

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE FIRST AGE

A TEN YEAR HISTORY

1996 -2006

Written January 2007

“The University of the First Age is not so much a seat of learning, as a run, jump, sing, laugh, shout, build and connect place of learning.”

Times Educational Supplement, 16th August 1966

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THE UFA, CELEBRATING TEN YEARS INTRODUCTION

This report was written almost ten years on from our beginning. Since its writing other evaluations and comments will doubtless have been added, but this document marks a point in time. A decade of activity.

A decade seems to be a tidy unit for the human mind to turn around and as there was some uncertainty in the beginning as to where and what the UFA would metamorphose into, a ten year document is an appropriate place to appraise our progress and celebrate some worthy achievements. This publication draws upon several independent research studies, various Board and team archives, witnesses up and down the country and past and present team members. Our thanks to all of them for their contributions.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for an organisation to be totally impartial about its achievements, to be proud without being pompous, be realistic without being negative and to lay some claim to having a role in the future without being parochial and self-aggrandising. Given the role of the UFA within Study Support Policy development, teaching and learning in schools, stimulating new thinking and, most importantly, within the learning lives of young people, we think it is a history worthy of reporting.

Histories are by necessity selective, apologies if readers believe we have missed anything or anyone out that should have been represented; it probably was not intentional but just the result of the wealth of stories available to choose from. We could have filled books with positive and glowing quotes; some of these are attributed where we have permission and some are from anonymous written feedback or interviews, all are genuine. The sceptical reader could accuse us of making grandiose claims on the flimsy grounds of selected quotations. Certainly there are doubtless those who may not warm to us and their voices are not represented here and the danger of overstating the case is something we have to guard against. However anecdotes form the bulk of the evidence available so we use them with the provisos in mind.

We have an annual review process producing largely interview and case study data and many independent research reports have been commissioned, these are listed in the bibliography, so there are strong grounds on which to be optimistic that the UFA has made an impact upon learners young and old.

The other difficulty in writing this report is getting to know about everything that goes on across the country. Partnership Managers have reported similar difficulties in knowing about all the activities that take place within their areas. The challenge for the network is to gather, share and enhance all the wisdom that is taking place across what Professor Helen Gunter's (2006b) research described as a "rich and vibrant network."

Two years after the start of the UFA Tom Bentley, then Director of the independent think-tank DEMOS said that

"The UFA, which has only been running for two years, has already created strong ripple effects." (1998 p87.)

As a team we know somewhere and somehow that those ripples have spread even further, so even though we are not able to quantify all of this movement the sense of accompanying hope and enquiry generated sustains our belief that this is a history worth writing.

“UFA has always for me represented something exciting, vital, subversive. Exciting because UFA people are good people to be around. Vital because it is a growing and learning community. Subversive because it is always ready to challenge perceived wisdom. The hallmark of the UFA is being open to new ideas and unafraid of change. The most long-lived of movements have grown from the ground up, and this is a singular strength of the UFA. Your growth has been vouchsafed by what you stand for – the compelling power of learning.”

Professor John MacBeath
Cambridge University 2001

In a full-page article in the Independent by journalist James Morrison, 3rd August 2006 the following appeared:

“So are all these efforts to reengage him working? “Yeah” he exclaims, beaming. “If school was like this, I’d want to get an A+ in everything. We all would.”

“UFA training has had the most deep-seated effect on my entire philosophy and approach to teaching. I cannot overstate the value of my UFA experience.”

Katrina Jarvis, Norfolk Fellow, June 2006

“I come to training tired, overworked and lacking in vision. By the end I am energized, enthusiastic and excited. It always opens doorways in my head through which brilliant light shines in all directions.”

Tanya Blake, Norfolk Fellow, June 2006

“I wish every day could be like this” Summer School Student

“I still think the UFA provides unique insights and unique opportunities for developing my understanding of teaching and learning and introduces me to concepts and ideas which I do not get in my day to day work. It fires me up; it places ideas and concepts so I am able to apply them.”

Helen Butler Kirklees Local Authority, November 2006

OPENING VOICES

In March 2006 Tim Brighouse spoke at the National Study Support Conference “Maximising Impact” in Nottingham. He celebrated ten years of the UFA and said that the organisation had grown out of all recognition to what he thought possible or likely at its founding. However the founding vision still lies very much at the heart of what we are about. Here are some of those original voices, extracted from interviews conducted by Manchester University in 2006. We will let them speak for themselves.

Tim Brighouse tells his story of the origins of the UFA:

“I was at a conference in Wolverhampton in the Spring or Summer of 1994 and I had been working on school improvement and thinking about the 85% of time when children are not in formal learning. I gave a speech at this conference where I argued that school is not enough and I coined the phrase ‘University of the First Age’ and talked about Multiple Intelligences and the need for summer courses. I later discussed the idea with David Winkley from the Children’s University and agreed that the UFA would be for early teenage years. I then built up support by sending a draft paper to secondary heads to invite involvement. Once I had the interest then the next stage was to generate some resources to fund the development, and so I held a dinner in Birmingham and invited people to it. There were local people from business and industry, from higher education, and some national people such as Michael Barber. I asked their advice on how to make the UFA a reality. At the same time the fund that had been generated from the legal action with John Patten became an inner city fund that could be used to support the beginnings of the UFA. Maggie Farrar was introduced to me through Michael Barber, and she took on the UFA using money from the fund to get things underway in the summer of 1995. The idea of the UFA was a technical one, and to make it happen it needed the flair that Maggie brought to the role. She was important for bouncing ideas off and it is not really possible to do something like this without her type of talent, and without networks who not only provide advice but you do need allies when things get tough”.

Maggie Farrar tells her story of the origins of the UFA:

“I came to be involved through serendipity. I moved out of London due to family reasons and was looking for a new job. I had been a Deputy Headteacher in London, and Michael Barber was a friend to the school, and he put Tim and myself in touch. The idea of the UFA was to be like an Open University for young people. We wanted something to transcend educational opportunity based on where you happen to live and to bring people together. We wanted the talents of Birmingham teachers to be spread across the city. Tim had a fund of money from the John Patten libel case and a charity was set up where the funds could be used to seed corn development. I was taken on for two days a week for three months to get the UFA started. We were successful in winning City Challenge Money that meant we could work with three schools in the Newtown area of the city. Within eighteen months we had a summer school, had involved six schools, and had set up a steering group. I worked with Pat Eagle who was instrumental in generating the funds and in managing the budget to deliver on our goals.

We had to develop a learning model and we built on multiple intelligences and the work of Howard Gardner as well as Accelerated Learning. We wanted to use the UFA as an experimental space where teachers, usually restricted by the National Curriculum, could be involved in designing the curriculum. We decided to broaden out and to recruit tutors who could work in both schools and the community. We put an advert in the Birmingham Evening Mail to invite people to join us and we got a good response. It gave people a chance to break out and to experience learning at a new level...

Tim's vision for the UFA resonated with my own beliefs about learning. I was an unknown and this helped because the UFA was able to be seen without having a vested interest behind it. We made something out of nothing, and we were passionate about making the UFA work. Tim used his name and influence to get it moving, he backed it and talked about it all the time, and this public advocacy was very important. We had a dinner party where we invited influential people and we got lots of supporters, and this helped with venues for summer schools".

Fred Jarvis tells his story of involvement in the UFA:

"There are a number of features to the initiation of the UFA. First Tim Brighouse gave the Greenwich lecture where he talked about the idea; second, I organised the fund to fight the libel of Tim, and when it was settled out of court there were funds from this together with the damages and this was to be used to pump prime. I was invited to join the Board and I became the first chair. The basic idea was to focus on time outside of school, the non-statutory time, and the key group the UFA wanted to target was the disadvantaged, and we brought people together to join the Board that reflected this and so we invited people from business and charities.

I had contacts with David Blunkett and through a formal approach about the UFA the government funded the national development. It was crucial that the UFA should not worry about funding, they needed core funding. Together with the Paul Hamlyn Fellows in Birmingham, these became the twin pillars of the UFA. The Paul Hamlyn Fellows were crucial in development because of their work on the curriculum and in generating new ideas".

The following is from the opening paragraph of an early UFA 'manifesto': the Paul Hamlyn Teacher Fellowship Programme, 1997.

"The University of the First Age is grounded in the philosophy that all young people have the potential to experience success in one or more learning areas. The key to unlocking this potential lies in the multiplicity of approaches to teaching and learning which are used and in the young persons ability to believe in themselves as 'super learners'. In order to ensure that all young people see themselves as capable of the highest achievement teachers must have the highest expectations. Teachers need to enhance their skills to create a generation of motivated young people able to enjoy success, and are willing to explore and develop new and radical approaches to teaching and learning to enable this to become a reality" (Quotation from the Introduction to the Paul Hamlyn Teacher Fellowships Programme, 1997: 1).

RIPPLES IN A POND

Borrowing an image from complexity theory, small local 'disturbances' can create new patterns of novelty and creativity that are entirely unpredictable. Patterns of UFA activity can spread like ripples in a pond generated by the throwing of the smallest stone.

In 1998 Tom Bentley (op cit) had this to say about us:

"The UFA shows that learning can be made more enjoyable and effective by bringing a wider range of resources and approaches to the process, and emphasising the active involvement of the individual learner, rather than their place in the routines and methods of institutions." P87

It was largely this demonstration of enjoyment and effectiveness in a climate where people were searching for innovation and new thinking that meant by September 2006, the UFA had spread to work with 62 different partnerships (53 Local Authority, four EAZs, three consortia of schools, one education business organisation and one direct school partner.) At the time of writing (October 2006) 48 of these partnerships are active or about to start.

One of the reasons for this spread lies in the talents and energies of some remarkable people around the country, namely the Partnership Managers. Partnership Managers traditionally have worked for a Local Education Authority, often with responsibility for Study Support and/or a feature of school improvement and increasingly with extended services. Partnership Managers are the gateways to opening out UFA activity in an area and for most the UFA is just one of their responsibilities.

Below are quotes from Partnership Managers as to why they became involved in the enterprise. They are just a few of the very many across the years and are taken from interviews conducted by the Manchester University research team (Gunter, 2006a).

"What sells it for me and to others is the unshakeable belief in children's potential. We have to keep reminding ourselves and we need to shout it louder."

"If I was the minister I would make the UFA my R & D area for education. This is how we use it here, and we think the unthinkable."

"It is the interface between the school, family and community, and it allows young people to learn in a different way, families to help learning and to learn in the community. It isn't just secondary, it is not just about the school site, but for all children and not just those who opt in. Community groups can be in charge of their own learning, and the curriculum can focus on their needs, and this is crucial."

"To unlock the learning potential among adults and young people, and this is the reason I am involved."

"To give young people a voice and influence over themselves and others in the future. Making learning more enjoyable."

"The UFA had an 'Every Child Matters' agenda before the 'Every Child Matters' agenda was thought about."

"It's about deepening learning, using young people as catalysts for change. The National UFA is one of three national bodies that gets funding from the DfES, this gives clout to study support and the extended curriculum."

"wow -this has inspired my work, made it interesting, made it bearable, made a difference."

Another important reason for the spread of the UFA has been the continued support of the DfES especially the Study Support Policy Unit who have provided some core funding since 1999.

Sue White from the Department reported that:

"From 1998 study support got specific government support, and it was an acknowledgement of its role in attainment. We have worked with partners to make it more strategic. A huge part of our agenda is to raise achievement, improve behaviour and attendance, and extended schools, the UFA has a huge part. There are strong links with the Youth Green Paper and, personalised learning. There is a Manifesto for Education Outside of the Classroom that involves the UFA along with Real World Learning and the Princes Trust. Study support looks healthy."
(Gunter, 2006a.)

In a September 2001 press release following the roll-out of summer schools Ivan Lewis, then Minister for Young People and Learning, made the following endorsement:

"It is clear that young people value the opportunity to take part in these challenging and fun events. It gives them a great opportunity to meet new people, to try new activities and to be responsible for managing their own learning experiences. I believe strongly in the work undertaken by the UFA and their partners in this area. The out of school experiences the UFA offers young people, motivates them and enriches their learning. I am therefore pleased to support UFA's continuing development and expansion."

IMPACT. WHAT HAS THIS ALL MEANT TO PEOPLE?

The UFA has in the words of one Partnership Manager “been lighting blue touch papers up and down the country” and much in the way of young people’s leadership, the understanding of parents and carers, new learning practice, Summer School and Study Support activity and partnership working has been encouraged and primed through the UFA’s capacity building. The UFA was part of a growing feeling and a growing interest in learning that moved from the confines of systems and policy regulated institutions to the individual as a learner. In this sense the UFA provided a framework that anticipated the movement to personalised learning without having called it that or clearly articulated what it meant.

Impact has been recorded in different ways, with some statistical data, but it is expressed mainly through stories and anecdotes. The Manchester University research (Gunter, 2006a) stated that

“Between 2001 and 2004 there has been a national evaluation of the impact of the UFA on teachers, students and schools. The positive perceptions of the UFA in the few quotations listed above are not isolated but are widespread across the network.”

The following pages cover some of this meaning from the point of view of **young people, Fellows, communities, schools and local authorities.**

YOUNG PEOPLE:

Achievement in school

Some quantitative comparisons have been done to suggest impact upon the attainments and achievements of young people, although as with all studies of this nature care needs to be taken not to over state the definite causes at work. The comparisons are encouraging in highlighting that the UFA was involved somehow in increased achievement and success for young people.

There is one main study on impact undertaken by John Hill in Birmingham in 2001. As the research and statistical officer for the City he undertook a comparative study of UFA students who had participated in UFA activities during 1997-2000 and a matched sample of non-UFA students. He found that:

Firstly, *“there is an above average KS3 and GCSE results for UFA students in comparison to the control group;”*

secondly, *“significantly higher than average KS3 results for UFA graduates across all core subjects for those UFA students making the most use of UFA activities”* (though he does note that these may be more motivated anyway, and this would need more research to understand the causal mechanisms better);

thirdly, *“drop out rates for UFA graduates as measured by the percentage of students with no GCSE passes were slightly lower than the LEA/national averages and significantly lower than the control group”* (and he notes this is indicative of the UFA promoting a positive attitude);

Fourthly, *“... GCSE value-added showed that UFA students made as much progress as other pupils nationally”* and he concludes, *“given that the UFA cohort had a high proportion of pupils from groups that are at risk of underachieving, this suggests that the UFA experience can help in reducing inequalities in educational outcomes and*

that gains at Key Stage 3 (when UFA activities take place) are carried forward to Key Stage 4” (p4).

