

GEM Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto conference Making a difference in the heritage sector Monday 9 July 2007 at the Bishopsgate Institute, London

The *Learning Outside the Classroom Manifesto* partnership was launched by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on 28 November 2006. The Manifesto is a movement or joint undertaking that many different stakeholders have helped to create and to which anyone can sign up. Its aim is to ensure that all young people have a variety of high quality learning experiences outside the classroom environment.
www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/resourcematerials/outsideclassroom/

One of the key proposed measures of the Manifesto is the creation of a new, independent LOtC Council to bring together providers from the public, private and voluntary sectors, to take ownership of and achieve the aims of the Manifesto. To facilitate this, an interim Advisory Group has been formed. GEM is pleased that its director, John Stevenson, has been invited to represent the heritage sector.
www.gem.org.uk/lotc/lotc_manifesto_more.html

Session 1 Working with Schools

Peter Carne (DCSF) explained that teachers faced barriers to high-quality learning outside the classroom:

- Lack of confidence of & training for teachers/support staff
- Lack of progression in the experiences provided for pupils
- Lack of confidence around health and safety including concerns about the bureaucracy associated with risk assessment
- Lack of coherence in the advice & support offered by government, local authorities and the private/voluntary sectors.

In response, the DCSF is producing a comprehensive set of advice, guidance and training to support the delivery of LOtC. The DCSF will map existing advice, guidance & training opportunities (including ITT and CPD) for teachers & support staff, heads, governors, LOtC providers, local authority staff. It will then develop a framework to cover each stage of the new Teacher Standards & the NPQH, and develop training/CPD modules to fill gaps in current provision covering key areas (managing risk, leading quality visits, effective teaching, senior management role, etc).

The DCSF will also develop new '*How to*' guidance for schools covering key areas of planning, funding, running and publicising LOtC, building into school ethos and reflecting in self evaluation/development plans. To support the guidance, existing resources will be mapped and where needed, new resources developed to be used to help plan, fund, organise, run and evaluate these experiences. The '*How to*' guidance will also help schools to plan for continuity & progression across all key stages and phases.

There will also be complementary support for providers of learning outside the classroom.

Mike Tones (DCSF) explained the basis of good evaluation of learning and described what quality provision would look like. He then outlined the new Self Evaluation Forms being introduced into schools and suggested them as a model to explore as part of a safety and/ or quality badge scheme for LOtC partners.

Breakout Session Question: “How should the heritage sector work with schools and the successful bidder in (a) mapping existing advice, guidance and training opportunities; and (b) developing a continuing professional development framework for teachers and support staff, head-teachers, governors, providers and local authority staff?”

Q1. With whom should the Heritage Sector Partnership (HSP) be working?

Q2. With which other organisations/committees should the HSP be networking/ liaising?

- The following organisations were mentioned: MLA & regional MLAs, engage, teacher associations and regional teachers networks, TDA, ITT providers, NAFSO, AIM, BGEN, heritage education groups, National Trust, Heritage Education Trust, outdoor activities providers, sustainable education providers, HLF, HHA, Ecsite, National archives, museums & libraries, arts and creative practitioners, local authorities, 24hr Museum, children’s services, Sure Start, special schools, children’s centres, voluntary and community umbrella organizations, home education groups, independent schools, school co-ordinators, teachers’ unions, Environment Agency, Museums Association & local area agreements
- Delegates suggested working with the groups who are interested first and use their case studies to see how they are getting it right.
- Create a network signposting people to relevant websites and resources (e.g. HERO or BGEN)
- Invite local authorities, users and providers to come together and share best practice and become more transparent about their LOtC needs
- Use GEM and other e-mail lists to put a call out to those willing to share pro forma and examples of best practice
- Ensure members of National Advisory Group are listed and sector partnership members are also listed with full contact details.
- Need to agree a common language to describe LOtC
- Need to address issue of non-participating schools – how can sites reach them and respond to their needs? Can MLA regional non-participating databases be used?
- Effective partnerships need resourcing and time to make them sustainable

Q3 Where is advice and guidance available at the moment? Where are the main gaps?

