

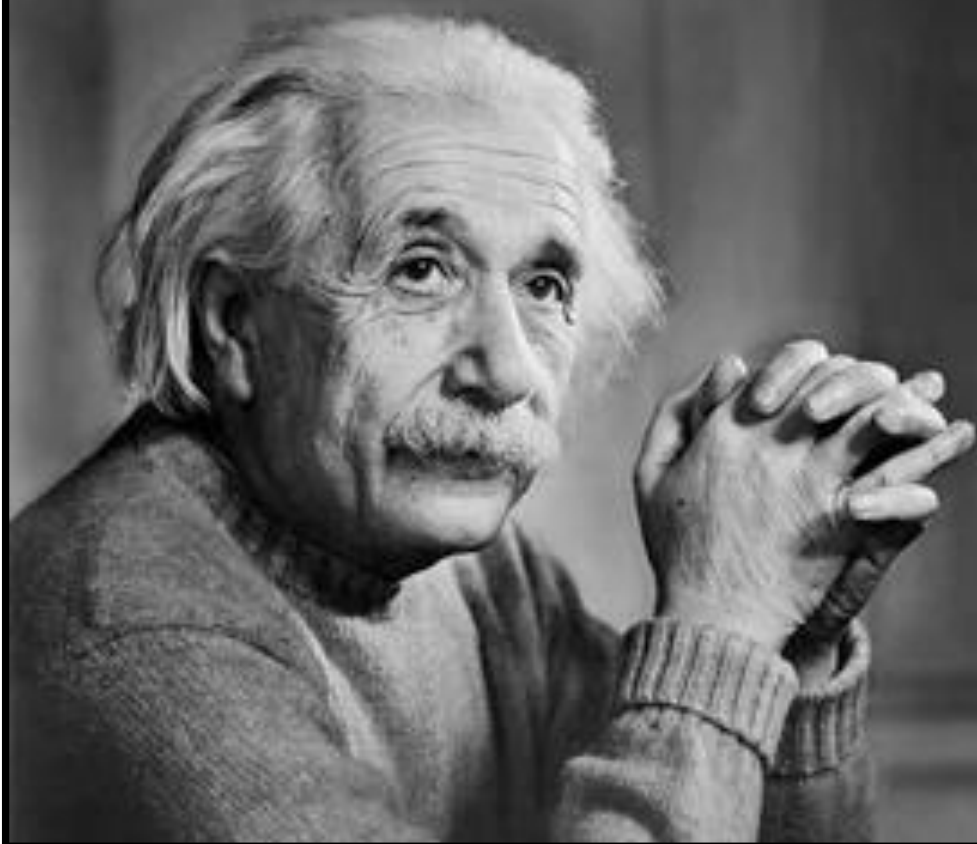
West of England Children's University

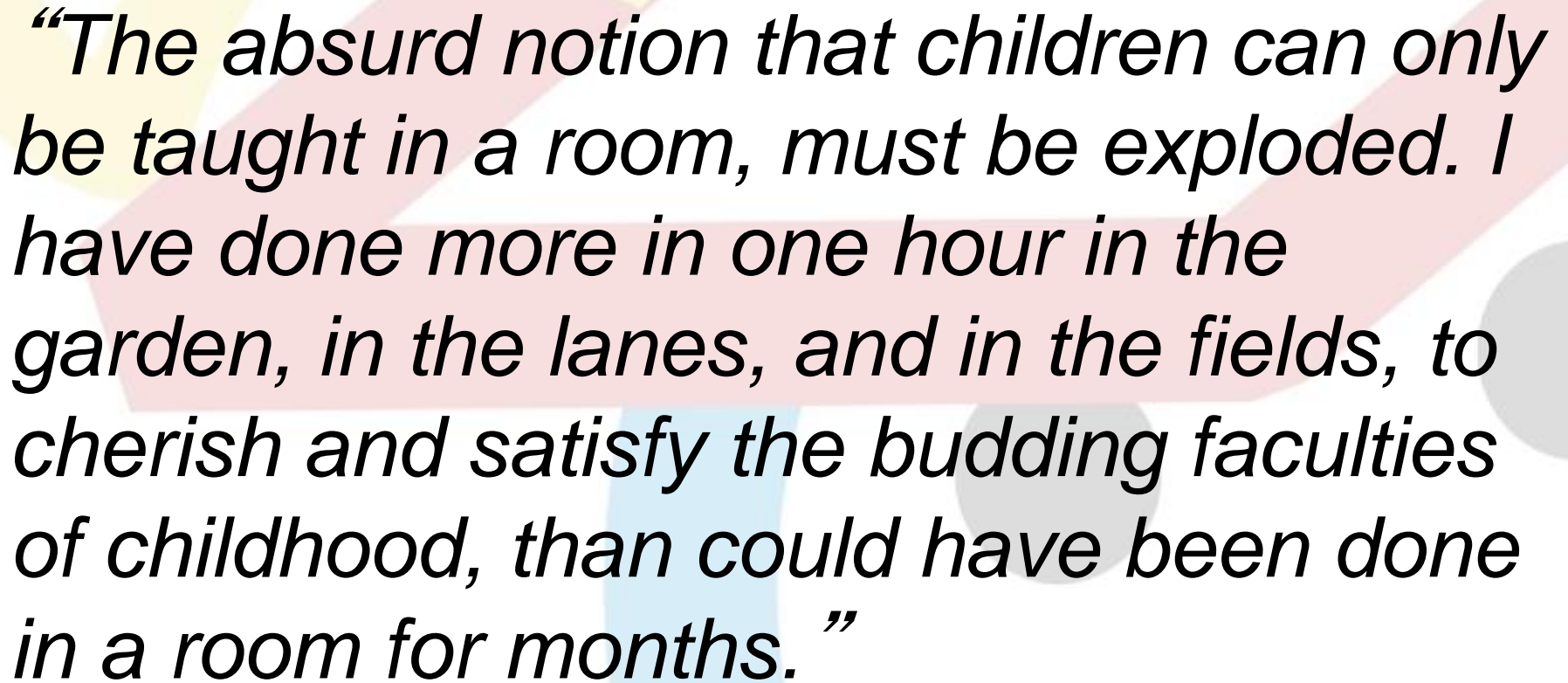
Dr Richard Barry
Wiltshire Children's University Manager
June 2017 SCIP Alliance Conference,
The University of Winchester



If you can't explain it **simply**, you don't understand it well enough.

– Albert Einstein





“The absurd notion that children can only be taught in a room, must be exploded. I have done more in one hour in the garden, in the lanes, and in the fields, to cherish and satisfy the budding faculties of childhood, than could have been done in a room for months.”

Samuel Wilderspin 1818

“Over 85% of learning occurs outside the school...Habitats outside the classroom – out there in the wild – are where the best learning might take place. It is certainly where most learning might already be taking place. So it is important that we all try to get out there in the wild with our children, as they adventure into exciting virgin territory ... remagicalising the world!”

James Bradburne, Children's University Patron,
Architect, Designer and Museum Specialist,
Director General of the Pinocoteca di Brera and Biblioteca Nazionale
Braidense in Milani

What is CU?

The Children's University Trust is a charity that provides 5 to 14 year olds, and their families, with access to exciting and innovative *CU Learning Activities* and experiences outside of the normal school day.

Aims:

- Raise aspirations and self-belief
- Foster curiosity and a love of learning
- Boost achievement and improve life chances

Mission:

- To promote social mobility and be a 'satellite navigation system' to better places in life



How does it work?

