

Twinkle twinkle

And now look where we are...

Welcome to the Children's University (CU) Trust's fifth birthday party! In April 2007 the CU was established with the financial support of the Department for Education and the Sutton Trust.

Chief Executive Ger Graus was appointed in April 2007 and set up the CU head office in Manchester. Since 2007, funding partners have included JP Morgan, Nationwide, Fidelity Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation and The Charles Dunstone Charitable Trust.

CU aims to promote social mobility by providing high-quality and innovative learning outside school hours to children aged 7 to 14 and engaging local communities as partners in the realisation of this. At the heart of its work lie ambitions to raise aspirations, boost achievement and foster a love of learning, so that children can make the most of their abilities and interests. Although open to all, CU aims particularly to reach children facing disadvantage through the targeting of grants, and the promotion of learning. It is here, we believe, that the benefits of high-quality provision and opportunities will be felt most. An

important CU principle is that participation is voluntary. It is intentionally something other than school – with a different feel, activities and often a different location, staff and peer group.

The ultimate testament to the effectiveness of CU is that children give up their time to attend and that they begin to realise that learning can be 'a satellite navigation system to better places in life'.

'Children can only aspire to what they know exists.'

From April 2012 there are 80 local CUs in England including Service Children's Schools CU. This represents an increase of 71 centres since the end of 2007.

During 2011 99,107 children took part in 2,050,000 hours of CU learning in England. By the end of 2011, 17,000 children in Scotland and Wales had taken part in 239,000 hours of CU learning. The Isle of Man CU launched in March 2012 and Northern Ireland's CU starts in September 2012.

In 2011 CU started to pilot the expansion of provision to five and six year olds with their families. 7,200 Children participated in the pilot for 76,500 hours.

The 'Passport To Learning' was introduced in 2009 and 160,000 passports were issued by April 2012. They engage children individually and encourage them to access a wide range of high-quality 'Learning Destinations'. Each

child, with his or her own passport, collects 'stamps' toward the award of CU certificates.

1,750+ Learning Destinations have so far been validated, including universities, clubs, museums, libraries, theatres and stately homes – for example Chatsworth House in Derbyshire, the Wedgwood Museum in Stoke-on-Trent and the Houses of Parliament – as well as First News, B&Q and the BBC.

During 2011 the CU worked with 2,900 schools and academies in England alone. The CU has made engagement with higher education a priority to raise children's aspirations. To strengthen these links, lectures and CU Chancellors have been introduced. CU Chancellors include university academics, senior figures from business, broadcasters, sports personalities and authors. The CU Trust's Chancellor is the children's author Michael Morpurgo. CU Lectures aim to raise the aspirations of children by giving them the opportunity to experience a tailored lecture delivered by university students or staff.

In 2011 the CU Trust won the Directory of Social Change Award for 'Every Day Impact – New Enterprises', and in 2012 the CU was also shortlisted for the Charity Awards. To find out more please contact us using the information below.



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