Q4 What training opportunities exist at the moment? Where are the main gaps?

- Need teachers and heritage sector people training together
- Need to standardise the training on ITT courses offering LOtC subjects
- Common Core Skills Framework (ECM) is common to both heritage and teaching sector and could be the basis of shared CPD

- Good examples of CPD at present e.g. various INSET sessions held by heritage organisations, Learning Links, national museums and Hub training programmes (e.g. in NE) but no co-ordination of heritage INSET/ CPD or central hub of information (can TeacherNet be used?)
- Websites recommended: MLA Yorkshire (teacher placements), MLA SW & MLA SE – developing quality heritage visits and teachers resources; there are 100s of resources & sites giving guidance to teachers on making the most of a heritage visit (e.g. English Heritage) – do teachers know about these? And use them effectively?
- Other staff, such as parents, classroom assistants and visitor services staff need access to CPD
- Heads, governors, LA staff and ITT providers need to be aware of benefits of LOtC
- LOtC needs to be built into the life of the school – standards and assessment (inc. OFSTED), management, funding and performance, as well as through CPD – TDA standards and OFSTED should require LOtC activities
- Pre-visits are essential to CPD and developing heritage site – school relations, but time does not always allow
- Confidence of teachers to use LOtC sites is an issue. Need to empower teachers to use heritage resources effectively and ask right questions; teachers and heritage sector need to be involved in. Need to equip teachers to use heritage resources actively (rather than as passive receivers as at present mostly)
- Drawing up guidance and CPD opportunities
- Advisory panels which bring teachers and sites together are useful and offer good awareness/ CPD opportunities
- Need to look at recent GEM CPD research and promote wider range of CPD activities (such as mentoring, placements, local networks and short interventions) rather than always full day training events.
- LOtC training needs to be part of a planned, continuous process and embedded into teacher training
- Evaluating a visit would be useful CPD for both teachers and heritage staff
- There are likely to be international examples of LOtC type activities and CPD worth exploring
- Good practice in learning needs to be embedded into all existing courses for heritage sector workers

Session 2 Risk Management

Ian Park (Buckingham County Council) explained what Health & Safety means in practice and described many situations where confusion has led to misunderstandings, overly bureaucratic systems and lack of confidence. He urged people to be clear about the actual risks, how to sensibly manage potential risk and to communicate these clearly with teachers, whilst ensuring group leaders/ teachers take responsibility for the safety of their party before, during and after the visit.

Discussion Session Question: “Discussion of the desired contents of the planned ‘light touch helpful guidance’ – in particular that to do with risk management – and what should be mandatory.”

Q5 What are the key issues?

Q6 What do the users require?

Q7 What do the providers require?

Q8 Where are examples of good practice to build on?

Q9 How best to work with the Out & About package contractor?