- Children's University in the West of England is led by UWE, Bristol supported by local partners i.e. Bath Spa University and Weston College with sponsorship specifically to support children from Service Families in Wiltshire from the Forces Children Education Trust (formerly Hampstead Trust)
- Children are registered through schools, other organisations or as individual members through UWE
- Passport to Learning and e-passport
- Restricted learning destinations – in school or on other educational organisations – Quality assured through CU validation framework
- Public learning destinations – external provider (e.g. museum, gallery, football club, library, countryside centre) - Quality assured through CU validation framework
- Downloadable Activities
- Hours of CU learning build to different levels of achievement
- Achievement is celebrated through CU graduation ceremonies



The Children's University is...

- Linked to further and higher education partners i.e. Bath Spa University, UWE Bristol, Weston College
- Actively promoting learning beyond the classroom, outside the normal school day
- Open to all 5-14 year olds and their families and carers
- Voluntary
- Promoting confidence and curiosity through activities that are practical and engaging

And Furthermore...

- The *Passport To Learning* records the young person's learning journey, and leads to awards presented at graduation ceremonies with proud families in the audience
- Post 14, young people can continue with the *Passport To Volunteering*, linking with e.g. the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- E-Passport (online) recording all activities

Benefits of CU Membership

For children:

- Children often achieve better in school as a result of motivation from something they succeed at beyond school, making learning a reality beyond academic studies
- A real sense of achievement beyond formal education
- Children's University can help children to see the real world relevance of what they do in school and what they experience beyond school
- **Raises awareness of and aspirations towards further and higher education – children can only aspire to what they know exists**

For schools:

- Children's University can improve attitudes to learning and attendance
- Pupils and teachers testify to significant changes in behaviour

For families:

- Children's University can provide a vehicle for families to learn together
- CU Provides ideas for new and exciting places for families to visit

For Learning Destinations:

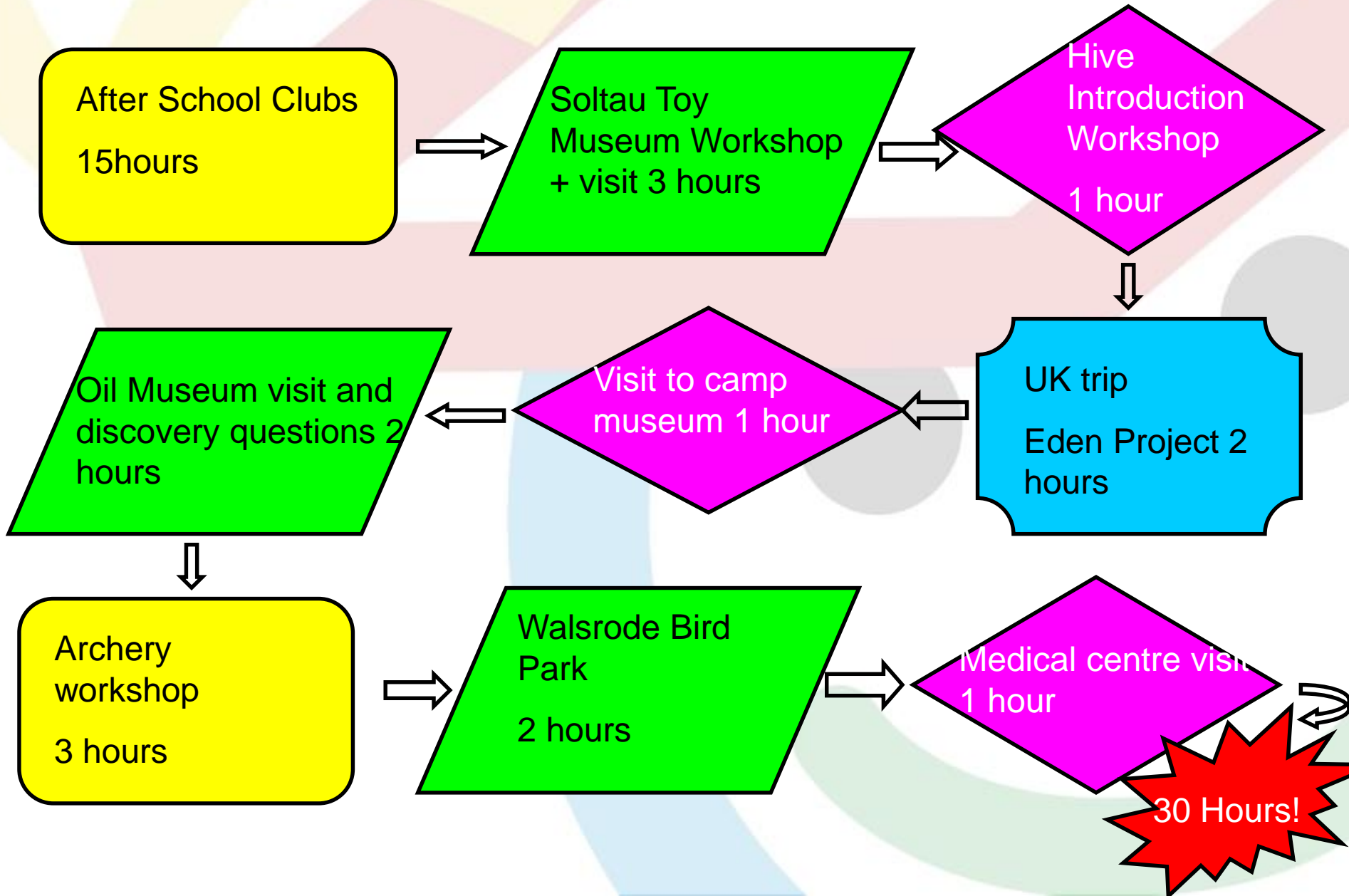
- Provides the opportunity for local organisations to “open their doors” to the community, creating links with further and higher education providers
- Proven to increase footfall and return visits

