

BBC Trust service review

The BBC's children's services

September 2013

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Introduction

Scope of this review

1. This report presents the findings of our second service review of the BBC's children's services. Our first report was published in 2009. Annex 1 summarises the main findings and conclusions of that review.
2. Part 1 of this report considers how well CBeebies and CBBC are now performing against their service licences (figure 1).

Figure 1: Service licence remits of CBeebies and CBBC

<p>CBeebies</p> <p>To offer high-quality, mostly UK-produced programmes to educate and entertain the BBC's youngest audience. The service should provide a range of programming designed to encourage learning through play in a consistently safe environment for children aged 6 or under.</p> <p>CBBC</p> <p>To provide a wide range of high-quality, distinctive content for 6-12 year olds, including drama, entertainment, comedy, animation, news and factual. The great majority of this content should be produced in the UK.</p> <p>CBBC should provide a stimulating, creative and enjoyable environment that is also safe and trusted. The service should have a particular focus on informal learning, with an emphasis on encouraging participation.</p> <p><i>Note: The full service licences can be found on the BBC Trust website at www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/our_work/services/television/service_licences.html</i></p>
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3. We have reviewed the extent to which the BBC's children's services are being used by their target audience, provide a range of high-quality content, and contribute to the BBC's public purposes. Under the Royal Charter the BBC has six public purposes. These are:
 - Citizenship - sustain citizenship and civil society
 - Learning - promote education and learning
 - Creativity - stimulate creativity and cultural excellence
 - Diversity - represent the UK, its nations, regions and communities
 - Global - bring the UK to the world and the world to the UK
 - Emerging communications - help to deliver to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services
4. We also examine the progress the BBC has made with the initiatives approved by the Trust in 2010 to support children's radio provision. CBeebies' audio content can be downloaded through its website but the responsibility of providing radio that appeals to older children rests with Radio 4 Extra.

5. Part 2 considers how well-placed BBC Children's is to meet the key strategic challenges it faces over the next few years in the run-up to the end of the current BBC Charter in 2017. We identify these as:
 - The financial challenge: Safeguarding the BBC's position as the cornerstone of UK-produced children's content
 - The technological challenge: Being where children expect the services to be;
 - The pan-BBC challenge: How other relevant BBC Services (TV, radio and online) plan to serve children under the age of 16.

Approach

6. We have used the following methods to collate evidence to inform this report:
 - **Public consultations:** We have received 8,143 responses from children to a specifically tailored children's questionnaire on CBBC and radio listening and 2,783 responses from parents, carers and other stakeholders to the 'adult' version covering CBeebies and CBBC as well as radio listening habits. A [detailed analysis of the consultations](#) can be found on our website.
 - **Qualitative audience research:** A specialist children's research agency held focus groups with children and their parents in a sample of households across the UK to understand better their media consumption habits on TV, radio and online. We sought their views on how CBeebies and CBBC are performing against their service licences and in particular how well they deliver the public purposes. The [full research report](#) can be found on our website.
 - **Performance analyses:** We reviewed audience viewing figures for CBeebies and CBBC comparing their performance against other broadcasters. The figures were broken down by different demographic groups and the nations and regions of the UK, where sample sizes allowed. We also reviewed online usage figures for CBeebies and CBBC as well as children's radio listening figures.
 - **Audience Council submissions.** The Trust's four Audience Councils in Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland and England submitted responses to the review on the performance of the services based on local outreach work with audiences and surveys of their members.
 - **Interviews** with senior BBC executive staff and external stakeholders, including document submissions to the public consultation.

At a glance

Performance

The BBC's services for children on television and online perform very well and make strong contributions to the public purposes. CBeebies and CBBC are the most watched children's channels in the UK for their respective target audiences. Overall feedback from children, parents, the Trust's Audience Councils and stakeholders on the services is very positive. CBeebies received overwhelming praise for its high-quality content that stimulates learning and development. CBBC is commended for its range of distinctive UK programmes, particularly drama and factual content, and for achieving a good balance between education and entertainment.

The key performance challenge for BBC Children's is to maintain the reach and impact of both CBeebies and CBBC in an environment where older children's consumption of media in particular is increasingly fragmented and where there is more choice than ever before.

The Executive's strategy to serve children's audio and radio listening has had some success. CBeebies pre-school audio downloads available online are relatively popular but we found there was very low audience awareness of the BBC's dedicated radio provision for older children on Radio 4 Extra. Comparatively large numbers of children are, however, listening to BBC Radio 1 and Radio 2.

Strategic challenges

BBC Children's is taking action to address the challenges it faces over the remainder of the current BBC licence fee settlement period to 2016-17.

- **The financial challenge:** Like all other BBC services, BBC Children's needs to make financial savings and operate on a reduced budget. We expect this to be achieved with minimal impact on the audiences of CBeebies and CBBC.
- **The technological challenge:** BBC Children's is developing plans to improve the services' online and interactive offers to meet the fast-changing media consumption habits of children. We believe that CBeebies and CBBC output should be made available on all the platforms that children and their families expect.
- **The pan-BBC challenge:** Following the decision to remove dedicated children's programming from BBC One and BBC Two, BBC Children's is working with other parts of the BBC to promote and develop content for children. The Trust expects the BBC's mainstream services to take account of children as a potential audience and for BBC Children's to form strong partnerships with these services so the needs of children are accommodated.

The Trust is supportive of BBC Children's plans to meet these challenges and the actions in this report are to help the Executive ensure that the quality and scope of children's output is protected and the profile and accountability of the services enhanced. We will monitor the implementation of the Executive's plans so they are delivered effectively and efficiently.

Executive Summary

The BBC's contribution to children's public service broadcasting in the UK

1. The BBC Trust regards the provision of outstanding children's programming made in the UK as being at the heart of the BBC's mission and public purposes. The BBC's own research shows the positive influence that distinctive content for children has on audience perceptions of the BBC. Children's is rightly one of the BBC's five editorial priorities and deserves special protection and prominence.
2. While children in the UK have a huge choice of children's channels and programming, the amount of new programming made for them in the UK is falling. The UK now has 32 digital TV channels dedicated to children's content. Only 20% of original programmes are currently made in the UK, however, and the BBC has for some time now been the largest commissioner of such programming, particularly of factual and drama content. More widely, Ofcom reports some important changes to children's public service broadcasting (PSB) in the UK in recent years. Compared with the position in 2006, significantly less money is now being spent on children's programming by commercial PSBs in particular. In addition, although PSBs as a whole are showing more hours of children's programming, in recent years the total amount of first-run original programmes (i.e. not including repeats and acquisitions) broadcast by all PSBs has reduced by half.¹
3. In recent years, the BBC's spending plans for children's content have aimed to prioritise programming that makes the services distinctive, particularly drama and factual content on CBBC, while reducing time in the schedule for cheaper entertainment content. By focusing greater resources on fewer programmes, the BBC aims to concentrate on quality content rather than quantity.

Changes in children's media consumption habits

4. Media technology has driven rapid change in audience behaviour and is increasingly remoulding children's and parents' expectations of how they should be able to access content. In 2012, around one in seven children aged 5-15 used a tablet device such as an iPad at home, a threefold increase since 2011. Increasing numbers of children also have access to smartphones. In 2012, 28% of 5-15 year olds had such a phone compared to 20% in 2011, with ownership driven by older children.²
5. Children are also increasingly choosing to watch programmes at a time that suits them. For example, in the first four months of 2013 there was an average of 10.8 million requests for BBC Children's on-demand content each week via BBC iPlayer, compared with a weekly average of 6.6 million requests during 2012.
6. Ofcom's research confirms the important role that television still plays in children's lives, particularly for younger children. According to Ofcom, television continues to be the media activity that the most children in all age groups say they do almost every day, and the medium that children aged 5-7 and 8-11 say they would miss the most.³

¹ Ofcom, Public Service Broadcasting Report 2013: Annex F, Children's report

² Ofcom, Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2012

³ Ofcom, 2012

Key findings

The performance of the services: Attracting and retaining audiences

CBeebies and CBBC have firmly established themselves in the lives of many of the UK's children and their families

7. Since our first review was published in 2009, the strong performance of CBeebies and CBBC has been maintained. Across all homes, both channels continue to be the most watched children's channels in the UK for their respective target audiences. This is without question an impressive performance given the huge diversity of needs represented by children aged 12 and under and the increasing array of products and services competing for their attention. In 2012-13, CBeebies had a weekly reach of 48% of its target audience (designated by BARB as housewives with children aged 0-3 and children aged 4-6), more than twice as high as its nearest competitor, Disney Junior. CBBC currently reaches 36% of children 6-12, considerably higher than the Disney Channel (22%) and CITV (21%). For both BBC services, these figures do represent a decline in viewing compared with 2011-12 but this was a five-year high for both channels.
8. While the headline viewing figures are very positive they do not tell the whole story. Our first review identified some performance challenges. Five years on, these challenges remain:
 - **BBC Children's does not perform as strongly in homes where children have more choice over what they watch.** The majority of other children's TV channels have been growing in popularity alongside CBeebies and CBBC. In satellite and cable homes, where most of the children's channels are found, the performance of both BBC services is not as strong. CBeebies is still the most popular pre-school channel in these homes but our audience research indicates less audience loyalty for it than in free-to-air homes. CBBC faces a harder task given the scale of competition. It has been overtaken by Disney as the most watched children's channel in satellite and cable homes. It should be noted that CBeebies and CBBC are found on the second page of the children's electronic programme guide (EPG) in Sky homes, which may affect viewing behaviours.
 - **Older children are still less inclined to watch the services.** For CBeebies, in 2012-13 reach amongst six year olds was 14 percentage points lower than amongst four year olds and this gap has remained high since 2008-09. For CBBC, weekly reach to 12 year olds stood at 30% compared with 44% for nine year olds, who represent the peak viewing age. CBBC also continues to struggle to inherit younger viewers moving on from CBeebies.
 - **Like other BBC TV services, the performance of CBeebies and CBBC is not uniform across the UK.** CBBC and CBeebies both continue to under-perform in Northern Ireland in particular. Across the English regions, in 2012-13 CBBC's weekly reach was nine points greater in the South (excluding London) compared with the North, where reach has declined year on year since 2010-11.

