

**Childrens University now embraces 5-7 year olds with their families UK wide**

The core age group for CU participation is 7-14. In 2011 we started to pilot the expansion of CU provision to 5 and 6 year olds with their families or carers. Following encouraging feedback from a number of pilot areas we are delighted to be able to extend this provision formally to all local CUs *who feel that it fits well with their local context*.

To reflect the fact that it is up to local CUs to agree how provision for younger learners fits with their local context, we will continue to describe our provision as aiming to

‘promote social mobility by providing high quality, exciting and innovative learning activities and experiences outside normal school hours to children aged 7 to 14 (and 5 and 6 year olds with their families) and engaging the wider communities as learning partners in the realisation of this.’

The principles underpinning the participation of 5-7 year olds are broadly the same as those for the core age group:

**Participation remains voluntary, but is necessarily supported at this stage through greater engagement with families**

* Information on Children’s University ideally needs to be part of a Starting School Information pack
* We are keen to promote family learning; as a rule of thumb, 20% of the recorded learning should involve them actively in some way

**Look for existing “win-win” partnerships with other agencies**

* Involve PTAs and Governing bodies formally
* Develop partnerships with the most active Adult and Community Learning organisations and Children’s Centres

**Consider how volunteering could make provision more sustainable**

* School staff may run clubs on a voluntary basis
* Activities offered by other helpers and community organisations could be validated
* Older children could act as helpers or mentors directly, or help with publicity, act as ‘ambassadors’ at parents’ events

**Grow from existing successful provision**

* It is always best to start small and think in terms of validating some already successful school clubs
* Ensure a mix of free and cost bearing provision
* Ask families where they would be prepared to take the children locally – already active libraries and leisure centres
* cultural and faith organisations and supplementary schools may have activities which can be validated

**Logging and celebrating achievement**

* Some pilot schools distributed passports, others kept them in school – you decide
* Local certificates for, say, 10 hours can supplement CU Trust certificates

N.B. It is important that both *Passports To Learning* and CU certificates retain the look and feel of core CU – please use the name ‘Children’s University 5-7’ if you wish to highlight this age group.