Research commissioned by the DfES undertook a longitudinal study of the impact of Study Support between 1997 and 2000 in 52 schools and with over 8,000 young people. The study featured eight UFA partner schools out of the 52 (15%) who had used the UFA to galvanise study support practice; this gives a reasonable sample from which to draw a conclusion that UFA activity can have significant impacts upon young people’s achievements. The research concluded that:

“Study support has effects which are significant for GCSE performance on Best 5 score, on the number of A-C passes and on Maths and English.

The overall effect of participation in study support is on average three and a half grades on Best 5 score or one A-C pass more than for students of equal ability who did not participate.

Study support has effects which are significant on KS3 SATs scores.”

John MacBeath et al (2001) The impact of Study Support DfES Research Report RR273

A trickle of schools and Partners have kindly provided snippets of data illustrating the impact of UFA activities upon young people’s success and achievements. It has been notoriously hard to obtain consistent data of this type from schools. In addition we would be hesitant to claim sole ownership for being the cause of this impact but we are confident of having made a strong contribution.

For example:

“Students not functioning as well at school are blossoming in the UFA. One young person from New College is trying to ‘save’ UFA clubs in his school. In his letter to the partnership manager he talks about what the club means to him, how he was in the bottom set in year 5 and is now in the top set.”

Leicester EAZ review 2003

Beechill primary School in Newcastle Science KS2 SATs scores went from 42% level 4 and 15% level 5 in 2003 to 100% level 4 and 85% level 5 in 2004 following use of UFA introduced methods in the school.

Caldicotes Primary School in Middlesbrough, and within a ward ranked as 3rd most deprived in the country, reported KS2 SATs results in 2004 of 100% science, 85% in Maths and English. *“Headteacher Leslie Howes attributes much of his pupils’ achievements to UFA principles and study support.”*

Lynnfield Primary School in Hartlepool, 2005 UFA Easter School *“had a positive impact upon the attainment of students with 92% achieving or exceeding their target SATs results across one or more target area (reading, writing, maths) compared to 60% of the control group. 58% of the UFA group exceeded their targets by up to 2 levels.”*

John Welham an Advanced Skills Teacher from Cambourne Science and Community College, Cornwall undertook a small scale action research project upon the impact of UFA activity on Cornish Schools between 2001 – 2004. The research noted a number of benefits but quite rightly expressed caution about making definitive quantitative statements extrapolating from the multitude of variables at work. However in one summer school cohort a statistically similar twin was also studied and the summer school group achieved significantly higher GSCE point scores and

their attendance for years 9-11 was 96% - 1.2% above the average for the year group as a whole. Student questionnaires immediately after the event and three years later supported the conclusions that summer schools were beneficial to achievement and attendance.

Craig Roberts who, before promotion, ran a challenge club at St Gerard's Primary School in Rotherham, reports that Challenge Clubbers outperform non-challenge clubbers and achieve over one point higher than the national average.

Aldercar Community Language College, Derbyshire, conducted a UFA residential with 13 boys identified as being very weak in literacy with the aim of raising their SATs from level 4. As a result 1 remained at level 4, 10 gained level 5, 2 gained level 6.

Perry Beeches School, Birmingham (QiSS case study series) recorded a Macbeth KS3 project using UFA training with level 4/5 borderline students. The project raised value added at KS3 by ten points, 63% achieved higher than expected, 22% achieved expected, 15% lower.

Since being a Fellow Judy Carr at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Newcastle, raised her PE departments A-C passes from 36% to 50% and worked alongside the English Department to raise their scores as well. Another Fellow, Sarah Todd in Somerset, reported a 10% increase in her GCSE Geography scores after incorporating UFA ideas for the first time.

Young people: positive dispositions and attitudes

Although the achievement scores are an important impact measure, and not to be underestimated, the UFA is very concerned to develop young people's learning dispositions such as resilience, reflectivity and curiosity. One headteacher described the UFA 'as a grow bag for young people' and we certainly feel that the nurturing metaphor is an apt one. Especially as our emphasis has been to grow *with* people and support the creativity that they already possess rather than *do to* them.

After summer schools we get comments such as:

"Why can't every day be like this?"

"It could be improved by making it (summer school) two weeks instead of one."

"Summer school was excellent, it has kept me off the streets and given me something to do."

"I would recommend it to anyone."

"I have learnt to boost my confidence and to speak to people I don't know more often."

One lovely story from 2006 was about Robert who attended a Birmingham Summer School although he had been expelled from his last school. In a full-page article in the Independent by journalist James Morrison, 3rd August 2006 the following appeared:

"So are all these efforts to reengage him working? "Yeah" he exclaims, beaming. "If school was like this, I'd want to get an A+ in everything. We all would."

Pat Eagle and Lyn Reynolds in their annual Summer Schools report to the Big Lottery Fund stated in 2006 that:

“Student reaction was again overwhelmingly positive. Statistical evidence in the individual reports shows students felt more positive about learning and themselves after summer school. They had enjoyed the learning process (on average 95% of the questionnaires reflected this), often saying it had been fun, and felt good about working in teams. A really pleasing result this year was the sustained high percentage of students who believed that Summer School attendance would help them in their schoolwork. In 2002 this was recorded as a disappointing 38%. 2003 saw a rise to an average of 64% of returns and 2004 the average across the areas was 86%. This year the average was again 80%. We see this as being a significant development and the result of tutors being able to increasingly concentrate on learning as their expertise in running attractive Summer Programmes has developed.” (2006, p6.)

“81% of young people said they now worked harder in class” From an evaluation taken 6 months after the summer school in Bristol, 2004.

In a research survey of Fellows it was found that:

“Impacts for children were also reported by Fellows. The main areas in which improvements were noted were in young people’s motivation to learn, improved behaviour, achievement levels and self-esteem.” (Wadsworth, 2006.)

The John MacBeath report (2001 op.cit.) concluded that study support had a positive impact upon attitudes to school and school attendance. We have developed a “Passport for learning” that gives young people a framework for them to think about attitudes, skills and qualities that will help them develop dispositions successful learning. In 2006 young people from Leicester became the first to complete their accreditation for the passport.

There are some powerful stories and quotes from young people to suggest that our work has been worthwhile and of value to a real cross-section of young people including a sizeable number of participants who find education and schooling a difficult experience. Data gathered from summer schools suggests that young people attending schools that have a high free school meals index benefit, that girls outnumber boys by an average of 4% and that the ethnic origin of participants reflects the proportions in their communities. Early studies in Birmingham suggested that it was young people from ethnic minority communities who appeared to benefit most, again this statement comes with a caveat that this is an enormously complex area to unpick. Independent research conducted by Birmingham University in 2004 concluded that the percentage of young people attending from ‘poor environments’ rose from 36% in 2001 to 60% in 2003 while the proportion from Gifted and Talented programmes fell to 15%.

Young people from special schools have also benefited from UFA activity. Calthorpe Special School in Birmingham were one of the early adopters and sent young people to summer schools alongside inclusion workers. A case study was produced by Catcote Special School in Hartlepool reporting on their increased maturity, attendance, behaviour and relationships between staff and students through doing summer school activities.

Young people’s leadership

Peer tutoring has been a feature of the UFA since the beginning. In the UFA peer tutoring is where young people who are at least two years older work in learning teams facilitating the learning of their peers. We make a distinction between this kind of tutoring, and mentoring that involves a 1-1 guidance and more of a counselling approach. In our experience we have found the most effective tutors are two years and above their peers but effectiveness depends upon their maturity with others and

the training and coaching they receive. Some partnership areas have trained primary school Peer Tutors.

Peer Tutors have engaged in UFA activity for a wide number of reasons and they are all voluntary. Some young people have been 'persuaded' because someone spotted a potential for leadership and putting their skills in a positive framework has made the difference between achieving and being disengaged from education. Many Peer Tutors have enjoyed the recognition and additional accreditation that peer tutoring can bring them, and a few have had opportunities to earn from their work. Most young people's involvement seems to reflect the following quote from a summer school Peer Tutor from Kirklees:

"The UFA is all about working together, having fun and learning new things. I would like to offer my gifts to help others and enjoy myself whilst doing this."

The peer group has the biggest influence on young people; peers with positive leadership roles and acting as good role-models have often been the factor that has really engaged young people in the UFA experience. Peer Tutors have developed into critical leadership roles within super-learning days, study support clubs and especially summer schools. In Norfolk, for example, Peer Tutors at Framlingham Earl High School supported the English Department in teaching one of the key course work elements.

In the Joint Area Review (JAR) of Bristol Authority in 2006 the inspection team commented:

'The University of the 1st Age has been very effective in helping many young people develop leadership and peer-tutoring skills.' (page 15)

'The University of the 1st Age has been very effective in training a large number of young people as peer-mentors through a range of summer 'challenge' activities.' (page 23)

Cornwall LA Peer Tutor network led programme development for 2006 summer schools by establishing planning meetings where they were solely responsible for setting the theme, naming the challenge, selecting the target group, creating mini-challenges and organising the structure of the week. They also helped with ideas for experts, visits and the outline of the week. They were shown the budget and had to think of the pros and cons of each suggestion. They were solely responsible for team building activities and gained experience in evaluating and handling data. They handled all this in a mature and thoughtful way.

In 2006 Norfolk started their second cohort of a Young People's Fellowship with 16 students from four secondary schools. The young people are deepening their understanding of the learning process and are working to develop projects in their schools and communities. The young people can become a natural bridge for learning to be connected between home, school and community. They link with adult Fellows in their school and support the learning process and embody the notion of study support being the 'experimental arm' of the school.

As one link teacher said *"they are ordinary people doing extraordinary things because they care."*

In 2006 a Young People's Fellowship framework was written and a train the trainers programme produced and trialled.

In 2004 we ran 2 regional student conferences called "It's My UFA!" These conferences held in Birmingham and Leeds brought together young people (and adults) from schools and other community organisations to work together to find out more about leading and running UFA activity themselves. The days proved very successful and were positively evaluated by the young people. Many of them have gone on to run activity in their school and communities and produced case studies of their projects.

One adult Fellow commented that *"the Peer Tutors are so on the ball now it's almost frightening!"*

In 2005 the UFA produced a statement on young people's involvement (available on the website) and under the generic banner of "It's My UFA", produced two courses called "Give Me a Voice!" and "I Can Lead It!" These have again been rolled out on a regional basis. The next phase of our work with young people is to co-develop views on how they see a role for young people in the governance of the UFA. At the time of going to press young people from five areas of the country came together for a residential weekend to produce proposals to take to the Board.

Because of our expertise in this area we were asked in 2003 to bring together a day in Nottingham for the National College of School Leadership (NCSL) for young people to work on their "Future Sights" programme. This was followed in 2004 to work with London Challenge and the NCSL to co-develop with young people in Key Stage 3, 6 modules of leadership that mirrored the courses for serving headteachers. We worked with groups of young people to test and write materials that were then piloted by other groups of young people in London. Over 700 young people from 60 different London schools were involved in writing and testing materials

After the course one young man said:

"I think that during this time at the course my skills learning about other people have improved immensely. I react to things much differently now and generally have a positive attitude to life and leadership... my perspective on what people are and what they do has changed.... it's been a great help to me."

In 2006 we secured the license to work in partnership with CSV to roll out the NCSL programme on a national basis and this course has been integrated into a 3-day package for schools with a follow up.

We are justly proud of the pioneering work we have done over the last ten years in developing young people's leadership. Apart from the positive impact upon achievement and attitudes of peer groups that this work has had we believe that it's lasting testimony is enabling young people to shape and create their own destinies in a positive way.

We have four stories that illustrate the nurturing of future active citizens through the UFA:

Story 1 from Middlesbrough, 2003 review:

"Jess- a year 8 pupil was bouncing off the walls initially, attention seeking, loud and brash. After a week in summer school, she was giving out coloured pens and had stayed up all night hand drawing 30 programmes for the final performance. She said she wanted to be a peer tutor next year. She learned she had a lot to give to the group, that she had a role and had aspirations for the future."

Story 2 from Cornwall a 14 year old young woman:

"I was a right little thug and hardly ever went to school. Then I started the peer tutoring. I heard that Dr Jones was boasting about me in the staff room and teachers were stopping me in the corridor to congratulate me."

Story 3

"I went to my first summer school in 1996 and a year later I became a peer tutor. Summer school for me was amazing, it was a week in July, and I was amazed by what was happening. All the different ways we were taught, all the senses were aware, I had not had this experience before. There were students from other schools, we were mixed and in our own time we could meet and talk with others. It was brilliant. There was a peer tutor in my group and I wanted to do this. It seemed that the peer tutor was in between the teacher and me, and they could help us out, it was a type of soft hierarchy. I did miss it once it was over. I did the training for the peer tutoring. I fell in love with all of it. Between July 1997 and December 2002 I went back to each summer school as a peer tutor. I really enjoyed it, I could be myself and be a role model.

In Year 10 I had to do work experience and I applied to do it at the UFA, and I did administration work for two weeks with the Birmingham Team in Newtown. It was really scary to catch two buses to get there. (name) gave me perspective on things, and (name) gave some evidence of the impact on revision classes, and how doing revision classes made a huge difference. I think it gave me more independence, I came out of my shell and I could let myself go a bit more, but it did take time.

I went to college in Solihull to do graphic design, did a BTEC National Diploma. After the first year, in 2001, I wondered what to do next, and so I did a part time evening class on teaching adult learners in 2002 at Millennium Point with about 12 other people. I then did a Coaching and Mentoring Certificate, and became a Community Tutor. This was a lot of work on top of doing the graphic design course, but it did mean I could work alongside other young people. I am gobsmacked at how I managed to do all of this while I was studying full time. I did learn a lot such as if a student is crying I learned how to approach them, how to be patient and how to listen.

