider plan emerged to bid for UK City of Culture 2021. This plan placed creativity and improving life chances for young people at the heart of a broad transformational agenda.

“Teachers’ confidence working with a creative learning approach has increased.”

(Head Teacher)

The CLN has played an important part in bridging the gap between the regeneration agenda, and wider educational and cultural sectors. Due to the work of the CLN, creativity and creative thinking are being widely discussed and recognised as essential elements of social and economic growth within Renfrewshire and nurturing them in young people has hugely positive benefits for the wider community.

In Paisley, *The Untold Story* is a set of ambitious plans to use the town's internationally significant cultural and heritage assets to turn it into one of the key destinations on Scotland’s tourist map.  This ambitious ten-year plan seeks to transform the cultural landscape of Renfrewshire. By working with colleagues from Planning & Transport, key staff from the CLN have been able to ensure that learning will be a key stream in this development over the coming years, helping to build a consistency of involvement from the classroom experience to the on the ground redevelopments. This has only been possible by ensuring a high and relevant profile for the CLN.

The CLN’s primary objective within Renfrewshire is to create and sustain a vibrant community of practice for teachers, educators, artists, practitioners and stakeholders who will promote a common vision of creative learning across Renfrewshire through events, learning opportunities, resources and other associated activities. This aim has been strengthened and enhanced by the commitment locally to focus resources around a programme of culture lead regeneration. The outcomes for the network continue to be focused around learners, and ensuring the best use of resources, talent and opportunity to support creative learning for the benefit of the individual and the wider community.

“The course was outstanding, a super opportunity for pupils to broaden their horizons and experience a huge variety of approaches not always compatible with the confinements of the SQA.”

(Teacher)

**Scottish Borders**

The NCLN creativity evaluation tools were used in a variety of contexts to support teachers and educationalists to reflect on learning activities. As part of the Borders Science Festival forty plus teachers and more than 1200 pupils assessed the workshops and projects using these evaluation tools. Through using the Science Festival as a vehicle, not only for the facilitation of creative learning projects for schools but also as a way in which to assess creativity skills, a large number of schools in the region including high school science departments were reached, a cohort that the CLN programme had not connected with in previous years.

The evaluation tools were adapted for use in relation to a 10-week Portfolio Art Course which involved senior secondary pupils from three high schools in the region and portfolio taster workshops which took place in five high schools in the region. The use of the creativity evaluation tools allowed the highlighting of the work and aims of the NCLN whilst asking the teachers and pupils to closely consider their learning experiences within the framework of creativity skills development.

A Creative Conversation, to increase the recognition, use and value of creativity skills by educationalists, was trialled with guest speaker David Cameron in April 2016. This Conversation was integrated into an existing ‘Speaker Series’ facilitated by Scottish Borders Council Professional Development Team. By working in partnership with this existing series, 52 head teachers, youth workers and educationalists from Integrated Children’s Services attended. The Conversation was very well received.

**South Ayrshire**

With a focus on enhancing the perception of what creativity is within South Ayrshire, the CLN, with Paul Collard, trained a core of young educators. They created and delivered training sessions entitled “What is Creativity and Why Does It Matter” to peers, youth workers, health and pedagogical professionals and parents. They also trialled the Creativity Skills Spider Diagram to find ways of better measuring the impact of creativity in different settings. This group unlocked ideas in young people and changed their perception of creativity from being purely about forms of art to being an approach to life and a way of thinking. These young people have represented a different outlook and this has provided a refreshing new approach for some more experienced youth work and arts practitioners.

Working in partnership with Community Learning and Development the CLN delivered a literacy project with the Marr and Prestwick cluster primary schools linking literacies through creativity to P2 pupils and parents together. Parents could see, in practical ways, how creative practice could enhance their children’s literacy skills. By delivering this as a longer term practical experience, parents learned how to use approaches themselves at home. Participants found the project valuable and they hope to continue with the programme next year.

CLN membership has increased and represents all areas of arts practitioners with strong representation from community groups, teachers, council departments, local interest groups and the voluntary sector. This is creating more opportunities generally and specifically for young people. People are becoming more connected making projects easier to coordinate and expand. In addition, the CLN monthly electronic newsletter and networking sessions are operational. Creative practitioners see this as a valuable tool and many have submitted information to be included in the newsletter and have delivered inputs on their practice to peers at networking sessions.

