



**Achievements 2007-09**

**and**

**Developments 2009-11**

**[www.childrensuniversity.co.uk](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk)**

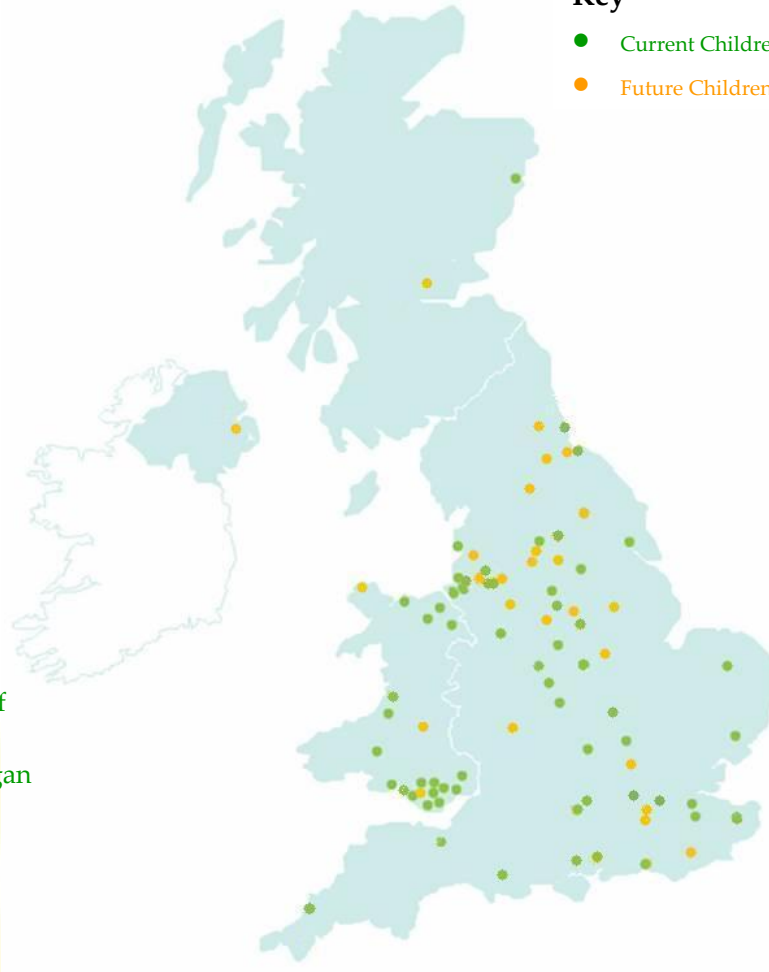
# Children's Universities

## Key

- Current Children's Universities
- Future Children's Universities

## Wales

1. Anglesey
2. Blaenau Gwent
3. Bridgend
4. Cardiff
5. Carmarthenshire
6. Ceredigion
7. Conwy
8. Denbighshire
9. Flintshire
10. Gwyneth
11. Monmouthshire
12. Neath Port Talbot
13. Newport
14. Pembrokeshire
15. Powys
16. Rhondda Cynon Taff
17. Swansea
18. The Vale of Glamorgan
19. Torfaen
20. Wrexham



## Northern Ireland

1. Belfast

## Scotland

1. Aberdeen
2. Alloa

and ...

## Cyprus

1. Limassol

## England

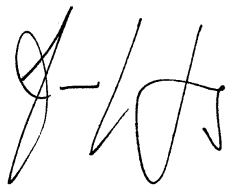
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|----------------------|------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Bedford           | 14. Derbyshire   | 28. Lincolnshire                | 40. Nottingham           | 53. Trafford            |
| 2. Bicester          | 15. Doncaster    | 29. Liverpool                   | 41. Oldham               | 54. Wakefield           |
| 3. Birmingham        | 16. Dorset       | 30. London (West)               | 42. Reading              | 55. Walsall             |
| 4. Blackpool         | 17. East Ridings | 31. Luton (as part of Bedford)  | 43. Redcar and Cleveland | 56. Warwickshire        |
| 5. Bolton            | 18. East Sussex  | 32. Macclesfield and Bollington | 44. Rutland              | 57. West Berkshire      |
| 6. Bradford          | 19. Fulham       | 33. Manchester                  | 45. Sefton               | 58. West London Academy |
| 7. Brighton and Hove | 20. Havant       | 34. Mansfield                   | 46. Sheffield            | 59. Wigan               |
| 8. Calderdale        | 21. Hull         | 35. Medway                      | 47. Somerset             | 60. Wimbledon           |
| 9. Canterbury        | 22. Kent         | 36. Newcastle                   | 48. Southampton          | 61. Wirral              |
| 10. Chesterfield     | 23. Kirklees     | 37. Norfolk                     | 49. Stoke                | 62. Worcestershire      |
| 11. Cornwall         | 24. Knowsley     | 38. Northamptonshire            | 50. Suffolk              | 63. York                |
| 12. Darlington       | 25. Lancashire   | 39. Northern Ireland            | 51. Sunderland           |                         |
| 13. Derby            | 26. Leeds        |                                 | 52. Teesside             |                         |
|                      | 27. Leicester    |                                 |                          |                         |

## Introduction

The Children's University™ aims to liberate, inspire and raise aspiration, and in particular aspiration for learning, among children aged 7-14. It does this by providing high quality 'out of school hours' learning opportunities for children and seeks, as a priority, to reach those children most in need of such provision.