Added Benefits of CU Membership for Service Children and Their Families

- All of the above plus...
- Provides continuity of experience and therefore helps mitigate against negative effects of mobility e.g. children moving from Germany to Salisbury Plain area
- Provides motivation/context to interact/investigate new environment/host nation/home e.g. Bulford Wessex Archaeology dig



A Possible Learning Pathway for a child in Hohne Garrison



What the children say

CU makes you
want to do
more.

It's about
having fun and
trying new
things!

I like learning
new skills.

I do fun things
with my family.

It encourages me
to visit places I've
never been
before!

We want to work
to earn more
certificates.

It encourages you
to do more
activities outside
of school.

Partnership Arrangement

West of England Children's University tailors support for schools on an individual basis and includes:

- Payment of the full cost of school membership and registration fee funded by UWE Bristol.
- Information and training for staff.
- Launch events for children and parents.
- Issue of Passport to Learning, e-passport licences, Children's University stamps, promotional material and certificates.
- Validation of school based activities and clubs as restricted learning activities.
- Undergraduate student ambassadors to help with school-based events.
- Invitations to dedicated Children's University events and regional graduation ceremonies.
- Loan of caps and gowns

Partnership Arrangement contd.

Schools agree to assign a member of staff to coordinate Children's University membership and activities in your school. Their role may involve:

- Promoting Children's University to children and parents, carers and staff
- Organising information and training sessions as required
- Identifying potential activities eligible for validation (e.g.. After-school clubs).
- Administrative duties, including monitoring members, stamping of Passport to Learning for school based activities and liaising with West of England
- Inform Children's University Manager about centrally organised events.
- Promoting your school's involvement with West of England Children's University.
- Supporting undergraduate student ambassadors when they are in school.

Getting involved

Your local CU Manager will support you through the necessary processes and will:

- i. arrange a planning/set up meeting with nominated school coordinator/team to agree membership and promotion arrangements
- ii. Where necessary, support identification of appropriate after school activities for inclusion in the programme
- iii. Assist in the development of new activities where appropriate to CU engagement
- iv. Support completion of the relevant registration and validation documentation



Questions ^A

www.childrensuniversity.co.uk