Action:

1. We do not underestimate the challenges for CBeebies and CBBC in serving all children aged 12 and under. But we expect the services to provide some relevant high-quality and distinctive content for all children across this age range.

We fully support plans by BBC Children's to improve the services' reach to older children and to those who have more choice in satellite and cable households. We also support the plans to improve the transition of children aged 4-6 between CBeebies and CBBC. The increase in non-linear viewing creates further opportunities to serve children of different ages in different ways.

We appreciate that reach levels amongst the different age groups inevitably vary but BBC Children's should monitor performance levels closely and ensure there is no decline in viewing as it implements these plans.

Timing: We will monitor performance of the channels amongst different age groups in one year and on an on-going basis.

Audiences continue to be very happy with the quality and range of CBeebies and CBBC

9. Overall, the feedback from audiences and stakeholders on what they think of the respective offers of CBeebies and CBBC has been extremely positive. Programmes shown on both channels were consistently rated as being of high-quality, distinctive and comprising a broad range. Children and their families trust the services to deliver quality content in a safe, advert-free environment.
10. In recent years, BBC Children's strategy of focusing on commissioning a smaller amount of expensive high quality programming ('fewer, bigger, better') has led to a reduction in the hours of first-run originated children's content broadcast on the BBC. There has also been a small reduction in hours due to the Executive's decision to end commissioning programmes for morning slots on BBC One and BBC Two, as they did not perform well when broadcast on the CBBC channel. The hours devoted to entertainment programming have reduced the most relative to other genres. There has been some reduction in the hours of factual programming while hours devoted to drama programmes have remained relatively stable over the period of our review.
11. The 'general impression' of audiences for both CBBC and CBeebies compares very favourably to other BBC services. However, scores reflect adults' impression of the services rather than children's views. BBC Children's has recently developed a new online survey specifically seeking the views of children (and parents of very young children) on programme quality and overall perceptions of the services. Once established, such information should help its performance management, accountability and decision-making. Such data should also help BBC Children's better promote the quality of its content across the BBC and facilitate greater opportunities to show strong titles on other BBC channels.

CBeebies and CBBC make strong and valuable contributions to the public purposes

12. Our evidence shows that CBeebies and CBBC make significant contributions to the delivery of the public purposes. Parents and children felt that their particular strengths distinguished them from other channels, including their 'Britishness' and their commitment to representing diversity and inclusion.
13. Children especially valued the fun way both services educate and inform them. BBC Children's exceeded the minimum quota hours prescribed in the CBBC service licence for factual programming each year and parents and children alike judged that CBBC is good at telling their audience what's going in the world in a way that is clear and understandable.
14. BBC Children's is generally working well with the creative industry. The Department's move to Salford to be part of the BBC North group has resulted in a greater degree of collaboration between the BBC and independent producers based outside London.

The BBC offers some bespoke audio and radio for children

15. In late 2010, the BBC restructured its radio and audio output for children. It developed CBeebies pre-school audio available online for download, family-friendly content for older children on Radio 4 Extra, and agreed to the commercial release of children's radio archive for broadcast by third parties.
16. CBeebies audio downloads have increased in popularity following a rebuild of the CBeebies website in 2011, which gave greater prominence to the 'CBeebies Radio' offer. The downloads are also now available on the BBC iPlayer Radio mobile app. However, we found awareness of this provision was still very low amongst parents and carers taking part in this review.
17. Radio 4 Extra is currently listened to by around 26,000 children aged 10 -14 each week (the youngest age group for which listening hours are collated by RAJAR). This compares with overall weekly listener reach to the station of 1.7 million. The station's service licence obligation to broadcast children's programming is primarily met through *The 4 O'Clock Show*, a daily one-hour speech programme which is designed to appeal to older children and adults. Due to the relatively low number of children listening to Radio 4 Extra, the RAJAR survey does not enable us to reliably measure and report on how many children listen to the show within its total audience of around 166,000 listeners. Most parents who responded to our consultation were unaware of any targeted provision for children on BBC radio and none of the children who responded to the consultation question on what radio programmes they listened to mentioned Radio 4 Extra.
18. The BBC believes the main value children derive from BBC radio comes from its mainstream brands and services, particularly Radio 1 and Radio 2, which have had some success in attracting older children to their breakfast and daytime programming in particular.

19. Only a small proportion of the children's radio archive has been successfully released to third parties and it is clear that the Executive underestimated the complexity of doing this.

Action:

- 2. We support the current scope of the BBC's radio and audio output for children but the Executive should find ways to promote it more effectively so that audience awareness levels increase and more children might discover speech radio programming that appeals to them.**

Timing: The Executive should update us on plans to increase children's awareness and listening of bespoke radio content within 6 months.

Meeting the strategic challenges

The financial challenge: Safeguarding the BBC's position as the cornerstone of UK-produced children's content

CBeebies and CBBC continue to deliver a good return for the money they receive from licence fee payers

20. CBeebies' cost per user hour is very low in comparison with other BBC services. The range of evidence we've collated on its performance, in particular the strongly positive audience perceptions on quality and impact, shows that the service continues to deliver a good return for the money it receives from licence fee payers.
21. CBBC's cost per user hour is relatively high compared with other BBC television services because of a combination of the type of programmes it produces (drama in particular is costly) and its smaller target audience relative to these other services. CBBC's cost per user hour increased in 2012-13, partially on account of viewing figures declining. However, the positive audience feedback we've received on the performance of the service, at a time when children have never had more choice on what to watch, shows that CBBC too is delivering an important service to the licence fee payer.

The additional investment that BBC Children's was given following the last review has supported the distinctiveness of both services

22. Following the last review, the Executive awarded BBC Children's an increase in funding from 2010-11 to 2012-13. This additional funding was designed to protect children's content from the budgetary pressures the department was then facing including shortfalls in commercial income. The department continues to benefit from a re-adjustment to its baseline budget, which assumes the additional investment carries on until 2016-17, the end of the current licence fee settlement period.
23. The additional funding has supported investment in higher-cost programmes particularly in drama and animation. These titles have attracted older audiences to both CBeebies and CBBC. Several programmes that have benefited from this funding have also contributed to the delivery of the public purposes particularly around citizenship.

24. The extra funding has also enabled BBC Children's to develop higher-cost programmes that have attracted co-production funding. While the commissions co-produced with commercial partners to date align well with the public purposes and support distinctiveness, increased pressures to find funding could, if not carefully managed, lead to certain types of children's programming being favoured over a broader content mix.

BBC Children's is intending to manage the reduction to its budget so the impact on the audience is marginal

25. In approving the BBC's *Delivering Quality First* (DQF) savings proposals we supported the Executive's plans to protect children's content as one of the BBC's five editorial priorities. The Executive has taken specific action to protect the Children's departmental budget, which has meant that the reduction to this budget of 10.5% over the DQF period was proportionately much less than the reductions agreed for other BBC services. The department's budget will reduce from £101.7m in 2011-12 to £91m in 2016-17 in cash terms. The Executive expect to manage this reduction principally through increases in productivity and by earning additional commercial revenue.

26. When the Trust approved the Executive's DQF plans, reductions in the scope of children's content were expected to be minimal beyond the savings in repeat fees as a result of stopping the broadcasting of output on BBC One and BBC Two. BBC Children's was expected to make efficiency savings, like every other BBC department. BBC Children's will reduce the commissioning budgets of CBBC and CBeebies by around 8% and 5% respectively to achieve a £6.1 million saving in 2013/14. As a result, both services will commission slightly fewer original programmes over the next two years.

27. Both CBBC and CBeebies aim to minimise the impact on audiences of these changes. To maintain its investment in drama, CBBC is replacing some higher-cost factual entertainment programmes with new factual series with lower budgets. CBeebies will also change the mix of its commissions.

28. Through this review, BBC Children's has stated that it believes a reduction in the CBeebies originations quota may allow it to stretch its production budget further while maintaining the quality of its output. A proposal to change the quota would require endorsement from the BBC Executive Board and Trust and approval from Ofcom.

Actions:

3. We will continue to monitor the impact of the *Delivering Quality First* initiative on BBC Children's to ensure that there is minimal need for scope cuts beyond those achieved from stopping the broadcasting of output on BBC One and BBC Two. This is to protect the quality and scope of the output of BBC children's.

4. To allow us to monitor the impact of DQF more effectively, and to support performance accountability generally, the Executive should establish robust quality metrics for children's content, which are regularly analysed and reported to the Trust as standard.

Timing: We will monitor this impact on a quarterly basis each year.