In December 2006, the CU Trust was formed and, with the financial support of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Sutton Trust, established the national Children's University™. A Chief Executive was appointed in April 2007 who, with the subsequent support of a PA, set up the national office in Manchester and put in place the necessary policy and procedural documentation.

This document highlights key aspects of what the CU Trust set out to do in its first two years (Aims and Targets 2007-09), what it has done in that period (Main Achievements 2007-09) and what it intends to do in the next two years (Key Developments 2009-11).



Kevin L Jones  
Chair  
CU Trust



## Aims and Targets 2007-09

The key aims of the Children's University™ (CU) in its first two years were:

- To sustain existing CU centres (12) and to create new centres, with a target of 30 centres in existence by April 2009, in NRU (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit) areas or, in other areas, focusing on contextual relative deprivation.
- To increase the quantity of provision for children to reach a minimum of 300,000 pupil hours of learning by April 2009.
- To establish robust quality assurance mechanisms to guarantee high quality education, including mechanisms for accrediting the quality of management of centres and for validating the learning opportunities provided by centres, and independent evaluation of the progress of the national organisation that would guide the future development of the organisation.
- To create a clear national currency for Children's University™ involvement through the certification of, and award ceremonies to celebrate, children's participation.
- To create a coherent national identity for the Children's University™, bringing together best practice from existing centres, establishing clear criteria for membership of the CU and establishing a national support and training network.
- To build partnerships with local authorities, higher education institutions, other educational providers and the business and voluntary sectors, engaging them in investing in the Children's University™ provision and vision, financially and through other forms of support as appropriate.

## Main Achievements 2007-09

The Children's University™ has, in its first two years, met or exceeded its main initial targets. In particular:

The initial target of 30 centres was exceeded by April 2009, when more than **40 centres** were active. The national Children's University™ is working with a total of 63 local Children's Universities and local CUs designate in England.

The initial target of 300,000 pupil hours of learning was exceeded by April 2009, by which time **50,000 children and 585,000 hours of CU learning** were achieved during the year 2008-09.

Highly effective *national quality assurance mechanisms* have been developed:

- A '*Planning for Excellence*' process has been created, adapted in partnership with Quality in Study Support (QiSS) from the Study Support Code of Practice, to provide a rigorous approach to the accreditation of local CUs' organisational structure and development.
- In the development of a national '*Planning for Learning*' process, a unique and innovative approach to the validation of learning opportunities in out of school hours settings has been devised with the support of Professor John MacBeath of the University of Cambridge. The

*'Planning for Learning – A National Framework for Validating Learning'*<sup>1</sup> document sets out a rigorous process of self-evaluation and planning to ensure that the highest quality of learning is provided in all Children's University™ curriculum modules and in all learning provision accredited by the CU.

- The *independent evaluation*<sup>2</sup> of the work of the CU has been undertaken by Leadership for Learning, led by Professor John MacBeath, of Cambridge University. The first annual evaluation report evidences the value of CU provision to children's lives and pays tribute to the CU's 'propitious and encouraging beginning'. The formative approach to evaluation has been integral to developments of the CU, most particularly in Professor MacBeath's contributions to the development of the *'Planning for Excellence'* and *'Planning for Learning'* processes and to the creation of a national *'Passport To Learning.'*

National Children's University™ certificates – *'National Awards'* – have been established to acknowledge, record and celebrate participation and achievement and award ceremonies take place in 'real' Universities and other significant educational settings.

A national *'Passport To Learning'* has been created, in which children will collect 'stamps' and hours of accredited learning (contributing to the award of a national CU certificate) to encourage children to access Children's University™ provision and a wide range of other out of school learning opportunities accredited by the CU. This innovation has received widespread support from potential partners (e.g. Museums, Libraries and Archives and National Trust) and promises to be a major development.

A formerly disparate group of isolated local CU managers has been brought together with new members to create *a coherent national organisation with a collective sense of identity* and purpose. Criteria for membership have been established, an overarching Children's University™ website exists to serve all members and the national approaches to certification, accreditation and validation outlined above have all been established with the membership, as has an agreed approach to the charging of membership fees. Frequent national meetings of centre managers are extremely well attended, providing training as well as networking and mutual support; local CU managers are engaged in peer mentoring and in the development of national initiatives, and a highly successful two day national conference was held in December 2008.

A range of *partnerships* has been established with national organisations, local authorities, universities, other out of school hours providers and other educational providers, as well as with the business and voluntary sectors. *Almost £1.2 million of outside investment in Children's University™ provision has been triggered by the work of the national Children's University™.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Planning for Learning – A National Framework for Validating Learning*, by Professor John MacBeath, University of Cambridge and Ger Graus, Children's University™

<sup>2</sup> *Evaluation of the Children's University™ – First Report*, November 2008, by Professor John MacBeath and Joanne Waterhouse, University of Cambridge

## Key Developments 2009-11

In the next two years, the Children's University™ aims to consolidate and build upon the success of its first two years as follows:

### Local Children's Universities

By April 2011, the Children's University™ aims to have **100 local CUs** in membership in England, covering two-thirds of the 150 local authorities in England. Its priority will continue to be to target its project funding at NRU (Neighbourhood Renewal Unit) areas and to focus on contextual relative deprivation in other areas.