- Fear/ lack of confidence about risk assessment seems to be the key issue for outside visits. Local authorities need to be clear about whose responsibility it is as messages are currently confused and teachers therefore sometimes hesitant or nervous about visits
- It is the responsibility of the individual organisation to deal with risk appropriately
- Importance of right ratio on site and good preparation by both
- Importance of trust between schools and heritage organisation
- Need to ensure parent-helpers are well briefed
- Need to encourage teachers to use pre-visits
- Need standard, simple approach – every guidance seems to differ and therefore confuses, as does each training event on the subject and there is little consistency between local authorities - LOtC needs to give clear guidance about risk, as do local authorities, DCSF and Health & Safety Executive
- Local authorities sometimes tell schools not to visit certain sites if they do not have a RA form or are not willing to share it
- Essential to provide training for teachers and PGCE students to respond appropriately to unforeseen circumstances rather than risk detracting from the experience
- It is essential that governors are aware of LOtC benefits as they decide on outside visiting policy
- “Open days” could take place for local schools, once a term, on site to encourage visits and to discuss practicalities of a visit – although this does not solve the problem for those schools travelling longer distances
- Providers should ensure they have the correct information in packs to schools (although some felt that these packs were rarely read) – is there an issue about the type of information being sent out? Can websites or email be used more effectively? Why are some teachers not reading packs?
- Some felt that they had no problem putting up risk assessments for specific activities on the website and referring to them in the schools pack. Responsibilities for elements of risk assessment on visits could be provided as a ‘check list’ on websites such as ‘teacher net’
- Users and providers should be responsible for training their staff regularly on health and safety including CRB checks etc.
- Local authorities need to be reminded of their responsibility to ensure any transport providers have working seatbelts
- Good practice was noted at Geffrye Museum, Building Exploratory (where pupils discuss risk as part of the visit), Hampton Court, and Heritage Railway Association – may be more useful to include bad practice
- Risk management could be part of more CPD activities rather than a stand-alone issue
- Do sites understand the issues of behaviour management?
- *A lot of Time* is taken filling in *risk assessments* – *can this be streamlined?*
- What advice do teaching unions give? Does it support LOtC activities? Is there risk management advice supportive of LOtC?
- Are there examples of sites that offer above basic standards?
- There was some debate about the use of icons to provide easy information

Session 3 Safety & Quality Badges

Ian Pearson (School Travel Forum) described how the LOtC Manifesto sees safety:

- Keep safety management practical & proportionate – reduce paperwork
- Produce clear guidelines
- Work together and share best practice
- Encourage the use of safety badges
- Work together to assure quality of provision and safety
- Develop quality marks
- Provide examples of well planned learning with progression
- Develop strategies to enable LEAs to monitor quality & impact

Ian believed that badging safety and/ or quality would benefit users by offering a faster, simpler and effective scheme. To providers, the badges would encourage good corporate governance / business practice, would protect and expand the market place, and would offer a level playing field. A major tender is currently being offered to bring together existing 'safety' and 'quality' badges/accreditation procedures to form one easily recognised and understood system for schools and other users (e.g. youth groups, early years settings). A number of schemes exist (EVAC, Sandford Award, Access to Farms scheme) which offer a starting point.

Breakout Session Question: “How can we bring together existing safety and quality badges/accreditation schemes – or develop a new one – to form one easily recognised and understood system for schools and other users?”

Q10 What other accreditation schemes exist or are being developed?

Q11 Should there be two schemes (safety and quality separate) or just one?

Q12 What are the key benefits of an accreditation scheme for users?

Q13 What are the key benefits of an accreditation scheme for providers?

Q14 What should be the key features of an accreditation scheme?

- Some argued why an accredited safety scheme was required when, as public venues, every heritage site had its own risk assessment and health & safety procedures, insurance, standards (e.g. Museums Accreditation), inspectors (HM Railway Inspectorate), local authority systems and ISOs, all under the umbrella of the Health & Safety Executive.
- Safety badge seems to be against idea of teachers taking responsibility – if they see a site has the safety badge they may be more lax about their own preparation
- Who checks the quality badges? How often? Is it self-assessed?
- Some questioned whether a quality mark was appropriate – examples of accreditation or acknowledgement schemes include Children's Workforce Development Council, Inspiring Learning for All, Forest Schools, and Arts Council England (ACE) are in the process of developing an arts award for organisations who welcome young children between 10-18 with good events/activities and resources. People have Museum Accreditation, iIP, Charter Mark, Family Friendly campaign, Blue Badge guides, VACAS & Tourist Board checks, Sandford Award & other awards. National Trust are developing an internal scheme. Easy to judge quality of facilities (do you have a packed lunch room, coach park, etc) but quality is subjective and each visit different for each individual, so can outcomes of the visit be made tangible?