The technological challenge: Being where children expect the services to be

The performance of CBBC's website has improved in the last year and the websites for both services are rated highly by the audience

29. Our previous review recommended that the Executive should address the declining usage levels of CBBC online. Changes to how online performance is measured mean it is not possible to accurately track trends from 2008-09 to 2012-13. However, we know that the weekly unique browser reach to the CBBC website averaged 927,000 in 2012-13, an 8% increase compared with the previous year. For the CBeebies website, the weekly reach in 2012-13 averaged 824,000 unique browsers. These figures are strong given the relative size of the audiences, although year-to-date figures for 2013-14 show CBBC website use has dropped compared with the same period last year. The CBeebies and CBBC websites regularly have the highest audience impression quality scores out of the 10 BBC online websites.
30. Reach to the websites is mainly driven by games, which many children and parents responding to our consultation praised on account of their educational value. As such, most resources are committed to the basic games offering, although an increase to the interactive budget that followed our last review has enabled BBC Children's to develop several more complex games as well as fund other innovations, such as online spin-offs of popular programmes.

BBC Children's wants to make its online offers more responsive to audiences' needs and consumption habits

31. Despite these improvements, BBC Children's feels it is at risk of falling behind children's media consumption habits. Stakeholders have also voiced concern in this respect. The interactive offer for both CBeebies and CBBC is relatively basic compared with some other commercial provision and there are some indications that its limitations – at present only a minority of content works well on smartphones or tablets – may be starting to impact on reach.
32. There are plans to address these issues, including launching more mobile-compatible games, a CBeebies app that was launched in August 2013, and a planned CBBC app due to launch later in 2013-14. As part of a pan-BBC initiative, next year the Executive also intends to publish content simultaneously for desktop and mobile devices, although these plans do not include making all of the games available on smartphone and tablet.
33. BBC Children's also wants to work with external websites with social functionality. CBeebies has made greater progress in this respect as it targets parents and carers only, so is not subject to the same child protection and editorial policy constraints as CBBC. YouTube in particular is very popular with the CBBC audience and BBC Children's wants to reach out to this audience and direct them to the CBBC site. BBC Children's is working with other BBC divisions including Editorial Policy to develop these plans. In doing so, it will be essential that all necessary steps are taken to minimise the risks of children accessing inappropriate content.

Action:

- 5. We support the development of plans by BBC Children's to improve its online and interactive offer to meet audience needs and expectations better. This is subject to any required approvals and subject to the plans adhering to existing syndication, editorial and other BBC guidelines and policies.**

Timing: We will assess progress of these plans in one year.

The pan-BBC challenge: Working together to serve children and young audiences

BBC Children's works with the rest of the BBC to promote and develop content for children

34. We were clear that, following the decision to remove dedicated children's programming from BBC One and BBC Two, it would be essential to ensure that children and their parents remain aware that the BBC provides programmes for children. This is particularly important as 2.1 million children watch BBC One and BBC Two each week but do not currently watch either CBeebies or CBBC. Licence fee payers generally also should be aware that the BBC provides dedicated services for children. As part of its usual marketing activities, the BBC is raising awareness of children's content on BBC One and BBC Two throughout 2013-14.
35. BBC Children's is also in discussions with other TV services to identify children's programmes that might be shown on other BBC channels. Currently these conversations take place on a fairly informal basis. While we have been encouraged by the evidence we have seen of the collaboration between BBC Children's and other divisions, there are areas where we believe consideration of the needs of children could be improved.
36. Strong relationships with BBC Television in particular are important as BBC One reaches 66% of children aged 6 – 12 years old every week, with some programmes in particular proving very popular with the CBBC target audience. BBC Children's has added its own versions of popular BBC One and BBC Two factual entertainment shows to its mix of programmes and is considering reworked versions of some BBC One programmes that perform well with teenagers. While such strategies help deliver content cost-effectively, some stakeholders were concerned that over-reliance on programme reversions could compromise innovation.
37. Opportunities for showing content that appeals to all the family on the main channels will always be limited given the demands on their schedule. As an alternative, BBC Children's is keen to develop output such as comedy that appeals to younger and older members of the family.

The BBC is considering how to serve young audiences better after they move on from CBBC

38. Reach of BBC TV and BBC Radio is lower amongst older children and teenagers compared with adults (apart from 16–24 year olds). The BBC Executive continues to look at ways to serve young audiences after they move from CBBC to mainstream TV, radio and online services.

Actions:

- 6. We would like to see more concerted action taken by other BBC TV, radio and online services to consider children as an audience for mainstream output and to continue to seek opportunities to include relevant BBC Children's output as part of their offer. The Trust will consider children as an audience when we are reviewing BBC television and radio services over the next few years.**

Timing: Our review of BBC Television will commence this autumn and reviews of BBC Radio in following years.

Part 1: Context and Performance

The BBC makes a very significant contribution to the children's media market in the UK

1. The BBC Trust regards the provision of outstanding children's programming made in the UK to licence fee payers and their children as being at the heart of the BBC's mission and public purposes. The BBC's own research shows the positive influence that distinctive content for children has on audience perceptions of the BBC. Such content is rightly one of the BBC's five editorial priorities and deserves special protection and prominence.
2. The UK now has 32 digital TV channels dedicated to children's content but, across all these channels, only 20% of original programmes are currently made in the UK. Most of the programming on the commercial children's channels is predominantly of US origin, as the majority of the channels are owned by three US companies: Walt Disney, Turner, and Viacom. Ofcom's analysis of the PSB channels specifically shows that, in 2011, 85% of children's programming was UK-made⁴.
3. The BBC has for some time now been the largest commissioner of UK programming particularly of factual and drama content. In 2012, the Corporation was responsible for £88 million of the £92 million spent by UK public service broadcasters (PSBs) on children's programming⁵. PSB spend on children's first-run originated content amounted to £83 million, of which the BBC contributed £80 million. In terms of broadcast hours, of the 777 hours of children's PSB output that was first-run PSB originations in 2012, the vast majority (597 hours) was commissioned by the BBC.
4. As part of its 2013 annual report of UK public service broadcasting, Ofcom noted a number of significant changes to the children's market in recent years⁶. These changes include:
 - **Near universal access to children's channels.** With digital switchover completed in autumn 2012, the proportion of children who have access to digital television has grown to around 95%. We would expect the figure to be close to 100% now. In addition, the majority of households with children (65%) now have access to pay TV.
 - **A significant decrease, in real terms, in total spend by PSB broadcasters on children's programming.** Over the period that Ofcom reported on (2006– 2011), total spend by PSBs on children's programming

⁴ Ofcom, Public Service Broadcasting Report 2013: Annex F, Children's report.

⁵ Ofcom, Public Service Broadcasting Report 2013. For the purposes of its PSB Annual Reports, Ofcom reports figures on a calendar year rather than financial year basis. Financial figures quoted are in 2012 prices

⁶ Ofcom, 2013

decreased by 22%. Since 2006, total spend by PSB broadcasters on children's new originated programmes has decreased by 17% to £91m in 2011. Commercial PSB spend decreased over the period by 93% from £33m to £2m. In contrast, over the same period the BBC increased its spending on new programming from £77m to £89m.

- **Total hours of new, original programming from PSB broadcasters reduced by half.** First-run originated hours on the PSB channels reduced by 51% from 2006 to 2011. The BBC's reduction of children's programming was 46% over the period. This was primarily a result of reductions on BBC Two. CBeebies first run hours remained relatively stable from 2007, while CBBC hours increased significantly each year from 2007 to 2011. In 2011, 91% of children's PSB content overall was repeats, compared to 84% in 2006.
- **A continued decline in hours of first-run originated PSB drama and factual content.** Again following a longer-term trend, Ofcom reports that children's drama output from PSB channels declined by just over a third (36%) from 2006 to 2011 while factual programming declined by two-thirds (63%). The BBC is overwhelmingly the main provider of new UK drama, factual and news programming for children. In recent years, the BBC's spending plans for children's content have looked to prioritise programming that makes the services distinctive, particularly drama and factual content, while reducing time in the schedule for cheaper entertainment content.
- **BBC now the main provider of children's PSB programming.** In 2011 the BBC contributed around 90% of the PSB's first-run originated programmes in 2011, compared to 80% in 2006 and 37% when looking back to 1998.
- **Children's appetite for UK programming remains strong.** While across all channels only 20% of children's programming was made in the UK in 2011, this programming accounted for 45% of all children's viewing.