I am still doing this type of work and I have now been CRB checked. I tend to work with the UFA at the weekend if I am needed for a session. I am now at the University of Wolverhampton doing graphic design. I have also done a British Sign Language qualification so that I can work with deaf people. After my degree I will do a masters course in communication.

What was good about the UFA for me is that it didn't matter that we didn't have the finances at home and I didn't think about being disadvantaged. The UFA meant I could pursue what I wanted to do, it supports all around it, and you learn to support yourself. I learned how to catch a bus, and so I learned what is basic. I learned to listen to people, to learn and to help. The people who supported me in my decisions are still there, and I know that I can do things and be successful. I got good grades, and I can see how far you can go and develop yourself."

Story 4

"I went to school where (Lyn Reynolds, later on the National Team) was a teacher. In Year 11 (1996-1997) the school became a UFA school, and new

techniques were used for revision. I became a peer tutor in the sixth form. I supported the summer schools by doing the administration and organising the Peer Tutors. I knew from this that I wanted to teach, and I went to University and then Newman College to do Geography and Education.

What is great about the UFA is that it is a grounding for how children learn, and I learned how to be a teacher while being a pupil in school doing UFA activities. There are opportunities to develop teaching and how to learn, and how to develop skills and experiences. I knew as a teacher what to do because of my UFA experiences. I knew how to deal with problems, how to use learning strategies in the classroom and to make learning fun. I have to thank everyone at the UFA. They gave me the skills to be successful as a student and as a teacher, it is a two fold thing that they gave me”.

“What these (last) two stories from UFA graduates show is how the opportunities provided have made a difference to how these individuals understand themselves and their capabilities to succeed, and how they have learned to relate to others through the productive relationships within the UFA partnerships.” (Helen Gunter, 2006a)

Why has this impact been made on young people?

The main reasons gathered from evaluations and interviews with young people are that:

- UFA activities are fun,
- Different to anything else,
- Peer Tutors are motivational for their peers,
- Learning in different and multi-sensory ways is important,
- They're active
- The relationships with tutors are more convivial and informal.

Many young people commented on being treated more as equals than as ‘little children’ and how adults had taken time to explain and support them. Young people also commented on enjoying the challenge framework where they could have more control over their own learning. One young person summed it up when she said after a Cornwall summer school:

‘It was great learning how to learn for a change rather than just being told what to learn’. Cornwall Summer School Student

The summer schools are also about energy and fun, packing a lot into a short amount of time so that young people often don’t realise they’ve been learning until the end of the experience.

“In school we suppress the energy of the students, here we use it – this makes all the difference.” UFA summer school tutor quoted by Tom Bentley (1998 p87.)

“I didn’t think I was learning anything until the end of the week, then I realised how much we’d done. That was really sneaky!!” Birmingham UFA summer school student

Participation in UFA study support activities, outside of school based super learning days, is voluntary and although some young people are ‘targeted’ and gently persuaded to attend, all young people are free to leave if they feel the activity isn’t for them. A minimum 90% full attendance record at summer schools is testimony to the power of the activities to engage.

"At school we are told what to study, I like this class because it is my choice, and if I didn't like it, it would be my mistake." Student quoted in Tom Bentley (1998 p87.)

FELLOWS

For the adults who have taken part in the various Fellowship programmes there are numerous testimonies to the huge impact made on their practice, ideas and energy. We received grants from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to train teachers from Birmingham secondary schools and this was the model that was originally replicated. As well as teachers the Fellowship programmes have also gone on to include learning mentors and staff from a number of authority support services such as Family Learning, Behaviour Support and Advisory services. However some areas have expanded the Fellowship beyond the schools context (see below.)

We could fill books full of positive quotes about the impact of the Fellowship upon individuals and their practice. Here are a few:

"This is the first course I've been on where I don't want to go home at the end of it."
Becky Ogle, Somerset Fellow, 2006

"The Fellowship has opened their minds and shown them how they can deliver excellence and enjoyment with excellence and enjoyment." Stephanie Johnson
Partnership Manager, Lancashire (2006.)

"I come to training tired, overworked and lacking in vision. By the end I am energized, enthusiastic and excited. It always opens doorways in my head through which brilliant light shines in all directions."
Tanya Blake, Norfolk Fellow, June 2006

"We had OFSTED in last week and one of my lessons was flagged up as an example of excellent practice. I put it down to the UFA Fellowship really, the ideas we've shared and learned. It's given me the confidence to take risks and it's re-injected enthusiasm into my teaching. Thank you!" Nicola Orchard, Perry Beeches School

"My dad is a UFA Fellow in Cornwall and he is so excited that I have now started the UFA training." Somerset Fellow, 2004

"The Fellowship has given me a new lease of life in teaching....the adrenaline is running again." Birmingham Fellow 2000

Sarah Todd is an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) in Stanchester Community School, Somerset and produced a case study in 2004. Sarah explains how she was initially skeptical about the claims of impact but then says *"when I took part in the first fellowship days it made me recognise that what I was doing was right ... I felt it empowered me with new ways to judge my classroom practice and success. On returning to school I felt energized and inspired."*

For Fellows who are school based

Birmingham University research conducted in 2003 reported that 79% of the survey sample (22% of all Fellows) reported that the UFA has had a positive impact on their knowledge and skills in teaching and 82% identify that the UFA has had a positive impact upon their own knowledge and skills in learning. Respondents were more hesitant about the impact of the UFA on their leadership and management skills with just 40% identifying a positive impact in 2003. Impact data upon the UFA assisting in promotion or decisions to stay a school is limited. The 2003 report (op cit) did find

that *“the UFA is having a positive impact on teacher’s commitment to teaching and education.”*

However there are some anecdotes to suggest that being in a UFA school is important and that some people have been helped by having the UFA on their CVs. For instance, *“I wouldn’t want to work in a school that didn’t have UFA approach now”* Derbyshire Fellow, 2004.

In 2006 Hartlepool reported that 14% of their Fellows had been promoted in the last three years.

Cornwall’s annual review in 2003 noted that:

“Many Fellows have been promoted in the last year and credit involvement in the UFA with a raised profile as a result – many have gone on to be ASTs and have been asked to deliver training in other settings.”

And

“I became an AST through the UFA, by meeting other ASTs who were Fellows and being inspired by them. The training I have received this year has been the best educational experience of my 12 years in teaching. It gave me the confidence and skills to use the brain-based learning activities in the school and set up revision workshops after school for parents and students. Without the UFA I could not have done these things – all of which played a huge part in my AST application and portfolio.” John Golding, Cornwall AST.

Wadsworth (2006) noted in an independent research survey that:

“Involvement with UFA had also led to two thirds of Fellows (60.3%, n=38) having an increased level of influence within their organisation. Fellows also reported changes within their own organisations. A total of 79.45 (50) described improved learning environments, 74.6% (45) noted improved networks with other schools and 71.4% stated that curriculum materials had improved.”

In 2006 Sarah Burgess conducted a questionnaire sample of end of Fellowship evaluations from 5 out of 32 fellowship programmes for 05-06, with a sample size of 53 respondents representing around 10% of the total fellowship programme in training at the time of the snapshot.

76% responded that the quality of training had been *“very good”*.

81% felt the Fellowship had a *“significant impact”* on their practice with 24.6% saying *“very significant”*.

79% of respondents felt that the UFA had an impact on young people’s achievement with 30.24% saying this was a *“significant impact”*. 52.9% reported a *“significant impact”* on young people’s motivation to learn.

81% of Fellows reported *“some”* to *“significant impact”* on the *range* of study support offered while 35.9% felt they had a *“significant impact”* on the *quality* of study support.

One of the themes that emerges for teachers in schools is that the Fellowship empowers younger teachers to be more confident risk takers and affirms their curiosity and creativity, while for more experienced teachers they are reminded of why they went into teaching in the first place and are given the confidence to trust their judgements and back their experience. One Fellow in Derbyshire reported being:

“much more enthusiastic about teaching and learning. Brought back to the reason why I started teaching in the first place. Pupils see me as someone who has got something interesting and relevant to say!! Met lots of interesting and innovative people.”

“The UFA Fellowship training has shaken my cynical views of new thinking and has made the job enjoyable again.” Julian Roderick, Walsall Fellow. 2006.

However it is not just teacher Fellows who have benefited from UFA training. A number of teaching assistants and learning mentors have been part of programmes although we do not have figures to suggest what proportion. These Fellows play a critical role in bridging learning for young people especially as they often work 1-1 and develop deeper knowledge of the students they interact with. In 2006 Peer Tutors ran a very successful year 6/7 transition summer school In Derbyshire with the support of a non-teacher Fellow who is a learning Centre Manager and in Rotherham a senior learning mentor also ran a really inspiring transition summer school. The KIWI Clubs in Manchester aimed at young people in danger of disengaging from primary schools are run by teaching assistants. We know there are many other examples to be found of successful activities in schools led by non-teaching staff.

Non-school based Fellowships

“I found the training to be an essential link to my role in working with families”
Family learning Manager Hounslow

The Manchester University research quoted above is in the light of school experiences, but we know that similar deep-seated impacts have been made with adults other than teachers, for example those who work as Learning Mentors, or in community organisations, as volunteers or are parents and carers of young people. The community environment for learning is growing in importance and significance for the UFA as the network expands and we begin to understand the processes of learning a little better.

Barnsley started out from the beginning to include a wider range of adults other than teachers on their Fellowship model and used the UFA to link schools, youth service, libraries, museums and other centres into an extended learning model. Derbyshire and Durham involved the Library Service in their training and young people have been involved in many library-based projects.

Birmingham UFA ran a Community Tutoring scheme 2000-2003 using City and Guilds 7321-01 “Certificate In Learning Support” as an award. To gain the award participants had to complete 120 hours of taught sessions and practical experiences. This was funded by two Single Regeneration Budget areas and aimed at enhancing the skills of 16+ to run and lead extended learning centres within a few of Birmingham’s most deprived wards. 12 tutors benefited from this grant aided programme and established programmes in the regeneration areas. Birmingham UFA then went onto secure substantial funding from Neighbourhood Renewal to train Community Tutors in 23 wards to run 75 hours of study support activities with at least 60 young people.

In 2002 Norfolk UFA piloted a Community Fellowship as part of a UFA Innovation Grant Award and Vanessa Scargill, Community Development Officer at Aylsham High School Norwich, wrote some OCN accreditation for it. Between 2003 and 2004 a Community Fellowship programme was piloted in Barnsley, Durham, Gloucestershire, and Norfolk, running a year two in 2005 and joined by Leicester. With a grant of £49.5k from the Esme Fairburn Foundation 38 Fellows completed five days training, delivered 6,276 hours of activity and benefited 640 young people in study support activity (target 60.) Durham piloted a Train the Trainers programme,

2004. In 2006 the whole Community Fellowship programme was updated and a Train the Trainers package written for it.

In total we have reliable figures for 203 Community Tutors being trained to date across 11 different partnerships. The Community Fellowships have worked with people from a wide range of organisations: youth work, libraries, museums, arts projects, centres and theatres, Education Social Workers, Looked After Children, sports workers, Youth Offending Teams, a member of a disability group, a local residents group and a local councillor. Parents and classroom assistants were also represented in the Fellowship programmes.

The evaluations of these projects report overwhelming enthusiasm and enjoyment from having been on the training. Of the 14 community based adults and parents (with low or no qualifications) in Barnsley 9 of the group progressed to undertake further educational qualifications within local colleges. Other quotes include:

'I am beginning to think differently about each child's particular intelligence and valuing it. UFA has allowed me to see a bigger picture.'

'I never thought I'd be able to do something like this before the course. It's inspired us to set up things that our kids can do when they are not at school. It's been great and I am really looking forward to putting my learning into practice.'

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the exact impact upon young people and communities we know that large numbers have benefited from the experience and energy of these community tutors and that this process has the power to contribute to the extended services agenda.

There have been many other non-teacher based initiatives around the country. We know of a very successful Parent Fellowship in Newcastle that began in 2005 with 28 parents of Foundation Stage children at the Walkergate Early Years Centre. The project has created a great sense of belonging and encouraged parents to understand better their own and their child's learning. Family learning sessions have taken place in Islington, Hartlepool and Durham. Enfield ran a community project with 15 women from the Bangladeshi community who went on to organise study support activity as part of their NVQ training.

Birmingham have worked with a coaching consultancy "Train of Thought" to produce and teach 6 OCN modules for Learning Mentors and are now working with the City's Study Support Group to run training for Adults Other Than Teachers.

The work to use learning projects as a means of bridging between communities, and between schools, organisations and community is a growing drive within the work of the UFA. To take the concept of a learning team and a learning community to a further stage we are exploring the concept of a 'community learning zone' and submitted a proposal in the summer of 2006 for pilot funding to the new Department for Communities.

COMMUNITIES

Working with communities, whether they be localities, in particular places, associated with cultures or particular interest groups, has become an increasingly important focus for the UFA over the last few years. Robustly evaluating impact upon communities is nigh on impossible because of the limited time of interventions, the

multitude of factors at work and the varying indices that might be applied to judge success.

We would hope that our aim of bringing people of various ages, backgrounds, interests and experiences together to develop a common language and purpose around learning could impact in a number of ways. For example positive learning activities could result in more parents and carers being involved in their children's education, it might mean more adults gaining skills and accreditation and running projects; it could contribute to the lowering of crime and anti-social behaviour statistics during the period of summer other holiday schools; it could contribute to more enterprises and businesses being established; it could contribute to having more young people developing skills and attitudes that are essential for businesses; it could contribute to more businesses and organisations being involved in the life of their localities; it could contribute to the general feeling of well-being that enables people to make positive choices for themselves and their communities and improve the health outcomes for residents. All these are important 'indices' but notoriously difficult to 'measure.'