**South Lanarkshire**

The CLN further developed and nurtured creativity across the local authority using a range of methods and case studies involving creative conversations, training and mentoring sessions. Two creative conversations looked at creativity and how it is being facilitated within nursery and primary establishments. This allowed participants to consider the *Our How Good is our School* framework and explore effective ways of evaluating creativity within their establishments.

“Loved the big and small questions approach – I’m using it this term.”

(Teacher)

Work with creative learning experts developed creative approaches to learning within two primaries, across the whole school. The project encouraged establishments to question creativity across learning, encourage staff and pupils to take creative risks and unlock a creative thinking process. The project supported establishments to positively self-evaluate their creative experiences acknowledging the risks they had taken and how this has now influenced their approach to planning and teaching within the classroom embracing a whole school approach.

The network delivered training to teachers to teach a creative writing project to nursery and primary pupils. Staff successfully delivered this project within their establishments and will continue to deliver this on an annual basis within the school/nursery.

A creative learning network group was developed on Facebook and used as a tool to share information to provoke thought and inspire colleagues to take different approaches to their view of teaching within their establishment.

**West Dunbartonshire**

Throughout the year, the Creative Learning Network was involved in a number of innovative projects and CLPL opportunities in collaboration with educators, artists, partner organisations, local service providers, parents/carers, children and young people.

A Culture and Creative Learning Strategy for West Dunbartonshire was developed, informed by local and national outcomes, in partnership with the Youth Alliance Hub and ‘Your Community’ groups. This provides a framework for the continued development of creative learning in West Dunbartonshire. The priorities include establishing a creative programme based on local need, developing summer and winter activities, increased quality and quantity of STEAM resources for primary schools (and associated CLPL), and further development of West Dunbartonshire’s Youth Theatre and Arts Award.

Through the Youth Art Collective, Arts Award provision in Primary Schools and Youth Theatre, exhibition previews for teachers and support staff, and Turkey Red Secondary School Project, the network increased the creative offer to schools within the area. This has also included increased digital presence through Ourcloud, Facebook and Twitter to share information and promote activities. Secondary School pupils also began to participate in the Community Arts programme using various arts activities to contribute to portfolio prep.

Using in-house expertise as well as external agencies such as Glasgow Science Centre, Tortoise in a Nutshell Theatre, National Galleries, CLPL opportunities for teachers and creative practitioners have increased confidence and inspiration to deliver creative activities.

**West Lothian**

Hidden Giants collaborated with Williamston and Dedridge primary schools to explore and measure how applying creativity could impact on a chosen priority area for the school, e.g. literacy.

“Through a series of creative, participatory, experiential diversions the pupils were encouraged to think differently about what they could write about. As the pupils acquired an intrinsic motivation for writing, they began to regard the development of literacy skills and competencies as authentically purposeful and genuinely useful for the completion of their collaborative and individual projects.

Applying the Scottish Criterion Scale, there was a significant and measurable improvement in the pupils’ writing based on two pieces of text at the beginning and end of the project. Word counts were significantly greater in the writing produced at the end of our residency. We conclude this was because pupils simply had more to say; as one pupil told us, the group now have the enduring knowledge that ‘ideas are everywhere’. This enhanced desire to write has been facilitated through the pupils’ increased vocabularies, and enhanced competencies with adjectives in extended descriptive sentences. Within the school, the P4 pupils’ achievements have been recognised by their class teacher and head teacher, which has served to generate invaluable self-esteem for all.

CLNs across five authorities used Artworks Scotland funding to explore the role of artists/creative practitioners within the education system. The programme worked across five local authority areas, West Lothian, Perth and Kinross, Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire. One of the key learning outcomes that emerged from three days of training was the importance of artists and teachers being in the same room and finding a shared language that unites them as learning practitioners. The training aimed to break down assumptions and address historical notions of schools, artists, and education. If artists are to adapt their approach when working in schools, there is a need for open and honest conversations to happen that bring people together to better understand each other. People often hold onto the folklore of the past which can restrict an artist and teacher as they predict what will happen before a project has started. There is a need to address the culture of ‘teacher sitting marking in the corner’ and ‘artists being frustrated’. This can only happen if a shared language is found and methods of doing things differently agreed.

“We believe the legacy of our creative intervention is twofold: for the pupils, an enhanced appetite for writing and a receptiveness for the continued acquisition of more literacy skills. For staff, an understanding through first-hand experience of the value of creative approaches to learning and teaching within the curriculum for excellence.”