Children's changing media habits and consumption patterns

Children's access to media technology is growing fast

5. Media technology has accelerated changes in audience behaviours and is increasingly remoulding children's and parents' expectations of how they should be able to access content.
6. More than 90% of children aged 5 to 15 years old now have access to the internet at home (figure 2) and they have an increasing array of devices at their disposal through which they can go online (figure 3). Desktop and laptop computers are now in almost all homes in the UK, with tablets and smartphones becoming more widely used by children, particularly older children. In 2012, around one in seven children aged 5-15 used a tablet device at home, a threefold increase since 2011 and 28% of 5-15 year olds had a smartphone compared to 20% in 2011. 62% of 12-15 year olds had such a phone in 2012 compared with 41% in 2011.⁷

⁷ Ofcom, Children and parents: media use and attitudes report 2012

Figure 2: Availability of the internet in the home

Access to the internet (at home)	2007 (%)	2012 (%)
Children aged 5-15	75	91
Children aged 5-7	68	87
Children aged 8-11	71	90
Children aged 12-15	77	96

Source: Ofcom

Figure 3: Devices ever used by children to go online at home

	5-15		5-7		8-11		12-15	
	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012	2011	2012
PC/laptop/netbook	82	82	65	58	85	87	93	95
Mobile	14	22	2	5	9	12	29	44
Tablet	2	9	1	6	3	9	3	11
Games console	17	18	8	6	19	18	23	27

Source: Ofcom

7. Ofcom’s latest analysis of the communications sector highlights the rapid growth in tablet computer ownership, which has more than doubled between 2012 and 2013. Almost a quarter (24%) of households now own at least one of these devices, with parents tending to be ‘early adopters’ of the technology. 91% of parents with tablets said their children either use their tablet, or have a tablet of their own to use, for activities other than just watching television content. Four in five parents said their children used a tablet computer at least weekly, with two in five reporting daily use by their children. A majority (76%) of these parents consider the tablet a useful tool for entertaining and/or educating their children.⁸
8. Our own audience research similarly found that even if children do not actually have their own tablet or smart phone, they are likely to have regular access to these devices via their parents or older siblings. The intuitive nature of tablets and smartphones means many children seem to pick up how to use them relatively quickly. They enjoy the independence they often get when using them as they don’t generally need an adult’s help, especially when playing games.
9. Despite this growth in usage of other devices, it is important to highlight that television is still playing a key role in children’s lives. The Ofcom research illustrates that watching television is the media activity that most children in all age groups say they do almost every day and the medium that children aged 5-7 and 8-11 say they would miss the most. In addition, the BBC’s own research suggests that iPlayer viewing is either additional or complementary to TV viewing.

Children’s media consumption is also changing rapidly

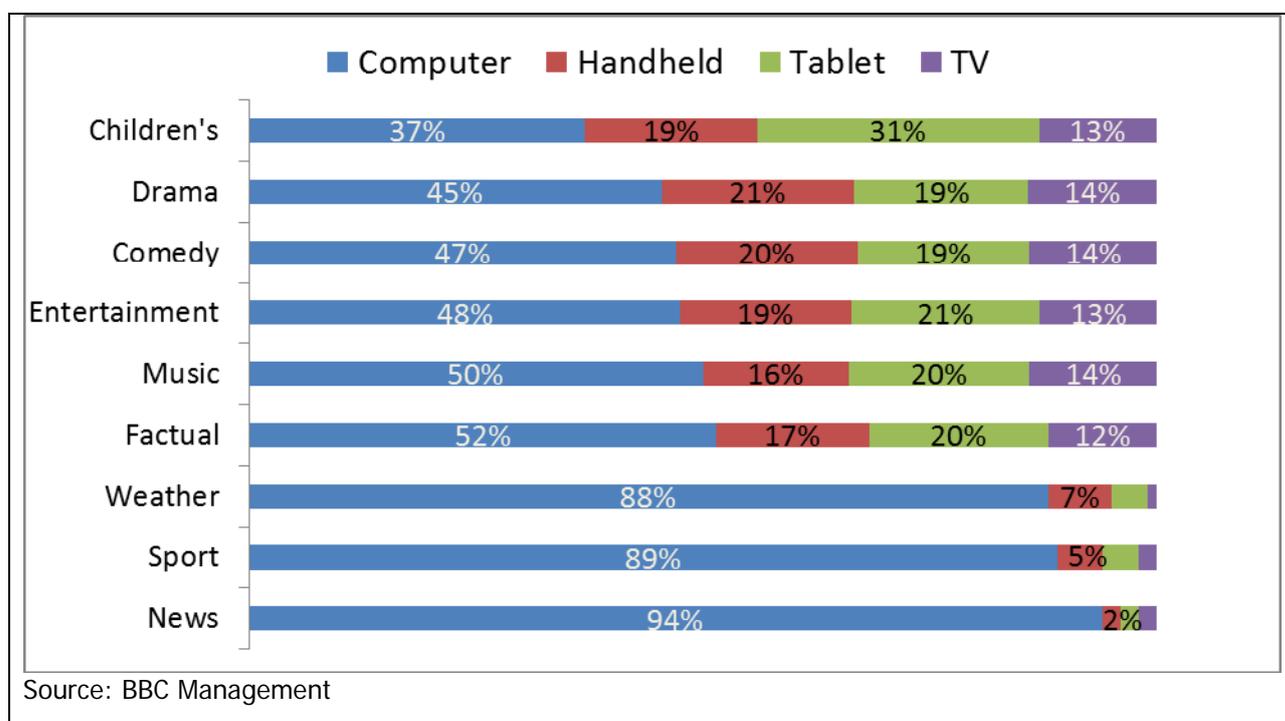
10. Children are increasingly watching broadcast content at a time that suits them. Ofcom’s research found that, in 2012, more than one in four children (28%) aged 5 to

⁸ Ofcom, Communications Market Report 2013

15 year olds use on-demand services.⁹ While this overall figure has not changed since 2011, it had noticeably increased among 12 to 15 year olds (40% vs. 32%).

11. The BBC's own research shows that there has been an increase in requests for children's content on the BBC iPlayer. The increase has been particularly striking since the beginning of 2013. In the first four months of 2013 there has been an average of some 10.8 million requests for BBC Children's content each week via iPlayer, compared with a weekly average of 6.6 million requests during 2012.
12. While popular content is driving usage, it is likely the sharp increase in iPlayer requests can also be attributed to greater ownership of mobile devices. A sample month of April 2013 shows that 48% of all iPlayer requests for BBC Children's content have come from handheld devices and tablets (figure 4). This compares to 29% in 2012. Children's is now the first BBC genre to see more iPlayer viewing coming from mobiles and tablets than desktop or laptop computers.

Figure 4: BBC iPlayer requests by genre and screen, April 2013



13. Children are also becoming increasingly adept at multi-tasking while consuming media content. One in three 8-15 year olds (34%) with a mobile phone, who watch television and who go online at home, also say they undertake some form of cross-media multi-tasking 'most times' when using these media. For example, they text friends or browse the internet while watching TV. This is much more likely for teenagers and nearly teens (12-15 year olds) than for children aged 8 to 11 year olds (44% vs. 14%).¹⁰

⁹ On demand TV content can be accessed using iPlayer on computers, mobile phones, tablets, portable media players, games consoles and TVs equipped with on demand functionality including Sky, Virgin Media and YouView.

¹⁰ Ofcom, 2012

BBC Children’s performance in attracting and retaining audiences

Overall reach on television: CBeebies and CBBC have firmly established themselves in the lives of many of the UK’s children and their families

14. Since our first review was published in 2009 the strong performance of both CBeebies and CBBC has been maintained with CBeebies’ viewing figures proving the more stable of the two. Across all homes, both channels continue to be the most watched children’s channels in the UK for their respective target audiences (figure 5 and figure 6). This is without question an impressive performance given the highly competitive landscape BBC Children’s operates in. The following paragraphs consider the performance of the services on television. We consider online performance separately in Part 2.

15. In 2012-13, CBeebies was watched by almost half of its target audience (designated by BARB as housewives with children aged 0-3 years old and children aged 4-6 years old) achieving an average weekly reach of 48% (2.3 million). This proportion is over twice as high as its nearest competitor, Disney Junior. CBBC currently reaches 36% of children aged 6-12 years old (1.7 million), considerably higher than the Disney Channel (22%) and CITV (21%). For both BBC services these figures represent a decline in viewing compared with 2011-12. This latter year marked a five-year high for both channels with performance driven by popular titles such as CBBC’s drama *Tracy Beaker Returns* and *Sarah Jane Adventures*, while on CBeebies, animation *Tree Fu Tom* and live action *Justin’s House*.

Figure 5: Average weekly reach of CBeebies and main commercial pre-school children’s broadcasters, 2008-09 – 2012-13