A community police officer in the Shard End ward in Birmingham reported a drop to 4% in the local crime rates compared to the previous equivalent period during the weeks of the summer school. This index could be a very positive indicator of impact and a valuable marketing tool, it also could be the result of a number of factors such as weather, shifting population and other provision. However it gives us hope that positive trends can be influenced.

The main vehicle for work in the communities has been the Fellowship programmes, (see above) summer school and study support activity taking place outside schools and involving a range of organisations. There are several anecdotes about UFA work in this area to suggest that our vision is important and our work worth pursuing.

The "Remaking Barnsley" vision has already been quoted as a model that inspired us to look again at how extended learning centres could be used in a community regeneration process. In May 2005 a community campus was launched on the Braunstone Estate in Leicester around 53 streets. Developed in partnership with Leicester Learning Zone and the UFA, the Braunstone University Zone (BUZ) *"gives young people ownership of the activities and projects from the outset, they input to the construction of them and through this they experience more new activities and participate with far more motivation."* Susan Clay, Braunstone resident and Community Tutor.

As Vicki England, project manager forecast, the BUZ model has become a blueprint for other UFA areas to look at and has been adopted into a successful 3-year funding stream from DfES National Youth Voluntary Organisations (NYVO) to replicate the model in three areas of the country. In Braunstone the New Deal Partnership reported that over 245 young people had taken part in BUZ; it was among a tapestry of new learning and community projects that had resulted in improvements in education performance and the feeling of local residents towards the area.

In some parts of the country businesses, libraries, museums, heritage centres, arts professionals and theatres, environmental and outdoor centres, faith centres, supplementary schools, Universities and Colleges and various local government departments have been involved in UFA activities helping to enrich the scope of the learning for young people, and, in many cases for the staff of these organisations as well. These are too numerous to mention but some examples will give a flavour.

Since September 2004 in Kirklees a steering group of various partners has been meeting to put together a vision for Faith Centres and the local UFA Partnership Manager, Helen Butler, has helped put together some educational packages that have UFA principles at the core of them and are aimed at supporting staff who work in the centres and schools of all key stages who visit them. There will be two Christian Centres, two Muslim, one Sikh, one Hindu and one Buddhist.

Birmingham UFA since the summer school in 1997 has always aimed to involve local government and businesses. Successful partnerships were developed with the Birmingham City Transport Department, the Council House, Learning and Skills Council, Playing for Success and various sports clubs, The Young Peoples Parliament, local FE Colleges, The University of Central England's Technology Innovation Centre, the Symphony Hall, Mac and Rep Theatres, Botanical Gardens, the National Trust, Handsworth Fire Station, Maverick TV, Villan Radio, Peugeot Cars, Waterstones Books, Birmingham International Airport and Wragge and Co. solicitors. All of these organisations have been involved in some way with imaginative summer schools.

The most recent examples in Birmingham are indicative of the wider strategic force these summer schools could have. "Legal Eagles" summer School was featured as a case study in the DfES (2006) publication "Extending Learning Opportunities." A firm of solicitors (Wragge and Co.) offered their premises for a week and a group of trainees as a summer school resource. Young people were challenged to represent a pop-group negotiating a big record deal. The success of this summer school illustrated how a simple investment of time and money by a local company could bring young people together from across a city, engage them *all* in a realistic and challenging work environment and leave them wanting more. For the staff of Wragge's this had been a fantastic training activity and Jerry Blackett, Chief Executive of the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, said this had been "one of the best examples of business education partnership working" he had ever seen.

Christopher Hughes, Wragge and Co Corporate Partner said:

"Wragge and Co. are delighted to work with the UFA and these truly excellent young people. The summer school has helped us to develop a greater understanding of young people, what they do with their lives and their expectations and ambitions. After all young people are not only the prospective clients of Wragge and Co, but also our solicitors and partners of tomorrow. Young people like this are quite simply the future of the firm and we look forward to receiving their applications for employment in 10 years time."

In 2006 Birmingham UFA ran a summer school with the National Trust to train young people as guides for one of their city properties and in so doing not only developed leadership skills for the young people but also enabled them to put something back into the cultural heritage of the city. 12 young people gained National Trust accreditation.

Other examples from around the country: Cornwall have worked with museums, outdoor centres, surfers and skaters in their summer school programme. Gloucestershire have involved a number of different agencies, including the Education Welfare Service and Everyman Theatre, in their summer school provision. Leeds have a Learning Centre in the White Rose Shopping Centre and have consistently involved them in UFA activity, and have also run Summer Schools with the supplementary schools in the City. Durham, Newcastle and Barnsley have used local heritage museums and sites for activity; Derbyshire, Gloucestershire, Middlesbrough and Rotherham have used local theatre and arts companies; Somerset have involved an Outdoor centre and the Ranger Service. There are

undoubtedly many more that we have not mentioned and we are unable to do justice in this publication to the rich contribution these organisations have made to young people's lives and to broadening our understanding of learning.

Across the network we have reliable figures for 199 non-school based organisations having been involved in UFA Fellowship programmes and many of these Fellows have gone on to run the kind of Study Support exemplars quoted above.

Warwickshire's innovation was to make an integral part of their Fellowship programme being hosted at different venues around the county. So for example Fellows' training has been held in an environmental centre, a theatre and an arts centre allowing opportunities to develop greater partnership working across learning communities. From a Gloucestershire review 2003:

"The Everyman Theatre are incorporating UFA into their learning environment and into their plans for a new studio, and have also trained all their workshop leaders in UFA principles."

One of the community experiences that UFA partnerships has offered has been in the areas of family and inter-generational learning. Some of the Community Fellowship experiences have been recorded earlier in this publication. However further examples are the family learning sessions that were run by Naz Khan in Enfield between 2004 and 2005. Parents enjoyed learning about the different ways their children learn and the "Lets Learn How to Learn" book was found to be a very useful tool. Sophie Blume ran three over-subscribed family Super Learning Days in Islington with over 100 parents and children attending and more were planned. In 2005 Warwickshire used their Community Education Unit to stimulate Fellows into planning at least one family learning day.

In 2006 Cambourne Fellows delivered a day to other Fellows in Cornwall on "Planning UFA Sessions for Parents using their acrostic:
Understand why we decided to run the Parents in School Project,
Find out how the various aspects of the project operate,
Appreciate the benefits the project has brought to the school and be aware of the pitfalls encountered on route."

Inter-generational learning projects offer great scope to develop useful community work. We have only a few examples of such learning but hope to encourage more. In Enfield Naz ran a session for Age-Concern volunteers who go into schools and Sure Start centres. Sue Dudson, the TransAge Action project manager enthused:

"The training was very well received. I got a lot of feedback – they all found it very stimulating and a bit different from some of the other training, we'd definitely like more."

White Rose Learning Centre in Leeds involved Silver Surfers in their UFA summer challenge and a Birmingham neighbourhood project collected oral stories from their grandparents as a stimulus for writing.

Bowes Primary School in Enfield ran a "Bring Your Dad to School" morning (2005) with 90 dads coming into school and 45 regular attenders at three Saturday sessions. Later in the year 100 dads out of 220 families visited their children's classroom for a lesson and attended a feedback session. Two dads wanted to run a programme themselves and four volunteered to come into school and read with the children.

Parents and carers have often provided us with wonderful feedback of the impact of the UFA summer schools on their children. Below are a few of our favourite quotes:

"I normally can't get him out of bed in the morning but this week he's been waking us up to get him here." Birmingham summer school parent 2004.

From the NOF Summer School Evaluation Report for 2005:

“My children cannot stop talking about their day.”

“My son enjoyed the summer challenge. He came home every night, excited about what he was going to do the next day. I think every school should do a challenge like this. It was brilliant.”

“I really don’t think you can improve on what you have achieved this year. I can honestly say I have never seen her so willing and happy to go to school.”

“It has given him confidence and he is not so worried about starting secondary school in September.”

100% of parents said they wanted their child to take part in the challenge again. Hopefully an indication that summer challenges would connect to the interests and needs of parents in different localities.

SCHOOLS

There are a number of ways that a school could experience the impact of the UFA and again it is a difficult thing to pin down consistently. The pupil attainment scores quoted earlier obviously impact upon the improvement values that are popularly attached to schools; however a number of headteachers see a bigger picture than simply the benchmark test or exam scores and see or feel the difference to attitudes, expectations and learning that being involved with the UFA has made to their schools. Schools who take up the UFA may also be schools with a high potential for developing capacity anyway as they are searching for improvements and developing their interests in learning and teaching with or without the UFA. The UFA has often helped them to provide a framework within which to concentrate their search.

The historical shift in our school partnerships has been the increasing number of primary schools, including infant and foundation stages, and special schools who have wanted to take on the Fellowship training. Schools have wanted to engage in the Fellowship to put a whole school focus on learning and the pioneer Birmingham schools were of a mind that said if this works in out of school hours then it should be throughout the school.

The following quotes illustrate the vision of heads and school leaders in sensing that it was the right time to use the UFA as a focus to raise achievement in school and to develop the school’s thinking about learning.

“Why was I so determined to involve the UFA? Well, I believed that what the UFA offered could be a means of transformation. I was looking to raise achievement through a focus on students and learning.” Margaret Threadgold, Headteacher Swanshurst School, Birmingham.

“The University of the First Age offers pupils opportunities to extend their learning, there is an increasingly direct impact on learning and progress.” OFSTED report Queensbridge Secondary School, Birmingham.

In 2001 “Let’s Talk UFA: Transforming Learning” captured these quotes:
The UFA has made a massive difference to the staff and children of St Mary and St Joseph’s. The development of the school as a learning environment shows no bounds. Children daily become more aware of themselves as learners. The enthusiasm for

continuous professional development and the willingness (even drive) to share new understanding is quite spectacular.”

Elaine Grimshaw, Head of St. Mary & Joseph primary School, Blackburn with Darwen LEA

In 2003 Elaine made the following endorsement:

“The UFA gave us the confidence to put creativity back into the classroom and the child back into the centre of planning. It has been a great project for galvanising people. It has given us back a common purpose, generated a great deal of team spirit.”

“UFA came along at a critical time in our development. It was enormously significant in: getting colleagues talking animatedly about teaching and learning, finding opportunities to engage with cross-curricular issues, realising the potential of some of our most creative teachers and giving our pupils a huge increase in high quality, stimulating extra-curricular activities.”

Clare Considine, Headteacher, Bordesley Green Girl's School, Birmingham

“We got involved with the UFA because we wanted it to focus on our teaching and learning styles. We wanted to break away from the mould of more conventional approaches to teaching and learning to find a way to engage those who do not engage with learning at the moment. We also wanted to challenge our staff. Initially we used it to engage difficult students but then it started to spread so a lot of staff were involved. It's also made students more focused on their own learning, it's made them more motivated, even to the point where they have run INSET for the staff on teaching and learning.”

Francoise Leake, Headteacher, Westborough High School, Kirklees.

The following examples are taken from independent research conducted by Birmingham University 2004:

“It's had a huge impact on the group of students that worked with the UFA. I think that without a doubt – you can measure the improvement it's made in a variety of ways but perhaps the ones that are the most significant are the ones that are most difficult to measure – the self esteem, the confidence, the wanting to be involved in things. And I think this has had an impact across the school.”

UFA Secondary Headteacher.

“Exclusions reduced from 25 to 0 in one year – a key factor has been the staff making learning more interesting as a result of the UFA Fellowship.”

UFA Secondary Headteacher.

“75% of partner schools made a positive statement about the UFA in their OfSTED reports.”

“I don't have to measure the difference the UFA has made to my school, I can see it.”

Manchester Primary Headteacher

The following are taken from case studies:

“You can see it on the children's faces, you can see it in the school. Attendance at school has improved from serious weaknesses to 94% and students have been involved in decisions along the way.”

Karen Edmenson, Deputy Head, Lynnfield Primary School, Hartlepool commenting on the impact of the UFA

In 2004 Kirk Hallam Community Technology College in Derbyshire were featured on “Schools In Focus” on TeacherNet specialist schools case studies as a school with growing achievement rates. It quoted that the UFA learning to learn approaches “are applied across the whole school.”

An NCSL case study (2005) on the Newcastle Headteacher Fellowship illustrated how 12 school leaders had used the UFA philosophies to help them as 'research associates' move their schools forward by becoming lead learners and supporting and encouraging staff to deepen their understand of learning processes. Although rate of progress in the schools varied, the project was valuable in starting a process, in focusing attention firmly on learning and enabling school leaders to experience for themselves different approaches to learning.

Finally the UFA has always advocated the use of study support as the 'experimental' space for schools to test out different teaching and learning approaches and transfer learning back into compulsory education. Many schools have started to broaden and deepen the quality of study support activities with the support of the UFA. Two examples are: Sedgfield Community College in Durham running enrichment Wednesdays with a huge menu of different activities; in 2005 Ladybridge High School in Bolton designated Tuesday afternoons as extra-curricular time offering a wide range of voluntary activities as UFA clubs and working in partnership with Bolton Community College. Nine schools in Birmingham were supported in 2003 to gain Quality In Study Support recognition through a Fellowship programme that included the impact and transfer of study support on mainstream classrooms.

There is some evidence to suggest that the experimental ethos might have started to have some impact. DfES Research Report 529, conducted by Julian Elliott et al, University of Sunderland, concluded that there was firm evidence to suggest that: *"Strategies for teaching and learning, developed in study support settings frequently transfer directly to compulsory education settings."* *"Study support settings provide a risk-free context for teachers to experiment with innovative techniques and to refine practice before adoption in the mainstream classroom."* (P2, 2004.)

30% of the sample for this research sample were UFA schools, both primary and secondary, and six out of eight LEAs visited were UFA partner areas so it would be reasonable to suggest that we had contributed something towards these key findings.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Local authorities have taken up the UFA for a variety of reasons and often the developments on the ground have gone in unexpected and unforeseen directions, which is one of the joys of unleashing a creative process. For some LEAs the emphasis has been on study support and using this policy area to support school improvement and link to a range of strategies through using summer schools, clubs and super learning days. Linkages have been made to projects as diverse as behaviour support, gifted and talented, family learning, looked after children, key stage strategies, inclusion, learning mentors, environment and arts agencies. In some areas Playing for Success Centre staff have been involved either as Fellows or training providers.