(Hidden Giants, Williamston – Tasting a Storm)

As a result of the training there are seven artists who are working differently in schools. These artists will have a huge impact on the pupils they work with and importantly on the staff they collaborate with. There is a critical need for more trained creative practitioners to be working with teachers to support them to deliver a creative curriculum fit for the 21st century. Through this the network of schools has strengthened and grown. The teachers who partnered with the artists are keen to learn more and have indicated they have adapted their practice as a result of the collaboration.

**Western Isles**

In Eilean Siar, creativity has been included as an essential element in all Raising Attainment for All (RAFA) projects.

During the initial RAFA training for primary and secondary teachers, staff were reminded of key documentation (the 3-18 Curriculum Impact Report, Creativity Across Learning; HGIOS 4) and provided with an overview sheet of creativity skills, which was to be used to audit those elements which had been incorporated into their RAFA projects. Staff identified their most disengaged learners (individuals or small groups) to plan to raise their attainment in aspects of literacy, numeracy or health and wellbeing.

Follow-up networking opportunities were provided during twilight sessions to enable staff to share their practice and to gain a better understanding of how to develop creativity as part of RAFA. All attendees provided three key documents (their project outline or *Driver Diagram, Run Charts* to show progress and the *creativity audit)* which, along with creativity case studies from the Creativity 3-18 report and the creativity skills posters, formed the displays. Practitioners presented their projects to colleagues and all were able to clarify their understanding and begin a new planning cycle.

In relation to the intended outcomes, there is clear evidence of improved opportunities for creative learning and teaching, of improved attainment and achievement for the most disengaged young people, teachers have had opportunities to develop more creative learning and teaching and practitioners have had an opportunity to share and support practice.

**Conclusion**

Creative Learning Networks have had significant impact in championing and advocating creativity across learning and on the intended outcome of helping to unlock learners’ creativity.

CLNs are a major delivery mechanism of Scotland’s Creative Learning Plan, helping to ensure that key messages from that Plan, the 3-18 Curriculum Impact Report – Creativity Across Learning, and from HGIOS 4 are embedded in their work with educators, practitioners, partners and learners. CLNs have contributed to the creation of a range of creative teaching and learning resources (<http://bit.ly/creativityNIH>) designed to help educators and learners plan for creativity, identify creativity skills and reflect on their learning including ‘Planning for and evaluating Creativity’.

The work of CLNs has significantly influenced the development of the common language that has furthered that shared understanding of creativity and creativity skills that underpins the creative practice of educators, practitioners, partners and learners.

The network has grown considerably over the past six years, developing participation from 7833 people involved in 189 CLN funded activities (2010/11), to 23,413 people involved in 626 activities in 2015/16. Over that period the range of participants has also grown to include local authority senior managers, employers, managers and staff from Higher and Further Education. A broad spectrum of educational and creative professionals from local authorities and the third sector continue to be involved.

The engagement in CLN funded activities has contributed significantly to a shared understanding of creativity and creativity skills and their role in the development of skills for learning, life and work. 86.67% of survey respondents agreed that creativity skills were recognised, articulated and valued by participants: ‘*Learners have a greater awareness of what creativity skills are due to their experiences and this has informed their approach to their coursework in school.’* (Survey participant)*.*  79.77% strongly agreed/agreed that both learners and practitioners engaged in dialogue about the development of creativity skills.

The work of CLNs has contributed to the growth in the number of schools that are including creativity as a school improvement priority and the development of creativity across a range of curriculum areas. 77.53% of survey respondents agreed that learners and practitioners were transferring creativity skills to new contexts. ‘*The children and staff have expanded their understanding of what being creative is and taken part in learning experiences both on and off site, all of which have added to their skills set and provided a sense of wonder linked to creativity. This has given us opportunities and ideas for IDL opportunities and enabled us to hold wonderful whole school events sharing our learning with parents, families and the wider community. We are focusing as a staff on identifying how these creative opportunities can foster IDL which complements the learning of core skills and building in links with STEAM projects.’* (Survey participant). Similar developments have taken place in further education: ‘*In our college, Creative Learning has been adopted across all departments with amazing initiatives taking place in surprising departments (e.g. engineering).*’ (Survey participant).

**Next Steps**

* Continue to provide opportunities that challenge and develop practitioners to engage with creativity and creativity skills
* Continue to extend the contribution creativity makes to the development of skills for life, learning and work
* Continue to extend the understanding of the contribution creativity makes to attainment and achievement