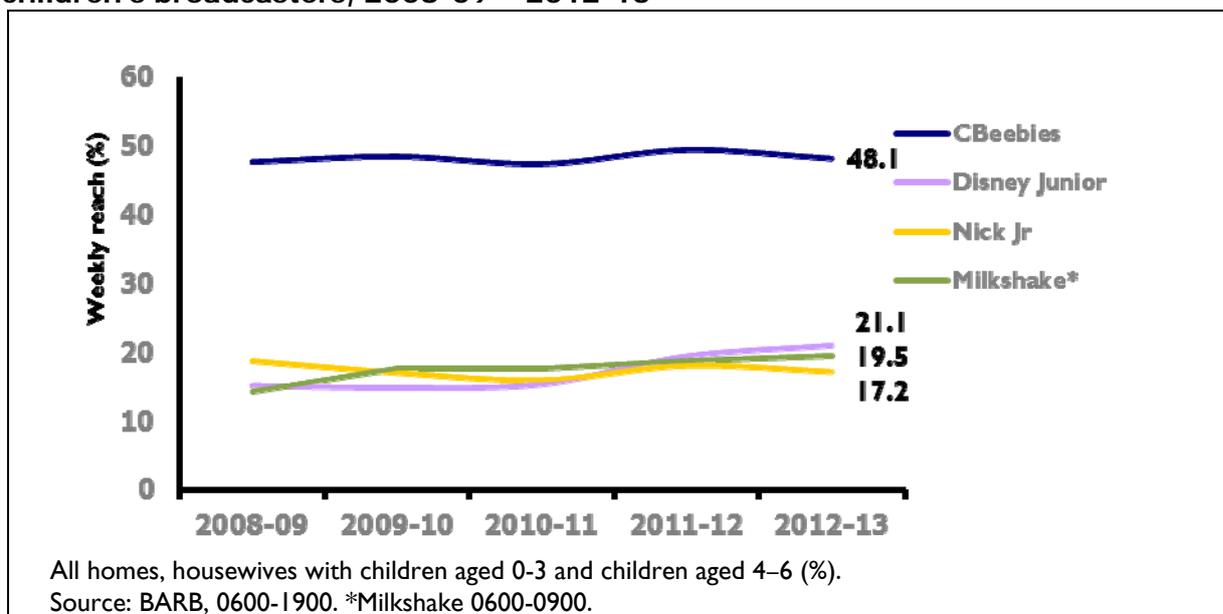
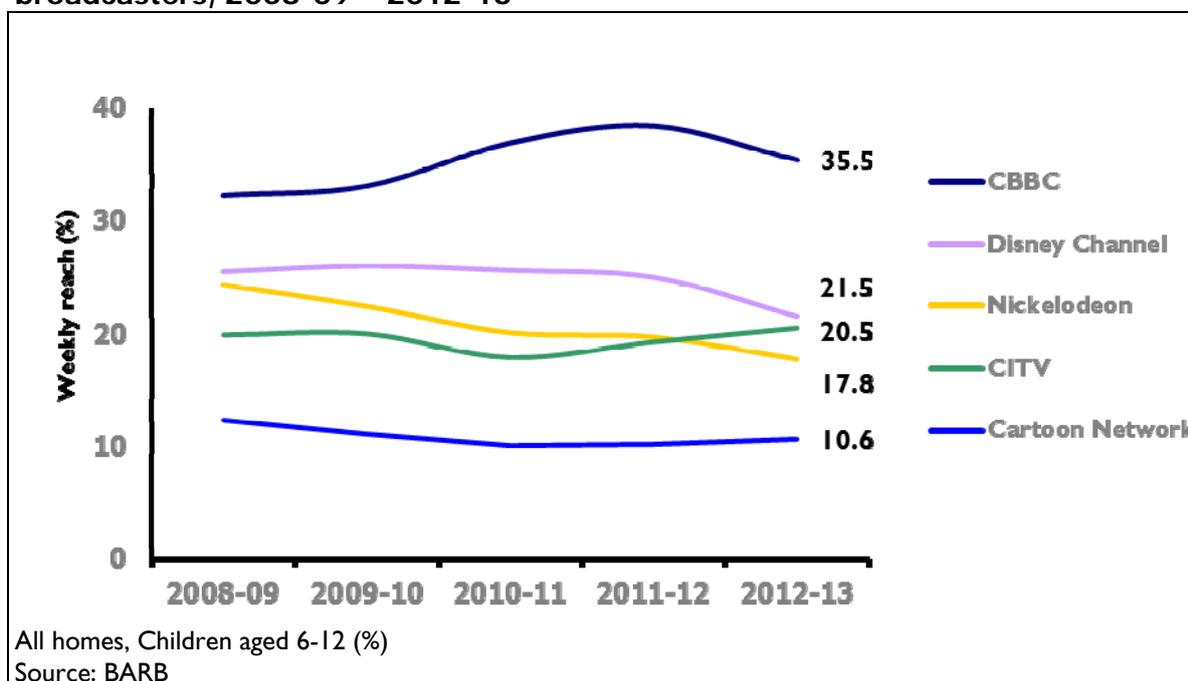


Figure 6: Average weekly reach of CBBC and main commercial children’s broadcasters, 2008-09 – 2012-13



16. In this context, it is also important to note the progress of CITV and Channel 5’s pre-school offer Milkshake. In 2012-2013, CBBC’s average weekly reach fell by around 150,000 while CITV’s reach held stable at around 1 million viewers each week after steady increases in recent years. Milkshake’s performance has been steadily increasing in recent years and, within its dedicated morning slot on Channel 5, continues to be CBeebies’ strongest competitor.

17. These figures confirm that BBC Children’s services have established themselves in the lives of many of the UK’s children and their families. However, the Executive is aware that the headline figures do not tell the full story. The recent decline in reach experienced by CBBC and, to a lesser degree, by CBeebies appears to be associated with some important challenges BBC Children’s is looking to address to better attract and retain its target audiences. In particular, there are two key audience groups the Executive wants to better serve:

- Children in satellite and cable homes
- Children at the older end of the target audiences of both services

18. We expand on the challenges in reaching out to these audiences below as well as highlighting some further performance trends amongst different audience groups. It can be difficult to segment reach data by different types of audience for CBeebies and CBBC due to small sample sizes so our findings should be interpreted with caution.

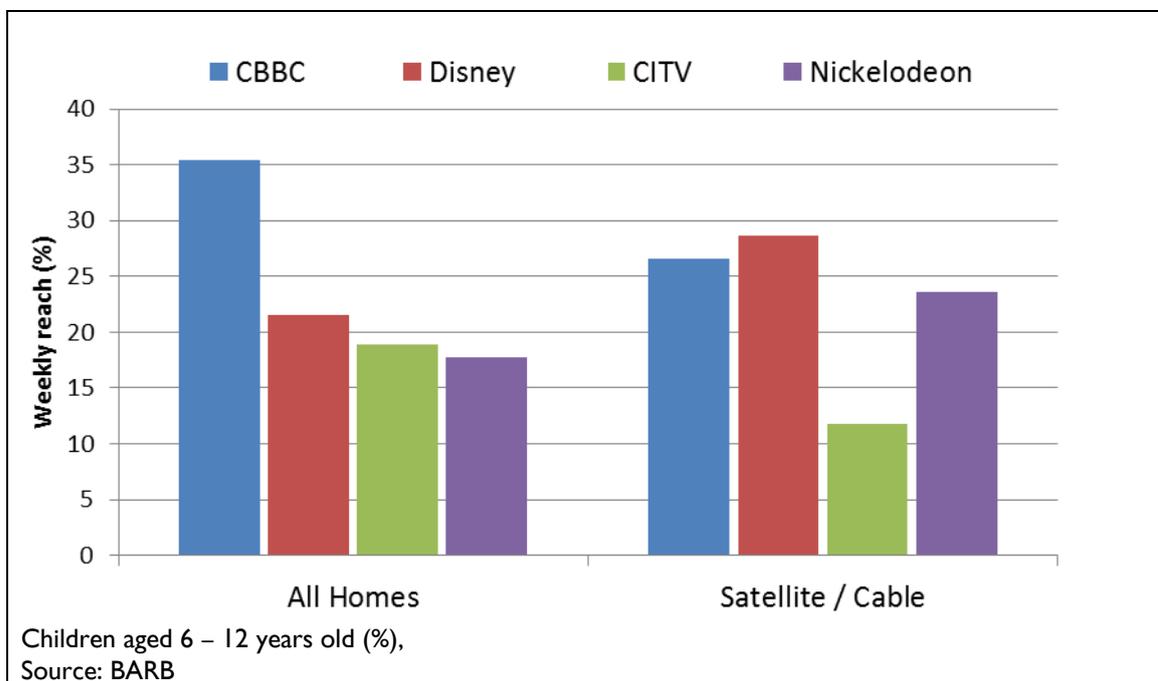
BBC Children’s performs less well in satellite and cable homes

19. More detailed analysis of the viewing figures indicates that, in an increasingly fragmented market, BBC Children’s does not perform as well in homes where children have more choice over what they watch. Our last review identified a similar trend and the issue has, if anything, become more acute. There are now 32 digital channels

dedicated to children’s programming and the majority have been growing in popularity alongside CBeebies and CBBC (although most experienced a similar dip in performance in 2012-13).

- 20. In satellite and cable homes, where these channels are found, the performance of the BBC is not as strong. In 2012-13, CBeebies reach dropped by 2 percentage points but it is still the most popular pre-school channel. However, our audience research suggests there is less loyalty for the channel in satellite and cable homes compared with free-to-air homes. CBBC has greater competition: in satellite and cable homes, the channel’s reach dropped to 27% in 2012-13 and it has now been overtaken by Disney as the most watched children’s channel in these homes (figure 7).

Figure 7: Average weekly reach of CBBC across different platforms, 2012-13



- 21. The BBC’s own research suggests that the decline in appeal of CBBC and CBeebies in satellite and cable homes appears to be in part linked to audience perceptions around channel brands and content, and whether television is used more as an educational or entertainment resource. The research found that families who regard television as more of an entertainment resource tend to be more relaxed about their children’s media consumption habits and access to technology. CBeebies and CBBC tend to have a comparatively weaker relationship with these audiences. It is also important to highlight in this context that CBeebies and CBBC are currently found on the second page of the Children’s electronic programme guide (EPG) in Sky homes, which may affect viewing behaviours.

Older children are less inclined to watch CBeebies and CBBC

- 22. Our last review highlighted that both CBeebies and CBBC lose children at the older end of their respective target age ranges and it remains the case that fewer older children are choosing to watch the services. For CBeebies, the difference in reach between four and six year olds has narrowed since 2008-09 but is still high. In 2012-13, reach stood at 53% amongst four year olds and 39% amongst six year olds (figure 8). For CBBC, weekly reach in 2012-13 amongst 12 year olds stood at 30%

compared with 44% amongst nine year olds (figure 9). CBBC also continues to struggle to inherit younger viewers moving on from CBeebies.