Some of these authorities have seen the role of extending learning as bridging communities, businesses, higher and further education, voluntary organisations and schools and were envisioning learning experiences that foreshadowed some of the thinking now in the extended schools agenda. Barnsley launched a "Remaking Barnsley" vision using Advanced Learning Centres based in the community and Leeds initiated projects with businesses such as the White Rose Centre and the Leeds-Bradford Airport. In 2001 the then Partnership Manager Mark Hopkins wrote: *"since the advent of the University of the First Age and the Education Leeds Partnership the true potential of hundreds of young people across the City of Leeds has been realised. The*

UFA partnership underpins our whole approach to developing new and innovative ways of engaging young people into learning. UFA works best when it works at a strategic as well as a local level. Learning Through Leeds, our Study Support initiative, has incorporated all UFA principles and we are thrilled that it has contributed significantly to our national and international reputation for developing different approaches to learning and teaching. Most significant for us has been the work with local partners in the city and the amazing experiences the young people of Leeds had in the summer as a result of those experiences."

All partners now have a spotlight firmly on how the UFA contributes to the Every Child Matters policies.

Some authorities have developed particular areas of expertise such as peer tutoring in Cornwall and Bristol. Reference has already been made to this highlight in the Bristol JAR report and it is pleasing to note that in Bristol they were praised for their study support in general:

"A good range of recreational and voluntary activities is available for most children and young people. Schools provide young people with good opportunities for out-of-hours learning that enable them to socialise and develop in a safe environment. Extended school facilities are used well."(page 21)

Manchester made a real drive in primary schools using Super Learning Days (SLD) as one public focus. In March 2003 over 4000 young people took part in a city wide SLD.

Mick Waters, then Director of Education for Manchester described the UFA as *"a real boost for teaching and learning in schools across the city."*

In Newcastle the Fellowship programme has been embedded into teaching and learning training for the authority and although the UFA was only one of many factors, Newcastle in 2005 recorded a 14.3 percentage points increase in attainment since 2002, the fifth most improved authority in England.

Somerset LA are currently running a countywide course for Higher Teaching and Learning Assistants (HTLAs) using UFA pedagogy and philosophy as an underpinning process.

Since they joined the UFA in 1999, Blackburn with Darwen operated a borough wide network of Study Centres. The authority implemented a tracking programme on their revision sessions using the Fischer Family Trust national dataset as a reliable comparative measure. They found that the average points score increase for young people (years 9-11) attending the centres was 3.63% compared to an LEA average for non-attendees of -0.49%. In year 11 the average points score gain for attendees was just under 3 compared to the -0.49% for non-attendees. Hartlepool in 2006 also ran revision sessions for year 6, and noted targets exceeded in comparison to the control group: 80% compared to 60% of non-attendees achieving expected levels and 58% of the group exceeding their expected result by up to 2 levels.

The Quality Development Programme for Study Support that QISS have been promoting with authorities on behalf of the DfES has enabled a number of partners from 2004 on to enhance UFA activities or encourage new authorities to join the network and the impact of this strategy is still being felt in 2006. The funds have been used by some authorities to purchase UFA services to develop a quality framework for study support and target some specific initiatives, for example Norfolk expanded their "Young People as Researchers" project across more schools. The UFA brand has helped to provide local authorities with an identity that can pull together a number of policy strands and teaching and learning strategies through

developing training and activity that provides a quality framework and a touchstone for research and development. Some authorities approaches are exemplified in this quote:

“The UFA? For me it’s the glue that binds together disparate initiatives. In Cornwall, the UFA is ‘joining up’ our thinking and practice to accelerate the pace of change in learning organisations. For me it’s a pleasure to work with UFA colleagues with the utmost creativity and passion.”

Lucy Mines, Partnership Manager Cornwall, 2002.

THE EVOLVING NATURE OF THE NETWORK PARTNERSHIPS.

In 2002 Tom Bentley of the think-tank DEMOS summed up our challenge in the following way:

“UFA’s greatest significance lies in its potential to transform. Radical possibilities increasingly come from innovation in practice, rather than from grand theory. To fulfill this potential the UFA, as an organisation and a network, must ensure that its definition of success involves more than doing the same thing all over the country. In fact it must exemplify the learning and creativity which it seeks to develop among its students.”

The UFA from the beginning of its growth tried to be flexible enough to respond to local needs and local circumstances, achieving coherence through shared core principles and values. There have been different ways of adopting and using the UFA, for example:

In 2003 Newcastle noted in their review that *“a strong initial emphasis on mainstream has established the rigour and credibility of the UFA and more people are now willing to get involved in OOHL.”*

A survey of 43 UFA local authority partners in 2006 found that:

- 1 Study Support was a key feature in 68% of partnerships. Summer schools were evident in 50% but there may be more we are unaware of.
- 2 Partnership working using the UFA was evidenced across organisations and schools in 53 % of partnerships to some degree or another and for 28% of partner authorities this was one of the prime rationales for using the UFA. Although in terms of policy and strategic placement UFA was only written into extended schools within 23% of the partner authorities.
- 3 School improvement was explicitly stated as a key reason for being involved in the UFA within 49% of the partnerships.

As the above statistics have indicated the UFA is used as a framework in a number of ways. A reflection of the development of the UFA and its network are the variations the historic Fellowship model that are being used in 2006. For example starting with young people’s leadership, extended schools co-ordinators, or involving non-teachers from the beginning in summer schools.

The UFA has operated with a number of paradoxes over the last few years in a rapidly changing policy and funding environment. One paradox is that if we are too flexible we become too many things to too many people. This has rendered the UFA quite opaque and difficult to grasp hold of until you actually experience it.

Another paradox is our model of building capacity depends upon colleagues, who depend upon gatekeepers, who depend upon strategic recognition and finance. Many early adopters saw the potential to linking to a range of strategies using the UFA and study support but some have had to fight to get the role of study support recognised within their authority and latterly within the extended schools agenda. Initial confusing messages from the Government about the extended schools ‘core offer’ and the definition of study support have not helped. These messages seem to have been clarified and study support is embedded in all major policy agendas, newer partners in 2006 have all been interested in linking study support to wider school improvement and Every Child Matters outcomes using UFA training to bring key players together.

The policy agenda with partnerships embedded into its vision seems really propitious for voluntary organisations such as ours. However the role of the ‘market’ and the

delegation of funding and choice to schools also brings with it some serious issues for voluntary organisation's partnerships with the statutory sector. As Local Education Authorities transform themselves into Children's Services there has been much uncertainty for some Partnership Managers as to their future placement and security. Funding going out to schools has meant for some authorities a cut-back in their services, a realignment to what are considered to be 'core targets' and new cultures and priorities where heads of services have not had an exclusively education background. These drivers are issues for future research but there is no escaping the fact that uncertainty is a way of life for many of our colleagues. UFA "review of reviews" since 2001 have been indicating that for many insecurity of positioning has always been a fact of life.

We now have partners operating across a spectrum of strategic placements. For example:

"all our extended schools strategy is based around the UFA" and

"It's (UFA) day has arrived."

For some "the UFA ticks a lot of strategy boxes for them" and has had a positive role in developing partnership work, while others have experienced a decrease in linkages. One partnership felt isolated after being placed in adult education because "they (the authority) didn't know what to do with them."

The success of partnerships in embedding more deeply into schools, other organisations and other strategies has a direct correlation with the amount of time a Partnership Manager has to devote to the UFA and the length of time the partnership has been going. The statistical analysis undertaken in 2004 is quite clear on this although the percentage of Fellows deemed to be active did not vary according to years in partnership or days available. Again a spectrum of Partnership Managers' time available for UFA is in evidence, stretching from those with full-time teams to those who have as little as a half-day a week. Two to three days a week made a significant difference to 'penetration' within an area over 1-2 days availability, but this impact did not rise as steeply for having a full week available to dedicate to UFA. In the 2006 census the average time recorded as available to deliver by Partnership Managers UFA was 41%. In two authorities UFA National Managers have been brought back in to service UFA development that the authority no longer has the capacity to manage fully. This may be an increasing trend.

The paradox of building capacity though gate-keepers is becoming more acute in the numbers of school consortium partnerships that have been developed. Some schools find it increasingly difficult to communicate with outside bodies and to convert enthusiastically conceived visions between different schools into action. Staff turnover and lack of communication within schools and between consortium partners make this area of work very difficult for the UFA sometimes, resulting in wasted time and lack of information about what's happening. However where we have pockets of enthusiastic staff and young people our direct delivery begins to make an impact. In some ways our experiences mirror the same difficulties that local authorities face of extracting information from schools.

As authorities and relationships with schools and organisations are evolving in the present climate the UFA has attempted to keep pace with its membership structure in order to enable partners to participate in the network. At the start of the national network there was a division between partners subsidised by the DfES and 'commercial partners' who brought in the UFA at full cost rates. Subscriptions were

also levied that reflected the size of LEAs. These structures were designed in the beginning to develop LEA capacity through them having access to financial support and encouraging them to recover funds from schools where funding was increasingly being devolved. However schools were not always in a position to use funding quickly or to balance this against pressing staffing priorities. Over the last three years flat rate authority membership packages have been introduced along with packages for consortia of schools and individuals. Membership and financing are difficult balances. It is evident from our time-sheeting process that some partners receive far more time than the revenue we receive for it and are probably not aware of that fact, and while we work extremely hard to make these relationships work, we cannot continue to do so uneconomically. Another paradox!

The relationship of work in Birmingham to the national network has always been somewhat anomalous in that Birmingham UFA is governed and run under the auspices of the AOY Board rather than being a partnership line-managed independently. Birmingham City Council has always supported the UFA with grant funding and this was always on the understanding that this grant would taper off to a zero or minimal base by the 2010. The project in Birmingham took on huge commitments to staff through City centrally awarded Neighbourhood Renewal Funding (NRF). This funding allowed the employment of some creative and talented teachers from schools and the employment of a dynamic community team who recruited part-time local ward Fellows to run many hours of activities.

In retrospect such a large growth of personnel was a huge risk and as we did not do enough to monitor the impact of our work closely enough against key floor targets, we were not in a position to protect ourselves when without warning the city 'pulled' our NRF funding. Redundancies in the community projects resulted followed by the majority of the Birmingham team being returned to their City contracts. This episode did not ultimately impact upon the national network, but could have done, but has certainly disrupted the work in Birmingham. Birmingham UFA is still under the direct auspices of the AOY with an influencing voice on the Board from Birmingham City Council but at the time of press there is much work being done in linking back into the City's wider strategies as a learning city. Through summer schools, the creation of a Study Support group, Fellowships with schools and leisure staff, Super Learning Days and parent work the Birmingham project is beginning to re-establish some exciting work. The UFA team has now resettled into a strong working organisation with new admin and finance officers and systems.

There has always been a paradox in the UFA organisation between servicing demand, income generating and time to invest in new ideas and services. Although the National Team has grown from three to seven this had not been proportional to the increase in partners from four in 1999 to forty-eight active in 2006. One of the developments in the network has been a move to regionalising, trying to establish regional-hubs where capacity could be supported more at a local level. Kirklees, through Fran Perry, and Durham, through Anne timothy, were given grants to support the training and development of hubs in the North and Northeast. Through their work the hubs made good progress in developing a sharing and meeting culture. In terms of time and finances it was not possible for either the two partners or the National Team to support these hubs in the same way, however they have continued to meet and share good practice and interface with the national network through the National Managers. Other meetings have begun in the Southwest and Midlands.

However a regional strategy is not necessarily suited to all areas. The regional networks are dependent for their success on a number of factors. Local and regional identities differ, regional competitions between councils for resources differ, UFA

histories and needs differ so that a one-size fits all may not work across the country. The north and north-east hub have certainly generated some rich practice and a sense of network. The cost-benefit analysis of attending and contributing to such meetings may ultimately determine the direction a regional strategy takes. As the network expands the National Team has taken on more staff who are based elsewhere than Birmingham.

So, what of the feelings about belonging to the network? There has over the last ten years been a sense of the UFA being a good thing to be involved in, in some cases transformational, but also of a sense of being in a constant drive to maintain and develop funding and resources in a policy environment that changes rapidly, presents many competing claims for funding and is demanding of energies in respect of the need to address a highly visible target regime that can militate against risk-taking.

One interviewee in Professor Helen Gunter's research (2006a) expressed it this way: *"the seeds of learning approaches have been sown, but without the UFA to push it there is a concern. The UFA makes people hungry, and so where will the ideas come from? For me it has been a roller coaster ride, and it has been a good thing to do."*

Helen Gunter noted that:

"While there has been some local difficulties the UFA remains vibrant across the country and those participating at all levels remain committed to it in relation to purposes and practices. The ideas and the enthusiasm remains, but what is needed is the support to do this."

And further concludes:

"The UFA is a vibrant network, is optimistic that it will respond productively to the new and unfolding context, but it could be lost unless there is a major investment in it."

So while partners in 2006 valued belonging to a national network, the challenge of funding, capacity and competing demands on energy continue to provide a roller-coaster ride. The successful partnerships that have continued to expand and grow are often the ones where there has been a clear long-term strategy and determination to embed the UFA firmly and strategically create linkages.

Unfortunately life is not always that simple and many factors create or end success. Tim Brighouse talked at the first Paul Hamlyn Fellowship meeting that there are energy creators and energy drainers in the system and that Fellows were the energy creators of the world. Our experience over ten years has certainly borne out this observation and successful UFA partnerships quite simply rely upon people with enthusiasm, belief and the ability to create relationships. However all these emotionally intelligent qualities also require a strategic structure that supports and encourages with resources and backing key people – the energy givers; what the exact relationship between one creating the other might be is difficult to say but partnerships fail to make an impact where there is neither the strategic vision nor the personal belief.

