



CU and Me ...



Food for thought: Hull CU re-launched in 2007 supported by national funding

"Amy"

... Amy is in year 6 and is a seasoned CU attendee. One of the modules she had enjoyed was 'Fun Fashion' because she made a few items such as a bag which she then took home, showing her Mum what she had done and they made some other things on the sewing machine together. Amy thinks that CU is good for making new friends and building confidence although this can be rather intimidating- 'Before you go you are nervous and when you get there you are still nervous but then you get on with people and then you feel confident'. Her brother attended a cookery module and now makes tea at home every Friday. The tutors' approach was central to Amy's enjoyment of the sessions as she found them all 'kind and helpful and they didn't shout'. She speaks with excitement about 'going home after school, getting changed and thinking: 'great - I'm going to do something fun' ...

"Jodie: Golden Time All Day"

... Jodie is 10 and in year 5 at school. She had attended many CU courses and particularly enjoyed a Silent Movies course because she had learnt so much; Laurel and Hardy, 'improvisation' and the use of comedy in 'olden days movies'. She explains how silent movies are a 'bit like ballet' they tell a story but through movement and signs. Jodie describes the CU as being like 'another day of school, but like golden time all day, learning in a new and different way.' She is bright, very articulate girl and fully immersed in the group and their performance.

Jodie's mum says that Jodie 'lacks social skills'. She is considered as 'troublesome' by her teachers and has had 'a terrible time' at school largely because she has been unable to form friendships. She has been suspended on two occasions. The CU offers Jodie a chance to learn in a different environment where she is realising that she can get along with people and enjoy learning ...



CU Doncaster celebrates in the presence of Professor John MacBeath of Cambridge University

"Techno Moves"

... This module, devised and led by college staff, centres on dance and movement and is held at the CU to enable the use of the specialist equipment. The children work together to create pictures of their movements using interactive software. In one pupil's words 'we learnt to make shapes with our body'. Children are able to freeze images of their poses and movement on a huge screen and then move them around to make a tableau. The children's evaluation forms indicate a high level of engagement and enjoyment. Catherine, writes that 'working together as a team to

make a picture was fun'. Others enjoyed the opportunity to be creative 'we made a rock garden with a bowl of fruit and we played musical statues'. A teaching assistant speaks of her pleasure in seeing children express themselves without being self conscious and cited one child who is very shy and introverted being encouraged by one of the student mentors to contribute - 'she really blossomed...coming on to an empty stage by herself'. A teacher comments that the same girl seems to have brought some of the self-confidence she discovered into the classroom and doesn't 'clam up as much' when asked a question in class ...

"A Lifeline for Jonathan"

... Jonathan is in year 6 and has four other siblings who are with foster parents. He is teetering on the brink of permanent exclusion, says his Headteacher, adding that 'he is hanging on by his fingertips at school'. He sees CU is a 'life line' for him, explaining that he can spend an extended period of time engaged in creative and challenging activities away from a difficult home environment. Jonathan attends two CU sessions every week.

At school he needs one to one support and can be aggressive. At CU, where he engages with others and is absorbed by his learning, his Headteacher says 'the tutors wouldn't notice him' The tutor mentions that he had been warned to 'watch out' for Jonathan but that he had not experienced any difficulties at all. His Headteacher cites three reasons for his engagement at CU. Firstly, the learning is hands on and experiential. Secondly, the bulk of time is given over to the children to explore their ideas rather than being predominantly teacher-led. Thirdly and perhaps most importantly the tutors have no preconceptions about children at CU. The children are not 'pigeon-holed' and therefore Jonathan has been able to create a different identity for himself as a learner ...

"John can be John"

... In the 'Script Writing' module at the drama campus outside Doncaster, John can be John. The deputy Headteacher accompanying the children says that at school he is passive, below age-related expectations and in need of extra support. She explains that John is the youngest of four brothers, the older siblings being more able and confident at school. She remarks that John 'always seems left behind...switched off in lessons.not engaged'. During the script reading session John is engaged at every stage, offering suggestions about plot lines and characters. At one stage during the short break he stayed in character and walked around the room as a troll, making up dialogue. Later he was lying on the floor making notes on a story line and gazing up at

the ceiling taking time to think. The different environment seems to be liberating for him. He has taken up every opportunity to do all the modules available and has recently completed the 'Airport Experience' and the 'Shakespeare without Tears'...



Graduating in partnership: celebrating achievement at Bradford University with Vice-Chancellor Professor Mark Cleary



Congratulations to Aberdeen



I know!!



Choregraphy and dance ...



One Hull of an eye ...



Design and technology



Medway celebrates



Eco studies at Sheffield



CU lecture



Chinese lions at Warwickshire



Happy faces in Wirral



Creative writing



CU Bradford and District



Doncaster graduates



Practical maths: how long is a piece of string?



The appliance of science

At end:

The case studies used can be found in 'Evaluation of the Children's University - First Report', November 2008, by John MacBeath and Joanne Waterhouse, University of Cambridge

<http://www.childrens-university.co.uk/Evaluation-of-the-Childrens-University---First-Report/>