Figure 8: CBeebies average weekly reach by age (%), 2008-09 compared with 2012-13

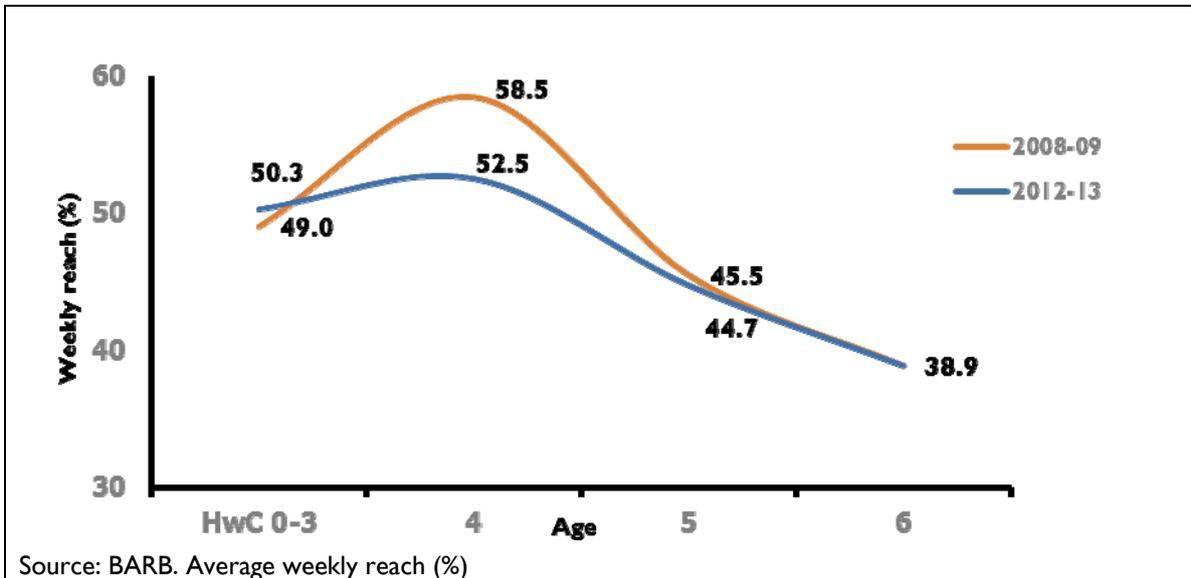
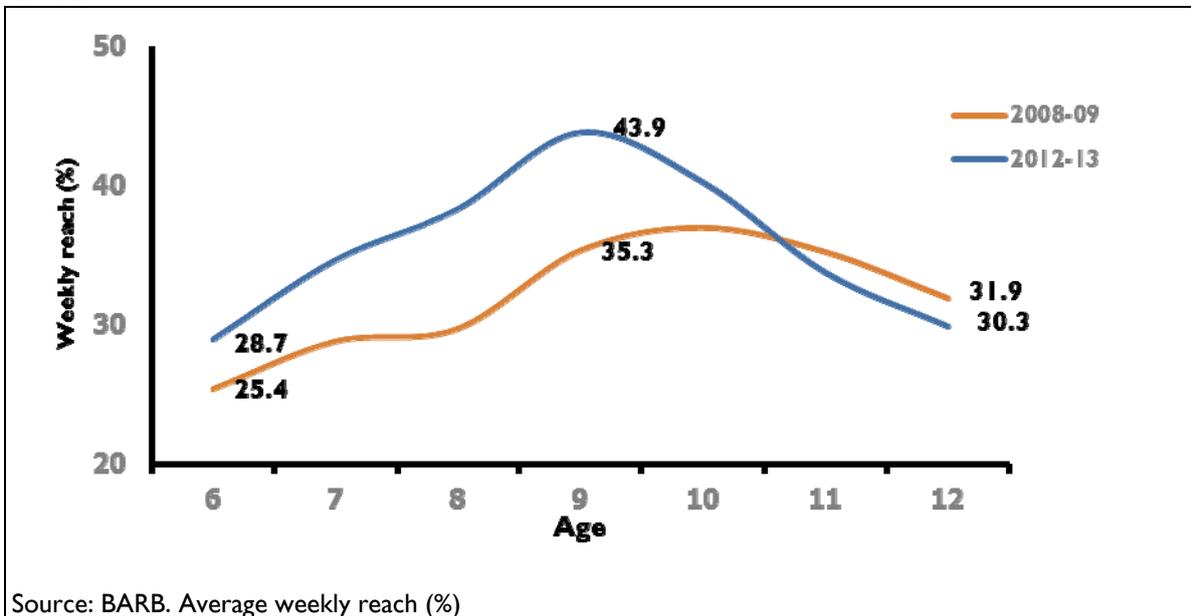


Figure 9: CBBC average weekly reach by age (%), 2008-09 compared with 2012-13



23. We do not underestimate the challenges BBC Children’s faces in catering for all children aged 12 and under, given the huge diversity of needs represented and the array of products and services competing for their attention. However, our audience feedback including from Audience Councils clearly shows that, for CBeebies, children between the ages of 4-6 begin to feel that much of the content is too babyish, but both they and their parents feel they are not yet old enough for much of the content on CBBC. For CBBC, children over the age of nine are starting to seek out more teenage-skewing programmes on other channels especially dramas and soaps.

24. BBC Children's plans to address this performance challenge by commissioning more content that appeals particularly to the older children amongst their target audiences. The strong performance of certain titles amongst older viewers, such as CBBC's *Dani's House* and *The Dumping Ground* or CBeebies' *Tree Fu Tom* and *Old Jack's Boat*, demonstrates that CBBC and CBeebies can attract these children. Such titles are also proving popular with children in satellite and cable homes. However these types of programmes are expensive and often require commercial investment to support their production. In pursuing these plans, BBC Children's needs to ensure that they don't lead to a negative impact on the rest of its audience. Some parents responding to our public consultation suggested that CBBC is aiming too much at the older end of the range and that there should be more content aimed at 6-8 year olds.
25. CBeebies and CBBC aim to work together to provide a more joined-up offer for children aged 12 and under. Plans to improve the transition of children aged 4-6 between the channels are still in their early stages but include finding strategic opportunities to cross-promote and co-commission content between the two services. CBeebies is also considering options to sign-post CBBC content suitable for 4-6 year olds at points in the day when CBeebies is showing programmes for this age group.

Actions:

- 1. We do not underestimate the challenges for CBeebies and CBBC in serving all children aged 12 and under. But we expect the services to provide some relevant high-quality and distinctive content for all children across this age range.**

We fully support the plans by BBC Children's to improve the services' reach to older children and to those who have more choice in satellite and cable households as the BBC provides a distinctive public service offer relevant to all children. We also support the plans to improve the transition of children aged 4-6 between CBeebies and CBBC. The increase in non-linear viewing creates further opportunities to serve children of different ages via curated catch-up or on-demand offers.

We appreciate that reach levels amongst the different age groups inevitably vary but BBC Children's should monitor performance levels closely and ensure there is no decline in viewing as it implements these plans.

Timing: We will monitor performance of the channels amongst different age groups in one year and on an on-going basis.

Fewer boys are watching CBBC

26. In common with many children's channels, boys are proving harder to attract to CBBC than girls. In 2012-13, more girls than boys watched the channel (a reach gap of four percentage points) although they had been watching in similar proportions in the previous two years. For CBeebies, since 2011-12 there has been little difference in weekly reach between boys and girls.

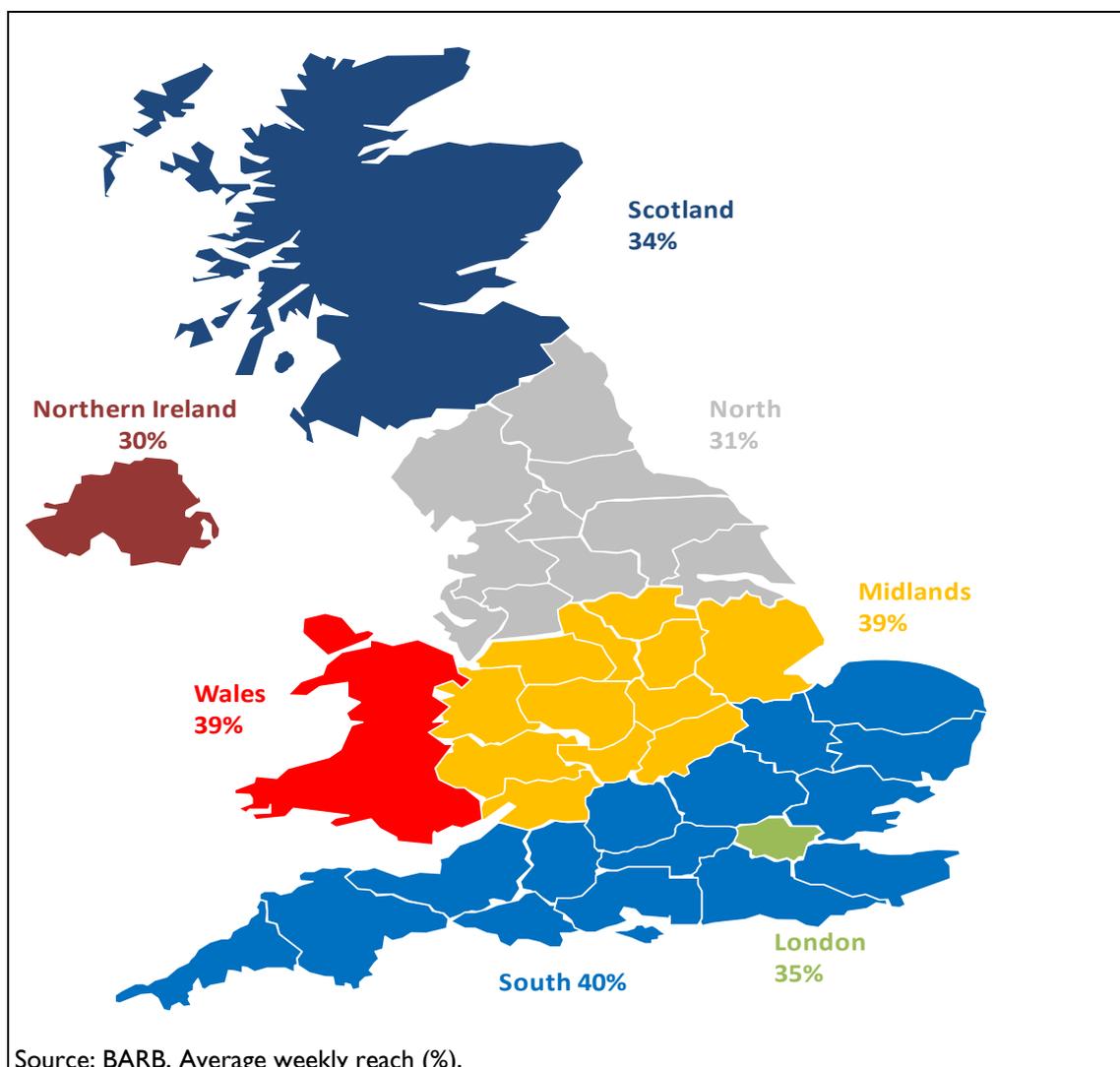
Children from different socio-economic groups watch both CBeebies and CBBC in similar proportions but children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic homes watch CBBC less than white children