The Role of the Brand

One of the interesting snippets to emerge from the history are the different views people have expressed in using the UFA brand and materials. In research on network learning communities Helen Gunter suggested that the UFA had a strong national reputation and that the brand was valued. Some partners have expressed the view quite strongly that the national UFA is a recognised national brand that is

worthy of belonging to and that validation of their local work by the National Team is important. Other partners see the energy created by having the t-shirts and marketing accessories as crucial to building the success of activities such as the summer schools. One partner expressed the view that it was important to get the quality right first before bringing on the issues of branding. In two partnerships to our knowledge views were expressed in recent reviews that essentially the brand was difficult to use as it didn't mean much to people. In addition Sarah Burgess's research of Fellows (op. cit.) found that not all Fellows were sure if the young people they taught were aware of the brand. Quite clearly differing expectations and experiences are being expressed here.

Looking back on ten years living with the brand, some points are worth re-iterating.

Firstly, that the branding derives from the UFA core-principle of "Building A Sense of Belonging." This principle echoes the notion that people coming to UFA activities can feel a sense of belonging to their own school or organisation and another organisation that supports and encourages their learning. Tim Brighthouse described the UFA as "an Open University (OU) for young people'. The open-university metaphor is still important as we have experienced people identifying the brand with quality, enjoyment and something different at a time and place that is different to institutionalised settings, much like the OU. To reinforce our learning on this point in 2005 we produced an "I Belong..." statement about the meaning of belonging to the UFA. (See attached appendix.)

Secondly, learning is often about discovering personal identity through social activity in which we trust and get along with our fellow group members. There is an argument to say that this sense of cosmopolitanism is critical in a rapidly changing social environment where values and ethical decisions are as important as the technical skills we possess. The brand creates a group identity that can, if handled well, support more sensitive dialogue and bridging between groups from different backgrounds.

Thirdly, we argue that learning should necessarily be lifelong; skills need cultivating that enable people to learn anywhere and anytime. This notion is enshrined in the core principle of "linking home, school and community." The OU metaphor is about putting into operation the development of a common language for learning so that parents, young people, communities and schools can talk together about learning to learn. The metaphor is also about getting away from an 'ages and stages' education model and a metronomic view of a timetable. When people say "I went to a UFA activity" they begin to have a common understanding of what took place and how they might support enriching learning environments. Marketing of the brand helps to reinforce this sense of belonging without which activity can be just another 'day-out' rather than part of a possible, coherent and challenging learning journey.

Fourthly, we understand much more about the psychology of 'flow' (Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). We have learnt that building energy, challenge and identity into a fun, coherent, package can contribute to the sense of flow that is critical for learning to be enhanced. One finding from Csikszentmihalyi's research is how few and how rarely adolescents experience this state of flow. Our experience in summer school activities demonstrates that the energy built through branding and team games makes an impact upon the depth of experience and its lasting impact.

Fifthly, we have learnt that it is invariably the adults who have 'hang-ups' about using the brand. The brand was aimed at young people and is really for them although we hope the adult Fellows feel part of the organisation too. When introduced and used

energetically with young people the t-shirts and the brand image are powerful. It has always been fascinating to see the adaptations made to t-shirts at the beginning of a summer school and see them 'pop-up' in all sorts of places subsequently, worn proudly by their wearers.

At a recent residential for young people from the around the UFA network the power of seeing themselves as part of a bigger national network was really apparent. Adult gatekeepers often feel competing demands around branding activities, for example, they have to go through internal authority guidelines, they belong to other organisations themselves, or they are insecure about what the brand represents. Adults do not often have access to the bigger picture of the power that networking through the brand can confer on the long-term impact of the UFA.

Despite all the paradoxes and puzzles of operating a national brand the UFA is as convinced as ever about using the brand to denote quality, to provide a sense of belonging and to support the long learning journey of every individual who cares to be part of the 'family', and a family, for good and bad, is how several people around the country have described the UFA. Branding helps to bring in funding and recognition for this family that will be critical for its survival. Since 2003 Linda Gregory and Felicity Martin have worked creatively on providing a colourful, modern branding of materials that is now vibrant and reflective of our growth. Alongside the brand now lies a new web-based service and range of on-line products to support activity. We hope confidence in the brand as a serious national organisation representing something worthwhile can grow as we become more confident at articulating our values and principles.

The Changing Nature of the Pedagogy and Fellowship

From the beginning the UFA has been hungry in its search and drive to explore new ways of looking at learning that can unlock potential that might otherwise remain hidden or untapped within people. Tim Brighouse's view for Birmingham was that the gap between achievers and under-achievers at key stage 3 was too wide and growing wider. Tim was firmly of the view that:

"Giving young people more time to do more of the same in the same way with the same people is not going to raise standards of achievement dramatically upward - we need to think about doing something radically different"

The UFA was part of that radical difference and designed to tap into the 85% of waking time that young people were not in school in order to engage them through a different pedagogy and to use judgements of progress that were different to those used in public exams and compulsory schooling.

In his research in 1998 Tom Bentley put it this way:

"New practice from around the country also shows that it is possible to accelerate learning by applying new techniques for teaching and learning in circumstances different from the average school day. One pioneer of such practice is the University of the First Age (UFA) in Birmingham, which works to extend and enrich young people's learning in partnership with their schools and local communities. It offers vacation courses in a range of subjects, and takes a broad, interest-led approach to learning based in part on Howard Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences. The combination of enthusiasm, immersion for long periods of time, and multi-sensory learning –for example using music and dance to teach maths – has already helped to boost the achievement of young people who took part in its pilot stages. As well as its focus on widening the range of ways in which school subjects can effectively be learned, the UFA emphasises individual reflection and recording of learning, encouraging individual pupils to take personal responsibility for their progress." P86

"Our dependence on public examinations, and the idea that competence can only be really assessed from 'afar' by experts, encourage the view that the subjective perceptions are of only marginal validity. In fact, they are central to the quality of learning, and the extent to which what has been learned will be retained and applied in other contexts. Many active learning projects, such as the University of the First Age, use journals for learners to record their experiences and progress, and encourage them to form reflective judgements about what they have achieved and where else it might be applied." Tom Bentley (1998) p 147

However our learning journey has been a process full of interesting dilemmas and twists and turns. Again quoting from Tom Bentley at DEMOS:

"The UFA has become a pioneer of new ways of learning- not seeking to banish or denigrate existing forms of provision but reconfiguring resources to gain greater leverage of learning potential. The great danger now that it faces is to become part of the learning establishment. Because of its success, it would be easy for the UFA to settle down into a well established niche. But settling down is the last thing it should do." (In UFA, 2002)

Again, some more paradoxes. Sometimes we need to 'settle down' for partners to grasp a process that is replicable and for us to gain sustainable funding, but ...we also need to be pushing boundaries that are uncomfortable, but... we also need to

be using well-evidenced ideas, but... sometimes ideas are 'wacky' and ridiculed until tested in practice. Our approach over the ten years has largely been pragmatic in the sense that we attempt to model in practice what we believe, and that we are mindful of the end game: engaging learners with things that work for them personally and can be reproduced.

The pragmatism of our approach has meant that we have not always borrowed from the most reliable of theoretical sources or the most well tested research, but we're quite cheerful to acknowledge this as part of the learning process. Our philosophy is that if you are too worried about the mistakes along the journey then you're not learning.

Our journey begins with the belief in the potential of everyone to succeed somewhere, somehow and sometime in their lives, and with the conviction that learning can provide people with the means to shape their options in positive directions in a world that is becoming more learning dependent. To unlock this potential we fastened onto the rubric of 'brain friendly learning', trying to understand our brains better to re-design better learning environments.

As part of a wave of ideas associated with brain friendly learning we enthusiastically adopted amongst other things learning styles (the simple visual, auditory and kinaesthetic VAK), Howard Gardner's work on multiple intelligences, work on emotional intelligence inspired by Daniel Goleman, Alistair Smith's adaptations of accelerated learning and Eric Jensen's work on 'brain-friendly' learning.

What became apparent is that the latest research into the brain was partial, we did not have access to original first-hand research, that the work was rapidly dated and that the leap from what is, or might be, to what ought to be is too outrageous a jump both empirically and philosophically. One example of this is the model of the 'triune brain' that includes the notion of a reptilian brain that Paul MacClean commenced in the late forties and fifties. This is something we naively promoted. However in our defence the principle that emotion and learning are inextricably linked was always one of our prime reasons for using the model and remains a valid principle. Neuroscience no longer recognises the triune brain model; many neuro-scientists are openly warning against their research being translated into education; later research analysis of the published research (meta-research) urges caution in deriving educational designs from the current body of science.

However a number of research findings suggest that the field of research into the brain is a brave new frontier and will promise some interesting returns in the future. A number of defensible principles are important to consider: models of how memory functions, the uses of environment and modelling, the levels of unconscious and parallel processing, our evolution as pattern makers and seekers, the role of emotion and the developments of the pre-frontal cortex are all examples of areas that we would be foolish to ignore when looking at the process of learning. Rather than give up these areas, whose complexity learners of all ages find endlessly fascinating if presented in an interesting manner, we have used the phrase 'connecting to our biology' to describe our investment as a little less jargonistic than 'brain friendly' learning. Although that may prove to be a rather ironic decision!

The psychological research in terms of learning styles is also fraught with difficulties that in our enthusiasm we had not anticipated. Much research has suggested again the need to exercise a lot more caution, while proponents of learning style theories continue to promote their ideas, often with their own questionnaire attached, an issue that raises a cynical eyebrow or two.

This is not the place to explore the issues at stake but we are horrified by seeing so called 'new' practices that have restricted potential through merely re-labelling learners in different ways. For example young people who have exercise books labelled auditory or kinaesthetic or visual and who now say I can't do that because I'm a kinaesthetic learner. Educators are in danger of swapping one limiting belief for another. In our enthusiasm to challenge orthodox thinking we may own up to promoting an uncritical picture of learning styles that was taken up in un-critical and negative ways. Learners are all undoubtedly different and we need wider debate than is possible to start in this document. There are a number of questions to ask. For example can we describe these differences in a meaningful way? How important are these differences? If in understanding all this we can do anything useful with the knowledge?

Recognising our 'errors' has driven our desire to understand learning as a more complex activity that is underpinned by values as much as by technical knowledge. Important principles for us are to be comfortable with complexity, construct knowledge in practice, test and reflect and to engage in dialogue. Brain friendly learning may then be a meaningless oxymoron. In our learning journey we have come to value the research that has a focus on disposition, habits, emotions and motivations for its practical relevance and its empirical weight. We continue to look at new knowledge into memory and above all we emphasise the need for practitioners to 'own' and develop ideas for themselves and when they see and feel the impact upon the lives they touch to ask why that might be – for themselves but also for the benefit of the wider learning community.

In this regard we still use Howard Gardner's model of multiple intelligences because while some academics suck their teeth over its validity, the model has been turned by practitioners into a tool to re-engage and motivate those who might otherwise be switched off learning. The model works despite its shortcomings and probably in contradiction to any truth it might describe, possibly because people see enough in it to make it work. In a recent visit to this country Howard Gardner talked about the way practitioners had extended his ideas far beyond his original scope. There was a sense both of exasperation and delight in his comments. Again our use of the model is not to lay claim to scientific truth but to enrich a learner's self-understandings and interpretations. A stance that has as long a philosophical pedigree as the scientific method.

Despite the wanderings there is a thread to our journey for our pedagogy is still based on the following idea:

"The approach to learning had to be an interest led model which for teachers kept alive intellectual curiosity." Tim Brighouse.

Ten years later Helen Gunter (2006b) observes that:

"membership of the UFA is not mandatory but is based on professional engagement and interest in developing the self and skills. It speaks to the intrinsic motivation within professionals to want to give of their best and to make a commitment to want to know more about learning."

This is reflected in the following quote:

"Every now and then you become genuinely involved and interactive with an initiative that has genuine and long-term impact in practice and attainment and which positively moves you on in a variety of personal and professional ways. Such experiences are an honest rarity. The UFA is a prime example." Alan Taylor, Enfield Fellow 2002.

Whatever our pedagogical journeys engagement of participants has always been central. What is pleasing in our history that we have expanded beyond the Paul Hamlyn Fellowship audience of teachers and the learning process that the Fellowship programme embodies also speaks to adults and young people who would not necessarily consider themselves professionals.

The Fellowship attempts to be different from a 'training' course per se, encouraging a mindset that goes beyond the content of the programme, encouraging the idea of Fellows as change agents not passive receivers of knowledge. The Fellowship is designed to be as much about learning to learn as a defined body of knowledge. Professor Helen Gunter's research drew the following conclusions:

"...the opportunity to open up areas of dispute are difficult in settings where the expectation is about consensus building. Furthermore, she (Frankham) argues that working for an agreement can deny access to knowledge, and what is needed are disturbances where people are asked to be troubled and to trouble others. Indeed, the case is made that we may not know what the problem is to be solved, and that learning is not a product of being clear about aims but originates from and is a part of a process of questioning and uncertainty....and as Frankham (2005) argues it 'reduces issues of knowledge production to questions of information exchange'. What makes the NUFA different is that it presents a curriculum for teachers and students, where there is content and evidence that can stimulate questions about meaning, practice and student progress. Teachers who attend NUFA sessions can bring their own histories with them, and can disagree with what they are being presented with. Hence the approach that is relevant to the NUFA is one that is less about a packaging of know how through problem solving and is more about problem posing and equity.

"The NUFA has seen itself as a champion of children and teachers, and how they might be enabled to develop learning activities based on the best possible research evidence combined with professionalism, rather than directly operating to ensure that national reforms are delivered. Secondly, the NUFA puts emphasis on research into learning and on working with teachers to develop their understanding and use of that knowledge, and as such there is an approach to adult learning that treats teachers as people who not only know through their practice but are also interested in knowing about research and theorising. There is the opportunity to develop this work in relation to how leadership is conceptualised." (Helen Gunter, March 2006b.)