- It seems that few wanted a combined Safety and Quality Badge. Safety badge seen as much more possible than a Quality Mark. Quality usually encompasses Health and Safety but this doesn't always work the other way round – could be a reason for two badges
- Issue of whether quality award refers to an individual (who may move on), a team, a site or an organisation (eg would English Heritage get one or one for each site?)
- Badges need to quickly gain widespread credence like builders Trust Mark
- Standards can stifle creativity
- It seems that few teachers had ever asked about awards or kite marks to establish safety or quality.
- Badges need to be effective and simple without too many criteria but would it reward the ones who are good at filling in forms? How much time would people need to dedicate to badge scheme?
- Would a safety badge make schools even more hung up on safety?
- Would there be a charge? Is there a reward? Would people begin to see badges as a funding requirement?
- Can we badge schools that are active in LOtC? Like ArtsMark?
- 'Badges' will probably add more bureaucracy to life
- How regularly would you have to apply for the scheme? How much time and resources would it take especially taking into account those organisations who only have 2-3 staff working for them?
- How do we prevent 'grass roots', independent and smaller organisations from dropping off the radar if they do not receive this accreditation or award? How can quality be reflected regardless of an organisation's size? Danger of being exclusive when organisations don't get award – how would you ensure the organisations with limited resources, or smaller/ older buildings did not get penalised? Will help be provided? Will there be feedback and support?
- Perhaps the same self evaluation form provided by Ofsted could be used for providers or use an external evaluator?
- A safety badge should be simple, like an MoT which would provide a basic safety level; this would make all venues (national, regional, local) equal. Instead of the scheme, the providers could be issues with a checklist of minimum requirements – although this could penalise some (e.g. demanding a requisite number of toilets)
- Any badge/ standard should encourage improvement and be developmental and not graded, it should be clear, distinct, meaningful, trusted and valued
- Badge could be seen as recognition for a venue and boost reputation of education dept internally as well as externally
- Quality badge will need to reflect whole service, such as services for early years, families and teenagers
- Learning Quality Badge - What could be assessed:
 - quality of learning, difficult but not impossible
 - accuracy of information
 - facilities (in proportion to size)
 - how well providers cater for different learners
 - do providers evaluate their services?
 - finding out of quality of provision from children/ participants
 - how does this reflect plans at site (e.g. have they plans for a new education centre or dedicated parking bays?)

Session 4 Making the Case

Beth Longcroft (Band & Brown) described the B&B campaign strategy as making the case for LOtC, changing behaviour and encouraging sign up to the Manifesto. They plan to use high-profile events as a hook and to reach both the supply and demand sides of LOtC. They need to consider that there is limited awareness of manifesto (so B&B will highlight the difference it will make); the perceived lack of proof that LOtC makes a difference (all evidence needs to be championed); that teachers are overwhelmed by initiatives and agendas (B&B will champion existing practice and help support professionals involved in LOtC); and the limited budget (and therefore the campaign needs to engage stakeholders to help deliver tactics). The B&B campaign will gather the evidence to prove benefits of LOtC and will find an authoritative way of expressing them. B&B recognise that there is wide public support for LOtC and the media are generally positive, and B&B feel they have a rich range of topics to explore. B&B offer the LOtC campaign a number of tactics including an active press office, e-newsletter, communications toolkit, joined-up Communications Working Group, features and case study placements in press and various on-line activities. Beth asked delegates to be actively involved in this campaign and to direct case studies and news items to B&B.

Breakout Session Question: “Discussion of ways we can help to develop the key messages; provide the evidence and assist Band & Brown in their communications campaign.”

Q15 Who are the key target audiences for your sector?

Q16 What should be the key messages for your sector?

Q17 What have we produced that will be of use to this campaign?

Q18 What is the best way of working with Band & Brown?