27. The available analysis suggests that roughly equal proportions of children from C2DE homes and ABC1 homes are now tuning into CBBC and CBeebies after some fluctuation in recent years. For CBeebies, reach among ABC1 children was 49%, while reach amongst C2DE children was 48%. For CBBC, the figures were 35% and 36% respectively.
28. Our previous review found that CBBC's reach was lower, on average, amongst children from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) homes compared with white children. Although at that time audiences felt the service represented diversity well, it faced greater competition from specialist ethnic or religious media, particularly Asian television channels. Although weekly reach increased from 29.6% to 32.4% amongst children from BAME homes between 2008-09 and 2012-13, weekly reach amongst white children is still higher (36.1% in 2012-13). We understand that there are challenges for most BBC services in serving different audience groups equally well and, as shown by the 2011 national census, the UK's population is becoming increasingly diverse. However, we would not wish to see this CBBC gap growing significantly wider. Sample sizes were too small to generate results for CBeebies.

The performance of CBeebies and CBBC is not uniform across the UK

29. Our last review found that both services under-perform in particular in Northern Ireland and, our analysis of reach in the nations and English regions, shows this continues to be the case. In terms of the English regions, in 2012-13 CBBC's weekly reach was nine percentage points greater in the South (excluding London) compared with the North, where reach has declined each year since 2010-11 (figure 10).

Figure 10: Map showing average weekly reach of CBBC by Nation and English region, 2012-13



30. The BBC's own research indicates that the reasons for the national and regional disparities seem in part related to the decreased appeal of the services amongst children in satellite and cable homes, as there are greater proportions of such households in areas of the country where the BBC performs less well. Our Audience Councils in Northern Ireland, Wales, England and Scotland noted the important role which CBeebies and CBBC programmes played in portraying the diversity of the UK's nations and regions to children. While mindful of the pressures on the Children's budget, the Councils were keen that the Executive continue to invest in and develop such programming by, for example, including an even wider range of voices and accents on the channels. Many parents responding to our consultations equally felt it was important that such content was maintained.
31. To reach out to audiences in the North of England in particular we have been impressed by the determination of BBC Children's to capitalise on its move to Salford. Prior to the move, the department did not organise any major audience-facing events in London for many years. Since the move in 2011, it has hosted 10 audience and broadcast events at several locations across the region. Cumulatively tens of thousands of families have taken part in these events. We hope these activities,

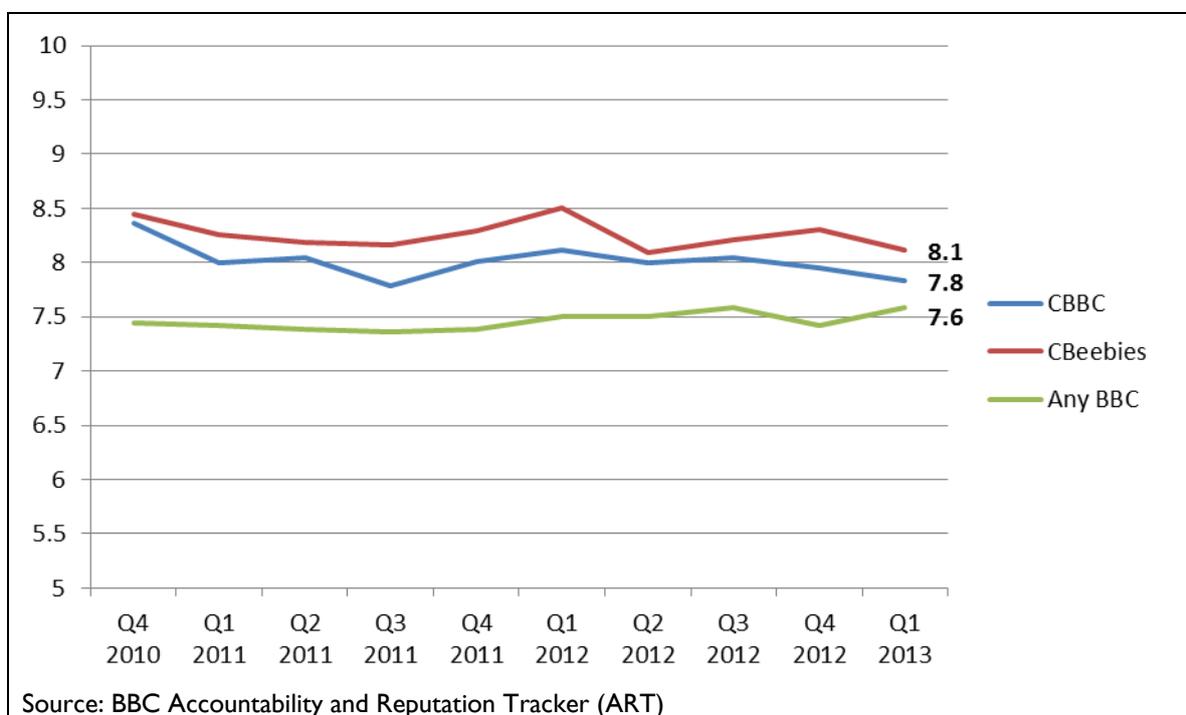
together with consideration of any editorial issues that could help, will enable BBC Children's to address lower audience reach in some nations and regions.

The quality and impact of CBeebies and CBBC

Audiences continue to be very happy with the quality and range of CBeebies and CBBC

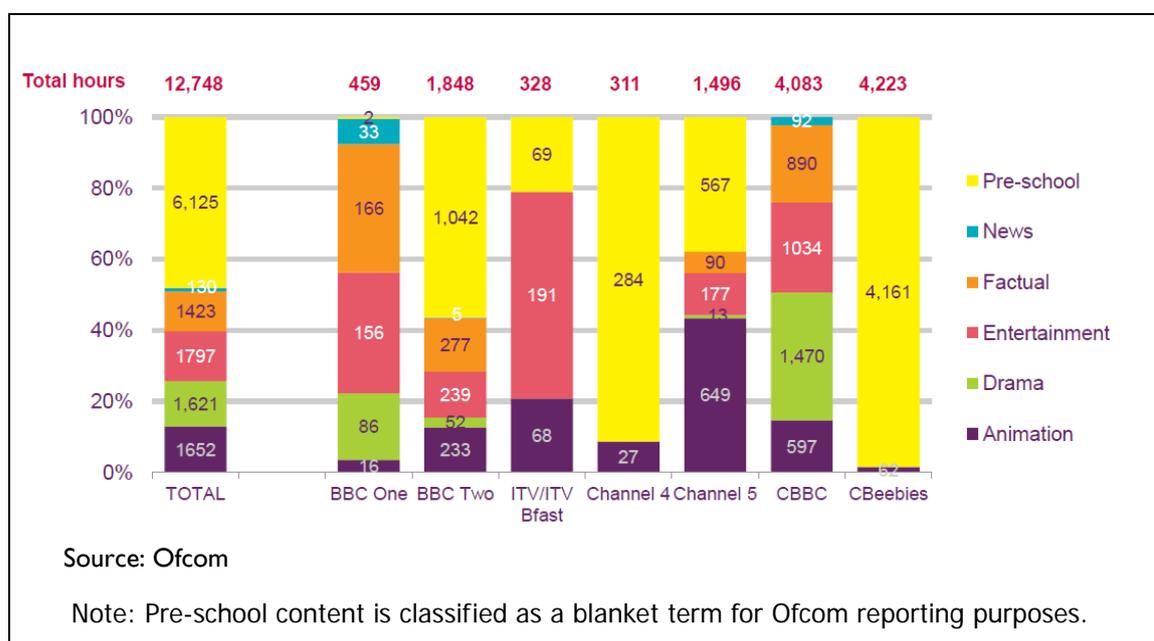
32. Overall, we have received very positive feedback from audiences and stakeholders on what they think of the respective offers of CBeebies and CBBC. Programmes shown on both channels were largely regarded by children as well as parents and carers as being high-quality, distinctive and comprising a broad range of genres. Audiences trust the services to deliver content in a safe, advert-free environment. The feedback we received also showed how indelibly linked presenter-led continuity is to both services, with many children and parents stating that the enthusiasm and diversity of the presenting team are key strengths. Children particularly valued the opportunity to interact with CBBC through joining in competitions and games and sending questions to presenters and celebrities.
33. The BBC's general impression scores of both CBBC and CBeebies compare very favourably to other BBC services (figure 11). However, scores reflect the impression of the services rather than individual programmes, and only people over 16 are surveyed. BBC Children's has recently developed a new online survey specifically seeking the views of children (and parents of very young children) so is starting to collate audience data on programme quality and overall perceptions of the services. Development of this survey has been a long process as the Executive has had to overcome a number of methodological challenges. Once established, such information should help its performance management, accountability and decision-making. Such data should also help the department better promote the quality of its content across the BBC and facilitate greater opportunities to show strong titles on the mainstream channels.