In 2006 we re-wrote the Fellowship Training Materials in order to update our knowledge base, revisit our practice and produce materials that would be more easily accessible and modular. There are a number of key challenges we have to face in the future. Many schools feel they are up to date with the learning to learn agenda and many schools are genuinely much further forward in their approach to learning than they were when we started out. In addition there has been a proliferation of consultancies, companies and DfES strategies that are placing an emphasis on learning in ways that were not around ten years ago. In short is there still a role for the UFA in a competitive market that demands 'innovation'?

Our recent direction has been to place more emphasis on dispositions and values in learning and incorporate more practice from around the network. The work on dispositions has drawn upon the works of writers such as Guy Claxton, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, Carol Dweck, Robert Sternberg and others who have both a strong empirical base and can write clearly and cogently. However we very strongly retain the original desire of the Fellowship to be practice focussed and action research orientated.

There is one strand of UFA pedagogy that remains constant and will continue to do so. The problem-solving, more open-ended challenge framework that we are

continually developing will always be central to our work. Putting people in learning teams to solve real-life problems together has to be the most powerful way we have of encouraging positive learning dispositions and values that will both raise achievement now and support 'future proofing' for learners.

Another challenge relates to the capacity of those we work with. Although the Fellowship model is no longer predominately teacher focused the issue that has been raised more lately is the difficulty or unwillingness of schools to release teachers during curriculum time as it is seen to deflect from 'core-business' as defined by results in league table targets; even though the Fellowship is known to impact upon the quality of teaching. As Helen Gunter (2006b) notes:
"These are dangerous arguments that could damage professional development because they are framed around the scalability of change rather than a change worth working for and resourcing."

David Hargreaves (2003 quoted in Gunter op. Cit.) argues that "it will be particularly important that innovations emerging from networks meet the criterion of high leverage, which can compensate the transaction costs." The notion of innovation is still very much in our minds as we would answer the question is there still a role for the UFA in the affirmative, but can we overcome the transaction costs? The answer has to lie in restating a definition of innovation as quite simply doing something differently in order to do it better (borrowed from David Hargreaves) and to ground the need to do things differently within a value set and a different time frame.

In some small way we believe our pedagogy contributes to the capacity of our education system to move from what Professor Susan Greenfield has called "information rich, question poor" to being "information rich, question rich". This requires something deeper and broader than another 'training course':

"If awareness never reaches beyond superficial events and current circumstances, actions will be reactions. If, on the other hand, we penetrate more deeply to see the larger wholes that generate "what is" and our own connection to this wholeness, the source and effectiveness of our actions can change dramatically."

Peter Senge (2004) Presence p12

Our Fellowship has always been aimed at long-term transformation through encouraging a deeper engagement and personal reflection with issues in an environment of trust and mutual respect. Although these are important, the Fellowship programme is not just focused on quick wins, easy solutions. There is a need to for individuals to grapple with complexity and construct change for themselves. In a research project on network learning communities Professor Helen Gunter (2006b) argues that there is an opportunity for the UFA to go beyond information exchange to knowledge production and produce the kinds of open dialogue that might not be possible where supposed learning communities are concerned with producing consensus within policy expectations.

Construction of new knowledge will undoubtedly mean that the UFA will continue to be grounded in practice, in working with how people understand their work in their own contexts; we will continue to try to challenge and stretch the personal meanings people make by engaging with the best public knowledge, research and ideas we can find while supporting learners to test them out for themselves in their learning. This is the emphasis on 'bottom up' that Professor John MacBeath highlighted (introduction) as the **"compelling power of learning."**

SO TO THE FUTURE? WILL THE UFA BE HERE IN TEN YEARS TIME? IS THERE STILL A NEED FOR THE UFA?

At the time these questions are posed we undoubtedly work in an improved policy environment with positive opportunities to join up services and focus on the outcomes for children and young people (the Every Child Matters agenda.) There is a recognition of study support in the education policies and a gathering focus throughout Government on creativity, enterprise, volunteering, citizenship and community regeneration with partnerships between organisations playing vital roles.

The UFA welcomes this policy environment but we also recognise the need to continue to challenge ideas and as a voluntary sector organisation take risks that other agencies would not necessarily embark upon. We would like to be involved in shaping strategy and policy and will endeavour to do so, but only if it does not detract from our focus on outcomes for young people. Over the last ten years we have been an active contributor to the DfES Study Support Policy through supporting conferences, regional seminars, sitting on steering groups and working in partnership with the Policy Team through our grant. We have also received grants for work from the Innovations Unit and National Youth Voluntary work teams.

At a national level the UFA is also talking to a wider range of organisations and Government departments other than the DfES. We continue to have conversations with a range of businesses and voluntary organisations and talk to ContinYou and QISS around the Study Support policy. In order to keep ourselves going a new and comprehensive five-year fund-raising strategy is being put in place. In order to sustain the organisation we will continue to rely on a mix of grants, trusts, sponsorship and income-generating work.

There are issues to be faced in our development, some of these have been aired in relation to how we work with and through 'gatekeepers' who may be vulnerable to changes. The capacity of schools to always respond to what many of them still see as the conflicting demands of school improvement and Every Child Matters means that we are operating in a volatile market even though achievement and child centred outcomes should go hand in hand. Failure to secure funding and recognition could prove damaging.

However these are operational and technical matters that can be worked on by us as an organisation. There is still a need and interest for organisations such as the UFA to grapple with ethical and social paradoxes that have no easy answers; can we offer contributions to their unravelling?

Here are some paradoxes. As a species we are driven to learn and to create. We hold both the capacity for good and for evil, for curiosity that has unforeseen consequences. Primo Levi back in 1987 made first a telling observation, then posed a challenging question

"We are what we are: each one of us, even the peasant, even the most modest artisan, is a researcher, has always been that. From the undeniable danger intrinsic in each new scientific discovery we can and must protect ourselves in other ways... our intelligence has increased portentously, yet our wisdom hasn't: But I ask myself how much time, in all of the schools of all the countries, is devoted to increasing wisdom, that is, to moral problems." (p213.)

Hatching The Cobra

Technology advancing so exponentially will give us unbelievable potentials, but as Primo Levi warned, also inherent dangers. Globalised networks are becoming a

more prominent organising and driving feature of human communities, individuals now have more opportunities to create and share knowledge for themselves. How do we use technology to learn more effectively while not sacrificing those local human capacities that are essential for our well-being and happiness? Do virtual realms and new technologies pose a threat to our identities? Are children and young people in more emotional and physical danger in the contemporary society or have they never had it so good?

In addition we can no longer escape responsibility for our impact upon the planet, will sustainability run through our future interventions? How can local interests and concern and global impact be enjoined? So how do we grow something successful at the local level while building in the ability to scale up or reproduce its success in other places? What will the future bring for the way we control and make decisions about our personal and collective responsibilities? What will be the future balances between the role of the state, local government, institutions, businesses, families, communities, neighbourhoods, in local and international decision-making processes?

In addition to these questions we need to add the following consideration when we think about the context in which we work: it is becoming increasingly confirmed that as a society we trust our young people less, that they are the targets of aggressive marketing strategies to turn them into consumers of considerable value to the 'market' and that social disadvantage and poverty impact upon low educational attainment.

One of the UFA's starting points was narrowing the tail of under-achievement in our society and breaking into the cycle that links between low educational attainment and poverty. There is still so much more work to be done in this field. The recent ippr research (2006) made the following statement:

"Our research used two large surveys that followed young people born in 1958 and 1970, and shows that in just over a decade, social and personal skills became 33 times more important in determining relative life chances. At the same time, young people from less affluent backgrounds became less likely than their more fortunate peers to develop these skills."

Furthermore

"Why the disadvantaged in particular have been negatively affected in this way is largely down to socio-economic trends of the past 30 years and their impact on the way young people are socialised in contemporary Britain."

There are some huge implications to grapple with. Not the least of which is should now the UFA be more clearly focused on those young people disengaged from learning and education?

In light of all these considerations we would endorse the statement made by Jacques Delors (1998) in his introduction to the UNESCO Commission on Education for the Twenty-first Century:

"In confronting the many challenges that the future holds in store, humankind sees in education an indispensable asset in its attempt to attain the ideals of peace, freedom and social justice."

The commission does not see education as a miracle cure or a magic formula opening the door to a world in which all ideals will be attained, but as one of the principle means available to foster a deeper and more harmonious form of human development and thereby reduce poverty, exclusion, ignorance, oppression and war."

This report was entitled “The Treasure Within” and promoted the following strands of learning as being essential to equip *all of us* to face the challenges of the 21st century.

1. Learning to know
2. Learning to do
3. Learning to be
4. Learning to live with each other

The UFA believes in its history it has uniquely contributed to promoting those strands of “learning to be” and “learning to live alongside each other” and that these contributions are as important as ever in the complex world we inhabit. Learning to be is about who we are as people, how we can exercise positive decisions in shaping options for our lives and about our place in the world. Learning to live alongside each other speaks for itself and as the ippr research intimated is becoming an increasingly important determinant of life chances.

One of our tools at an ethical level has been Robert Starrat’s (2003) triangular framework. As an organisation we were prompted by Helen Gunter to explore his work on what he describes as foundational human moral qualities: autonomy, connectedness and transcendence and this has also become part of our map. Transcendence is summed up perfectly by:

“one cannot lead a life that is truly excellent without feeling that one belongs to something greater and more permanent than oneself” Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi Finding Flow (1977 p131.)

How many people have an opportunity to experience that feeling of excellence? How can we connect more widely and deeply with others in a frame of positive interest? How can I do that without first understanding myself more deeply and reflectively? The implications of this model for our practice are being explored in other publications but it does give us a compass that we can build practice from; for example, adopting a frame of “me, me and others and me and my community” in the Learning Passport that gives some simple pointers for young people to begin asking these questions.

So the Treasure Within frames a purpose for us: to enhance learning in ways that is not currently practised widely enough.

“We did not put our ideas together. We put our purposes together. And we agreed. Then we decided.” From “Popol Vuh”, the sacred book of the Mayans
Quoted in Peter Senge et al (2005) Presence

There is still a need for us to do the affirming and celebrating of the compelling power of learning. One Partnership Manager said that:

“I would really miss it if it wasn’t there. The UFA can be irritating, a bit like a family, but I realise it’s importance.”

(From Manchester University interviews Gunter, 2006a.)

The research concludes that we have a number of strategic investments to make in our future and while there have been some local difficulties the UFA remains vibrant across the country and

“those who are participating at all levels remain committed to it in relation to purposes and practice.”

Perhaps a key strategic investment will be in the young people who hold the keys to the sustainability of the network as more and more of them get involved in the governance of the UFA, and more young people have the capacity and wherewithal to run activities for themselves. One of our roles will be to understand and further develop young people's leadership. Perhaps we should develop more the metaphor of the 'open university' as a space to enrich and extend learning and as a space to experiment with ideas.

The UFA will need to support adults to build that capacity. In the process we hope to develop more sophisticated scripts that people can replicate. For example, alternative subject curricula that can enrich work in the subjects through multi-sensory learning and enable more young people to be excited by these domains. The scripts would also need to enable people to develop skills for lifelong learning and the ability to transfer these dispositions between home, school, community and a variety of work places. Could these scripts not be placed into on-line learning environments as well?

Many of our communities are rich in experiences and resources that can provide expertise, experience, places, times and artefacts that can enhance the learning process. These resources could be a business or workplace, a park or reserve, a college or university, an arts centre, a library, theatre or museum, a public service or faith centre. The resource could be in the minds and willingness of individuals of all ages with interest and talents to share, in volunteers and time-banks, in higher education involving their students in community learning, in the meeting of different generations and cultures. The possibilities are enormous. All of these resources would enhance and enrich the role schools play in providing both an emotional and a basic skills grounding for children. Learning to be and learning to live alongside each other by taking apart and reconstructing the notion of when, where and how learning takes place.

This is at the heart of the community campus model we are promoting as one way of enabling people to make use of the rich abundance of resources around them through bringing together learning teams. This concept we raised ten years ago and it foreshadowed some of the thinking that has emerged in the extended schools agenda. Some of our friends have said that we were thinking extended schools before the policy emerged. The UFA has a long way to go in realising the potential of the campus metaphor but it is a key task.

Perhaps the role of schools will become more focused and tightly defined, even narrower, while other sites become part of the learning tapestry. Perhaps Ivan Illich was right in his argument that we need to 'de-school society' and perhaps that time is drawing closer because of the momentous questions that are now being asked of education. We don't know the answers, which is why the questions are still a paradox, if we did know, wouldn't we all be doing them?

Our contribution is to test the questions out bit by bit and to try and model and practise in our own organisation what we would like to see in others and that includes learning to change ourselves.

And how seriously should we take ourselves? Well...

**“The Buddhists have a good piece of advice:
Act always as if the future of the universe depended on what you did, while
laughing at yourself for thinking that you made any difference.”**

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi Finding Flow (1997 p131.)

So yes we will still be here in ten years time. Actually we're not much different from where we started in 1996, the language might have changed, the pedagogy developed and we have spread to other ages and other places than key stage 3 but the TES report of 16th August 1996 says it all really:

“The University of the First Age is not so much a seat of learning, as a run, jump, sing, laugh, shout, build and connect place of learning.”

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Let's Talk UFA - Transforming Learning (2000)

UFA transforming Learning Through Study Support, A good practice Guide (2002) DfES

UFA in Action – "I wish every day could be like this" (2003)

Further case studies are available on our web site: www.ufa.org.uk

APPENDIX A

SOME VOLUME FIGURES:

The following statistics are based upon summer school returns, grant monitoring, Partnership Managers review documents, annual portfolios and census returns. These are reliable in so far as they are what we've been given, yet these numbers are probably an underestimate of activity as there are many gaps in records, particularly in Summer School and Super Learning Day activity and Peer Tutor numbers.

Local Partnerships worked with: 63

Number of Fellows trained: 2,941
2,640 Fellows;
214 Community Fellows;
69 Young People's Fellows:
28 on separate Parent's Fellowships
Number of Peer Tutors trained: 5,941

Number young people participated in Summer Schools: 27, 898
Number of different Summer Challenge programmes run: 648

Number of schools recorded as Partner Schools: 1,242 of which Primary Schools: 499 (40%) Secondary Schools: 343 (28%)
We have worked with 28 special schools, and 6 foundation/KS one settings.