In Wales<sup>3</sup>, the aim is to have a CU centre presence in every local authority, increasing the current numbers by 2 to 22 in total. In Scotland, the aim is to establish a minimum of 5 CU centres in partnership with Learning and Teaching Scotland.

### Provision for Children

By April 2011, the CU aims to provide **more than 1 million pupil hours of learning to more than 100,000 children**.

### Partnerships in Provision

Through its own funding and through national partnerships, the CU will explore and foster **innovative curriculum approaches** to Maths and Science, **curriculum progression and extension**. Mindful of children who may not have a local Children's University™, and of the value of developing other approaches to independent learning and opportunities for research, the CU will explore the potential benefits of **'virtual learning'**. The CU will continue to promote the development of **arts based projects** through national and local partnerships including the Royal and British Shakespeare Companies and the Royal Northern College of Music.

**A national framework for mentoring, mentor training and support** will be developed and implemented with a specific focus on parents and carers as mentors.

The establishment of **new partnerships** will increase the potential for extending and enhancing curriculum development. At national level, recent new partners include Museums, Libraries and Archives, National Trust, Natural England, Imagineering Foundation. The CU aims to forge closer ties with **Teacher Education institutions**, as yet not engaged with the national CU. Engaging with pre-service and continuing professional development and with **Higher Education and Further Education Institutions** is a high priority.

### Quality Assurance

The CU aims to embed the established quality assurance mechanisms for **accreditation of centres' organisational and management structures** (*'Planning for Excellence'*) and for **validation of learning** (*'Planning for Learning'*) in all existing and new member centres.

*'Planning for Learning – A National Framework for Validating Learning'*<sup>4</sup> sets out a rigorous process of self-evaluation and planning to ensure that the highest quality of learning is provided in all Children's University™ curriculum modules and in all learning provision accredited by the CU, taking account of ways in which differing environments may be exploited to enhance children's motivation and

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<sup>3</sup> Developments outside England do not receive project funding support from the DCSF

<sup>4</sup> Planning for Learning – A National Framework for Validating Learning, by Professor John MacBeath, University of Cambridge and Ger Graus, Children's University™

engagement with learning. As a unique and innovative tool for guaranteeing the quality of out of school hours learning, it will serve as a self-evaluation and planning tool for schools and for other organisations and sites which offer opportunities for out of school hours learning. Designated non-CU 'Learning Destinations' will be required to use 'Planning for Learning' to achieve accreditation and it will, as such, bring a rigorous quality assurance approach to a diverse range of out of school hours providers nationally.

The CU will continue to engage Leadership for Learning to provide **independent evaluation** of the work of the CU, taking in a larger sample of CU centres and enhancing the data obtained and analysed with regard to attendance, attitude and attainment.

### **Certification**

The CU aims to engage 100,000 children in the use of the 'Passport To Learning' and to establish 'Learning Destination' status as a sought after kite mark of quality among non-CU providers of out of school learning opportunities.

The CU aims to increase the percentage of awards ceremonies occurring in or with the involvement of universities from the current 40% to 100% by April 2011.

### **Membership Support**

National meetings and the annual conference will continue; regional meetings will be developed, enabling a greater degree of peer mentoring and sharing of good practice. CU training will also continue, specifically in the areas of 'Planning for Learning', 'Planning for Excellence', web development and mentoring.

The CU will develop the website [www.childrensuniversity.co.uk](http://www.childrensuniversity.co.uk) to include information for local CUs, in a 'members only' section, on local management, mentoring, curriculum developments and content. The website will also contain information about 'Learning Destinations' and where the 'Passport To Learning' can be used.

### **National Partnerships and National Identity**

The long term ambition of the CU is to become a household name. The target in the next two years is to become a recognised 'brand' among educationalists in the UK in general, for the quality of the 'brand' to be understood and valued and for the value of the CU's work to be widely understood.

The 'Passport To Learning' and its national launch, linked to the validation of learning framework 'Planning for Learning' will place the CU in the public eye and bring it to the attention of policy makers and educationalists. The national evaluation by Professor John MacBeath will continue to contribute to the CUs national profile as will its work on learning through 'Learning Destinations' with both national and local partners.

### **Sustainability of the National Office**

By generating income through membership fees and a range of other sources, the Children's University™ aims not only to offset the increases in core costs essential to its growth but also to effect significant overall reductions in the external funding requirement for core costs in the coming two years, approaching sustainability, without external funding, by 2011-12.

### **Increasing Inward Investment**

The CU aims at least to match its achievement in the last two years of generating £1.85 of inward investment in Children's University™ provision for every £1 of project funding support received by the CU Trust, resulting in more than £3.5 million of inward investment over the forthcoming two years.

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