



Manchester City Council

Museums for changing lives:
working together to raise standards

Primary Consultant (museums and galleries) with Manchester Education Partnership.

The funding of £199,000 for this programme has been secured from the Renaissance in the Regions resources and allocated to the North West Museums' Hub 2004-06.

The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) has established a 'museum hub' in each of the English regions, to promote best practice in the sector. Education is a key strand, where the DCMS has set a 2006 target for all hubs, to increase their contacts with schoolchildren by 25 per cent.

The North West Museums Hub has appointed a Primary Consultant for Museums and Galleries within the Innovations Team of the Manchester Education Partnership. This is a trail-blazing initiative in response to research with teachers and LEAs, which revealed:

- a strong belief among teachers, who do use museums and galleries that children benefit from the experience
- a demand from teachers for CPD opportunities, to develop confidence in using museums
- a concern expressed, by both museum and LEA staff, at the lack of joined up thinking
- a commitment within Manchester's Education Development Plan to 'extend opportunity and aspirations through the use of creativity and support'

Manchester Art Gallery is a lead partner for the North West Museums' Hub. The primary consultant project is a partnership of the three Manchester-based hub museums, which includes: Manchester Museum, the Whitworth Art Gallery and Manchester Art Gallery.

The three museums have negotiated with the Manchester Education Partnership, to create a ground-breaking post that 'unlocks' the resources of the Specialist Consultants within the LEA and improves the museums and galleries' understanding of working with primary schools.

There is huge determination, on both sides, to make this experiment work.

A former primary school head teacher was appointed to the post in September 2004. Her main tasks are to:

- raise awareness within the LEA of the relevance of museums in delivering the National Curriculum and the creativity agenda in schools, in-line with the national primary strategy, excellence and enjoyment
- develop a team of museum and gallery champions in schools

- organise a CPD programme, to increase teachers' confidence in using museums
- help museum and gallery staff attune their services and marketing to teachers' needs
- work closely with other LEA consultants, teacher training institutions and with initiatives, such as Creative Partnerships, the Arts Education Initiative and Excellence in Cities

One of the main pieces of work undertaken by the consultant, so far, is a pilot literacy programme for Key Stage Two. The pilot aims to encourage collaborative working, raise attainment and provide CPD for teachers and museum staff. The programme is being delivered to 12 schools across the city. Schools were invited to participate in the initiative and three 'core' schools have been selected – one in each of the districts of the city. The core schools are established users of museums and galleries, who utilise them in a highly imaginative and influential way. They identified skilled teachers, who support and guide the work of nine 'link' schools.

The programme will lead to widespread learning outcomes for all participants: children, teachers, LEA staff, museum and gallery staff, and other stakeholders. Generic learning outcomes have been identified as follows:

- increase in knowledge and understanding in relation to specific collection or curriculum areas, the connections between subjects and the information or experiences that museums and galleries can offer
- increase in skills eg, thinking critically and analytically, interpreting evidence, reading and writing, communicating ideas, arguments and feelings, developing such physical skills as drawing, making, acting, developing social skills through opportunities to interact with different adults in a new and stimulating environment
- change in attitudes and values, by taking part in imaginative or empathetic activities, relating personal experience to collections, observing change or differences over time and between cultures and environments
- evidence of enjoyment, inspiration, creativity increased motivation, willingness to do things differently, greater resilience in learning

For further information please contact:

Myna Trustram
 Evaluation & Research Officer
 Tel: 0161 235 8849
 Email: M.Trustram@manchester.gov.uk