Number of non-school organisations regarded as partners: 223

At least 11,880 young people have recorded Super Learning Day activity but this figure is much lower than the actual (unknown) total

Just supposing that?

Outside of the Summer Challenge numbers, if only 50% of these Fellows were active and made a profound difference to their practice through having been on UFA training, then suppose that each one impacted upon the learning of x number of young people then the UFA would have touched so many lives.

If say the Fellows had a deep impact upon 30 (a class or group size) then 43,740 young people would have experienced different learning patterns

If 60 then 87,480

If 120 then 174,960

If 240 then 349,920

If 300 then 437,400

And so on. As amusing as this numbers game might be, it is also fairly pointless in providing absolute figures. None the less the speculation does demonstrate that the potential volume of work has been significant.

APPENDIX B

CRITICAL MOMENTS TIME LINE:

1994: Item 2.4 of the Chief Education Officer's report to the Birmingham City Council Education Committee.

"In the Chairman's statement to the Education Committee in June 1994 he referred to his hope that it might be possible to create in Birmingham a University for young people as a means of extending educational opportunities.

Later that summer the Chief Education Officer was invited to present a keynote speech to the annual conference of the Council of Local Education Authorities (CLEA) and chose to use the occasion to develop the Chairman's theme under the broad heading of the University of The First Age (UFA). Earlier he has consulted with all head teachers of Secondary Schools in the city on the text of that particular speech, the thrust of which follows in this report."

Tim Brighouse speeches at Wolverhampton and Greenwich 1994 raise the University of the First Age theme with a focus on 'non-statutory' time – 'school is not enough'.

Michael Barber introduces Maggie Farrar to Tim Brighouse.

Fred Jarvis organises funds for legal action against John Patten for libelling Tim. From the resulting settlement, funds are made available to commence the UFA Summer 1995.

A small team of Maggie Farrar, Pat Eagle and Elaine Wright get the UFA started from a small office in Margaret Street, Birmingham LEA 'HQ'. A steering group of Birmingham schools is started comprising of Aston Manor, Broadway, Handsworth Wood Boys, Heartlands, Holte, King Edward's Aston, Shenley Court.

1996 City Challenge Money used to pilot with schools in Birmingham

- To develop a new learning model
- Develop taster sessions
- To recruit tutors to work in school and community
- First Summer Schools hosted by University of Central England, Birmingham 296 Young People, curriculum comprised of maths, science and technology, French, Spanish, Urdu, and "Springboard to Literacy" at Shenley Court School.
- The TES reports: *"From July 15th –26th two groups of 150 children attended the first summer school. For five hours a day they enjoyed the multisensory approach, a highly interactive experience that takes the pupils out of the classroom both literally and metaphorically."*
- The Guardian wrote *"The students on the project were chosen mostly because they had shown some signs of beginning to 'turn-off' traditional ways of learning,"*

1996 Bill Culshaw former Personal Director with Mitchell's and Butlers Brewery, joins Board and planning team, arranging funding from M&B Trusts. Bill was a critical link to the Millennium Point Board and our subsequent move to Millennium Point.

17th February, 1997 Certificate of Incorporation for the Academy of Youth as private limited company. Fred Jarvis, Former General Secretary of NUT, becomes chair of the Board.

17th March, 1997 official confirmation of charitable status from the Charities Commission.

1998 to 2001 Paul Hamlyn Foundation grant of £430,000 enables Fellowship programme in Birmingham. Initially four cohorts of teachers, (73 in total finished) trained as Fellows with this grant.

“The time was right” - new ideas about learning (particularly Howard Gardner) restlessness with restrictions about the national curriculum concern with dip in attainment and the tail of under-achievement at KS3 in Birmingham schools and the need to do something different.

Birmingham Fellows begin ‘extended learning centres’ to try new ideas in learning outside compulsory school time. The UFA envisioned these centres as the ‘experimental arm’ of the school, trialling and testing ideas and linking back to school improvement. The forerunners of what the extended schools concept could become?

1997 Fran Perry from Kirklees visits an ‘open afternoon’ to talk about replicating.

1998 The UFA was awarded the Local Government Chronicle Innovation of the Year Award for its work.

Fred Jarvis through “The New Vision Group” talks to David Blunkett who agrees national roll-out. DfES National perspective, Study Support National Partnership,

17th June, 1999 Statutory Instrument 1999 no 1754 The Local Authorities (Goods and Services) (Public Bodies) (No. 2) Order 1999 signed by Alan Meale, Minister of State, Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions.

“Article 2 of this Order designates The Academy of Youth Limited, Coronation Park (at Launceston, Cornwall), the New Opportunities Fund, the Preston and Western Lancashire Racial Equality Council and Reaisi Limited as public bodies under section 1(5) of the Local Authorities (Goods and Services) Act 1970. The effect of designation is to allow a local authority to provide goods and services to the designated body.”

1999. Kirklees, Blackburn with Darwen, Middlesbrough and Enfield LEAs become first national partners supported by the DfES. Maggie takes up National Director post, Sarah Burgess and Manjit Shellis become new National Managers. Chrissie Garret takes up post of Principal of Birmingham UFA under the auspices of the AOY and begins a huge surge of activity within the city

A membership by subscription, that included a service package, was introduced, scaled to the size of authorities. In the beginning the DfES subsidised partnerships, and had the power of approval over those who could join. “Commercial” partners such as EAZs brought into membership.

2000 Stephen Brown is seconded to National Team from the Birmingham Urban Outdoor Education Centre

2000 UFA moves into Millennium Point, a new Millennium project build designed by Nicholas Grimshaw and Partners.

2001 Lyn Reynolds joins the National Team

2001 £1.7 million over 5 years is secured from New Opportunities Fund (Big Lottery) for partners to bid into for Summer School Programmes.

2001 Fred Jarvis retires as chair but stays active on Board:

"Fred's contribution was recognised, he was nominated to take the Chair in 1997. UFA started with £30k with the emphasis on summer school activity working with 300 young people and five schools. This year, 2001, the income will be £1m working with 3,000 children and 50 schools in Birmingham and 70 more nationally" (Minutes of Director's Meeting 28th March 2001).

Bill Culshaw becomes Chair of the AOY Board. Bill was a founder member of the Board and brought in vast expertise in business management from his time as Personnel Director for the Mitchell and Butlers Brewery.

In 2001 'snapshots' of 16 LEA partnerships were published.

Partner areas begin to test out UFA ideas beyond the school. Imaginative Fellowships bring adults from libraries, museums, youth work, supplementary schools and other services together.

2002 a regional hub model was proposed. Fran Perry, Kirklees, took co-ordination for the North and Anne Timothy, Durham, for the North East. Although those roles no longer operate these hubs continue to meet, provide professional development and mutual support. A step toward regionalisation.

2001-02 Birmingham UFA engaged in European Youth Coaching project and visit 4 European cities, and host colleagues from 8 cities in return.

2001 Chrissie Garrett takes up Assistant Director post for Birmingham LEA. Stephen Rogers takes up Chrissie's role having been her assistant from 2000.

2002 Sue Barnes joins National Team.

2003 87 Birmingham teachers attend a Fellows re-united conference addressed by Alistair Smith

2003 Maggie leaves to take up post as Assistant Director, National College School Leadership, NCSL. Sue Collins seconded from DfES for a temporary period in charge. August, Stephen Rogers becomes Director and September, Linda Gregory the new Business and Marketing Manager. The UFA is re-branded and the images updated to a contemporary and colourful suite of materials.

By 2003 Birmingham had reliably recorded 14,352 learners doing over 1 million learner hours. The national network had recorded work with 564 schools and around 1,200 Fellows.

From 2003 the network expanded through marketing, referrals and authorities' desire to use the UFA model
Cardiff join as our first Partner from outside England

2003, following Norfolk pilot, Esme Fairburn Grant awarded to run community tutor programmes in Barnsley, Durham, Norfolk. Community Tutors, The Community Fellowship, Coaching and Mentoring Fellowship, Adults Other Than Teachers and Parents Fellowships start the expansion of the UFA from a mainly school classroom focus.

March 2004, Bill Culshaw retires as Chair of the AOY Board. Professor Ted Wragg of Exeter University takes over as chair of Board.

2004 a new lower flat rate subscription package was introduced and membership opened up to consortia and (2005) individual schools.

2004 –2005 Roman Russocki in post as Chief Executive of AOY

2004 Pat Eagle leaves after 7 years of dedication.

2004 Elaine Abbott joins National Team.

July 2004 Sue Barnes and Sarah Burgess work with Jamaica 2K and deliver a five-day training programme in Shortwood Teachers College, Kingston, Jamaica. Introductory meeting to Heads and Ministry officials attended by over 50 people. 34 professionals from schools, voluntary sector, JAMAL, Ministry of Education Youth and Culture, Churches and Jamaica Environmental Sustainability Development Organisation attend.

Peer Tutors have been part of UFA activity since 1996 but now young people begin to take an increasing role in many areas. We have reliable figures that over 5,000 Peer Tutors have been trained around the country.

Young people have started running and leading activities such as clubs and summer schools. Young people have started researching learning.

2004 on “It’s My UFA” and bring young people together regionally and nationally to support them taking a leading role in activities.

2004 the UFA is commissioned by the NCSL to co-develop a leadership programme with young people in London.

2005, Professor Graham Rogers, Dean of the Technology Innovation Centre, University of Central England takes over chair of Board.

May 2005 BUZ launched. Braunstone University Zone in Leicester becomes the first community campus model with young people and parents around 53 streets in one locality.

2005 Lyn Reynolds takes up post as Extended Schools Co-ordinator for Birmingham.

2005 Lu Garner and Liz Lowenstein join the National Team.

2005 Linda Gregory appointed as Chief Executive to AOY

2006 After testing and re-writing with young people, the UFA and CSV now have a license to roll the “students of Today, Leaders of Tomorrow” programme out nationally. Young people can be trained to become facilitators of this 3-day course.

2005 -06 Fellowship materials re-written. Still retaining a focus on practice and process. Emphasis on well researched and evidenced ideas and testing through action research with a multi-disciplinary approach. Packaged into new books.

2006 Jan Polack joins National Team role having worked in Birmingham team since 2004.

Summer 2006, Jackie Ranger does follow up course in Jamaica, Fellows still keen to continue links.

November 2006 A Young Peoples Residential with young people from 6 different Partnership areas convenes to look at young people roles within governance of UFA.

APPENDIX C

Date of subscribing Partners joining (Financial years) ©= still subscribing

1999	2000	2001	2002
Blackburn with Darwen © Enfield © Kirklees © Middlesbrough ©	Bristol © Cornwall © Hartlepool © Norfolk © Leicester © (Stockton) Tees Side consortium	Durham © Gloucestershire © Leeds © Newcastle © Plymouth EAZ Jersey Corby EAZ Nottingham EAZ (Keys to Success) Richmond	Barnsley © Bolton © Derbyshire © Islington Manchester © Rotherham © Somerset © Bedford EAZ Greenwich Hounslow Wakefield Dudley
2003	2004	2005	2006 (all current)
Cardiff © Northamptonshire © Warwickshire © Wigan © Jersey Leicestershire Oldham	Darlington © Solihull © South Gloucestershire Schools consortium Walsall © Kensington & Chelsea © Hampshire Outdoors	Bradford © Coventry © Doncaster © East Cleveland EAZ © Lancashire © Swindon schools Consortium © Walton Girls © Wolverhampton © Haringey	Bournemouth Hackney Schools consortium Lewisham Milton Keynes Northumberland Northern Ireland Redbridge Torbay Tower Hamlets North Tyneside (07)

APPENDIX D

List of UFA national publications

Commercial:

Brain Friendly Revision (2002) Network Education Press
Let's Learn How to Learn in KS2 (2004) Network Education Press
School Fuel Toolkit (2005)

Making Learning Fun (2006) Network Continuum Press

Internally produced for public consumption:

Let's Talk UFA - Transforming Learning (2000)

UFA transforming Learning Through Study Support, A good practice Guide (2002)
DfES

UFA in Action – “I wish every day could be like this” (2003)

Celebrating Learning – The UFA's contribution to the learning debate (2005)

Helping My Child To Learn – A practical guide for parents and carers (2005)

APPENDIX E the “I Belong....” statement



‘I belong to a learning community called the UFA; I am able to take part in a range of learning opportunities and training. I know where I see the UFA logo it means that people will believe in me and help me to develop my potential as a learner and as a leader. I can learn in different places; at home, in and out of school and in my community. I can be part of a trained learning team where I can teach and learn from other people who bring a wide range of experience. The UFA helps me to have a greater understanding of how I learn and how I can be more creative, confident, resilient, curious and enterprising, so that I can face and reflect upon new challenges in my life. The UFA recognises and celebrates my learning.’

UFA
UNIVERSITY
of the FIRST AGE
NATIONAL

UFA
UNIVERSITY
of the FIRST AGE
NATIONAL

UFA CORE PRINCIPLES:

The following core principles have been co-developed with partners and although the language has been ‘tweaked’ the core beliefs have remained. A full explanation of them is available elsewhere.

- Building a sense of BELONGING to the UFA
- LEARNING modelled on action research
- Developed trained LEARNING TEAMS
- CONNECTING home, school and community
- An unshakeable BELIEF in the potential of all to achieve success.

APPENDIX F

BOARD MEMBERS

List of trustees over the last ten years, our thanks to all their contributions. The Academy of Youth Limited – Trustees from 17th February 1997 to date

Fred Jarvis
Tim Brighthouse
Sandra Jenkinson
Cllr. Roy Pinney
David Cragg
Bill Culshaw
Professor Graham Rogers
John Hawksley
Sue Battle
Jindy Khera
Margaret Threadgold
Hugh Wright
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Ingrid Gallagher
John Ling
Adnan Saif
Professor EC Wragg
Cllr. Emily Cox
Cllr. Jon Hunt
Gill Howland
Arti Halai

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