- Extensive evidence, based on good quality research and evaluation, is available – does B&B want it all? What are their criteria? When do they want things? What audiences are they after? Guidance needed (but see below issue of existing information housed up in MLA and HLF)
- Do MLA or HLF effectively use the evidence they have? Both organisations must have shed-loads of case studies, news stories and good practice to use
- What do schools want to hear? Do they want to hear how LOtC activities will boost exam grades or improve the individual or both? Message will differ between schools & LEAs
- Easy for national campaigns to focus on major sites and projects (e.g. the Hampton Court Gardens example given in the presentation) – what about local sites? These are the ones most likely to be used by schools yet also the ones overlooked by high-profile marketing campaigns that need quick wins; the national media wants stories about Stonehenge! So need good coverage across UK, not just major urban centres and honey-pot heritage locations
- Need to stress diverse range of learning resources and curriculum areas heritage does offer
- Can B&B do joint marketing between sites across a geographic area who are not newsworthy individually (too small) but are collectively?
- Communication is key! Disseminate partnership and national advisory members contact details, as well as partners within the heritage sector
- Members on both National Advisory and Sector Partnerships need to be active in ‘spreading the word’ and encouraging support for the programme

- Organisations have different PR departments so it would not be so easy to just send a press release to B&B.
- It should be the responsibility of everyone attending seminars about LOtCM to ensure they keep a good liaison with their press office to keep good news/case studies flowing to B&B.
- There should be strong representation from the government bodies to show their support for LOtC including DCMS
- There seems to be a role for local and regional champions
- Schools and parents seem to be a strong link to making this work. Use the local authorities mechanism for speaking to school governors
- Get celebrity endorsement
- Need to fit messages with existing programmes and activities, build on what sector does well
- Use ITT as channel for LOtC
- B&B need to use existing networks to seek stories & disseminate messages
- Need to focus activity on engaging schools, particularly hard to reach ones, and this may require a bit more creative thinking – teachers tend to listen to teachers so how do we encourage positive word of mouth messages? LOtC needs to use examples coming from schools of positive responses to LOtC, teacher quotes and teacher champions; use teacher conferences
- DCSF champions to speak to PGCE students before they undertake their placements and ask them to champion LOtC within their schools
- Message could also stress LOtC activities support other key initiatives such as healthy schools, citizenship, individual learning, ECM, creativity, etc
- Need to reach all parts of the school, not just teacher who organises trips
- Can campaign focus on quieter months; get message across that heritage visits are not a end of summer term jolly but should be done at the beginning, middle and end of topics
- It is the responsibility of us all to make sure we speak about LOtC and let organisations that we work with know about it also. Better to be told twice than not at all!
- Message should be 'LOtC is good for your school – they're safe, they're having fun and they're learning'
- contact details for Band and Bower need to be sent to local authorities and organizations attending seminars.

Key Issues

Overarching issues and questions that remain:

- How to address barriers to accessing heritage resources, such as transport costs, marketing and awareness raising, tackling teacher apathy and the capacity of smaller organisations to welcome school parties
- Need to translate LOtC from a national manifesto into a workable regional and local campaign; need LOtC champions at regional & local level and that the National champions have a strong presence across both the education and heritage sectors
- Capacity of sector to respond to LOtC, particularly small venues and those operating with short-term contract staff; both education and heritage sectors may need additional resources and expertise to prepare for LOtC
- Question about who is resourcing LOtC and at what level
- Need for shared expectations and language

- Need extensive partnerships to aid delivery
- Where does heritage outreach into schools fit? Is it part of LOtC?
- Need to engage 'those in authority'; governors, local authorities, OFSTED
- How do we enshrine LOtC as part of the cultural offer? Does cultural offer still exist?
- How does LOtC fit in with ECM, Renaissance, Cultural Hubs, DCMS Engaging Places agenda, Youth Matters, 13-19 agenda, etc? Is it all joined-up?
- Need to ensure equal opportunities for all; must not develop standards, funding regimes or quality marks that create an exclusive club
- Does DCSF have a long-term commitment to LOtC?
- What is exact role and responsibilities of HSP?
- There is initiative fatigue syndrome in both sectors and LOtC needs to be developed as building on existing activity rather than a new idea from a new department
- Has LOtC been launched to schools yet?