Figure 11: Mean general impression scores of CBBC, CBeebies and any BBC service, fourth quarter 2010 – first quarter 2013, adults



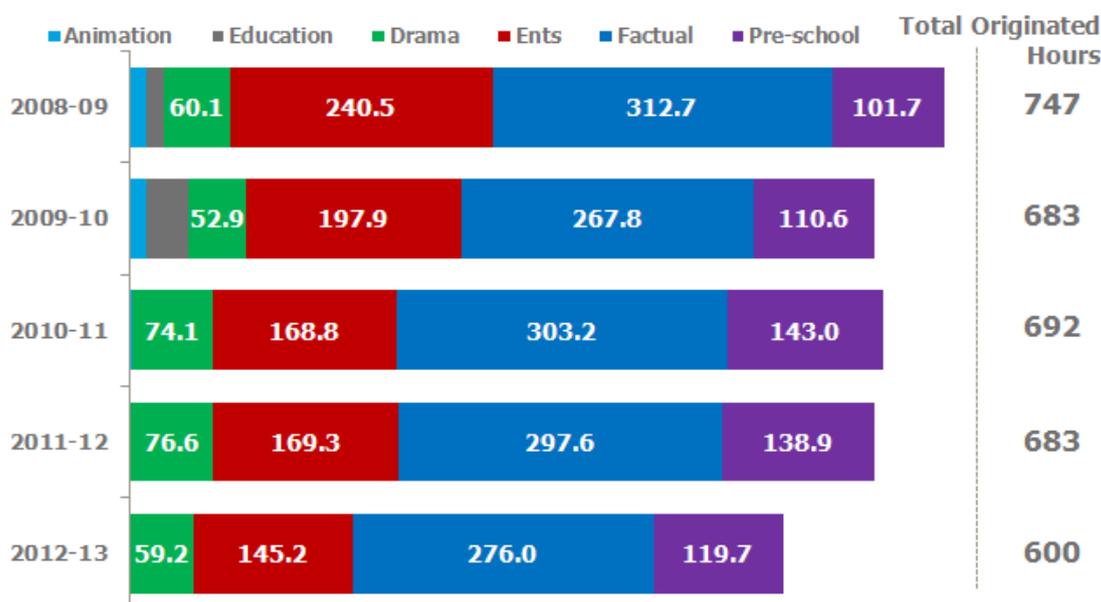
34. The children’s television industry also holds CBeebies and CBBC in strong regard. CBBC was awarded Channel of the Year at the 2012 Children’s BAFTAs and in recent years its programmes dominated the comedy, drama, factual and entertainment award categories. CBeebies won the Channel of the Year in the previous two years and was Freesat’s Channel of the Year in 2012.
35. Both audience and stakeholder feedback confirms that CBeebies represents a unique and highly valued pre-school proposition. An analysis of recent schedules clearly shows that the channel offers a range of genres, from live action drama to factual through to animated drama in many different styles. Parents we spoke to particularly appreciated that the channel is not dominated by one or two big shows. There is also a good range of innovative ‘hybrid’ programming weaving educational content carefully into entertainment formats. Some parents suggested that CBeebies should aim to offer more drama because of the lack of this type of programming elsewhere. The Executive is alive to this view and has recently commissioned new and additional drama for the channel.
36. For CBBC, analysis of the latest PSB broadcast hours reported to Ofcom confirms that the range of output is unparalleled (figure 12). As a proportion of the total hours broadcast on CBBC in 2012, 36% comprised drama, 25% entertainment, 22% factual, 15% animation and 2% news. Many of the children who responded to our consultation or who took part in the research spontaneously stated that CBBC has a good variety of shows

Figure 12: Ofcom's analysis of children's PSB output by sub-genre, 2012



37. While drama and factual titles were regularly singled out for praise in the audience feedback, some stakeholder groups commented that they felt CBBC offered a narrower range of such programmes as a consequence of prioritising investment in recent years in its biggest programme brands. They felt the schedule placed too much reliance on established, long-running series at the expense of a more diverse range of programming. Some children responding to our consultation also expressed frustration over the showing at weekends of back-to-back repeat programmes from the same CBBC series and which had first been shown earlier in the week. We are clear that range of output is one of the BBC Children's channels distinctive strengths and so would not want to see range reduced too far in favour of there being fewer, bigger, reach-driving titles.
38. The total broadcast hours for first-run originated children's content on the BBC have declined from 2008-09 to 2012-13 (figure 13). This reduction is primarily a result of BBC Children's strategy of focusing on commissioning a smaller amount of high cost, high-quality programming ('fewer, bigger, better'). The decrease is also in part due to the Executive's decision that, from 2009-10, it would no longer commission originated children's output for BBC One and BBC Two as it did not perform well when broadcast on the CBBC channel. Our analysis shows that, in line with the Executive's strategy, the proportion of hours devoted to entertainment programmes has reduced the most, although there has been some reduction in the hours of factual programming also. The proportion of hours devoted to drama programmes has remained relatively stable over the period of our review.

Figure 13: Total first-run originated hours of BBC Children’s broadcast content by genre, 2008-09 – 2012-13



Source: BBC management

Note: Analysis includes first-run originations shown on BBC One, BBC Two, CBBC and CBeebies

39. A strong finding from our research groups with children was that, in satellite and cable homes particularly, more choice seems to be resulting in fewer children discovering the full range of programmes on CBBC. They have so many options available to them now, including watching programmes on demand, that we found many of the children taking part in the research tended to stick with programmes they know and love. BBC Children’s recognises that it faces a tough challenge given this context particularly in introducing children to new factual programmes.
40. Against a general backdrop of high appreciation for the quality of the output on CBeebies and CBBC, children and parents taking part in our review expressed some dissatisfaction with the amount of repeat programmes shown on both channels. In 2012-13, 83% of CBBC’s total broadcast hours were repeats, the same proportion as the preceding two years. For CBeebies the figure was 88%, slightly higher than in recent years. These numbers compare with around 90% for repeats on the PSB children’s channels overall and, we estimate, even higher repeat levels on commercial channels.¹¹
41. There are positive reasons for showing programmes more than once including ensuring good value for money of programme investment. Broadcasting repeats also has particular benefits for children’s programming. For example, pre-school children can enjoy and benefit developmentally from watching the same programme more than once. And older children can get the opportunity to watch programmes they may have missed on their first showing due to school or other commitments. We highlight in Part 2 of this report that CBeebies and CBBC will commission lower volumes of original programmes over the next two years due to reductions to their budgets. As a result, there will be some increase in the level of repeats on both channels. We accept

¹¹ Ofcom, 2013. Ofcom estimate that, in 2011, 2% of all programming on the commercial children’s channels was first-run (both original and acquired).

that the high level of repeats on the channels are standard practice for children's TV in serving their audiences and help provide good value for money. However our audience feedback demonstrates that the Executive must continue to handle the scheduling of repeat programming carefully so viewers' perceptions of the services are not significantly affected.

CBeebies and CBBC make strong and valuable contributions to the delivery of the public purposes

42. Under the Royal Charter the BBC has six public purposes. These are:

- Citizenship - sustain citizenship and civil society
- Learning - promote education and learning
- Creativity - stimulate creativity and cultural excellence
- Diversity - represent the UK, its nations, regions and communities
- Global - bring the UK to the world and the world to the UK
- Emerging communications - help to deliver to the public the benefit of emerging communications technologies and services.

43. The service licence for CBBC requires it to make a contribution to all six of these purposes. Following our last review, the CBeebies service licence now specifies that the service should contribute to five with the exception being citizenship, as this purpose is unlikely to be appropriate for very young children.

44. Our evidence clearly demonstrates that, overall, both CBeebies and CBBC continue to make strong and valuable contributions to the public purposes. BBC Children's has stayed true to what the audience value about its content, namely its difference from other broadcasters due to its provision of genres such as live action, factual and drama. Widely praised aspects of both services were their 'Britishness' as well as their commitment to diversity and inclusion. In the following paragraphs we consider how the services contribute to the individual purposes.

Sustaining citizenship and civil society

45. CBBC meets this purpose through the provision of news, current affairs and factual programmes which engage children with the idea of citizenship and also keep them in touch with national and global events. CBBC continues to deliver its service licence obligation to provide 85 hours of news each year.

46. Many parents and children who responded to our consultation and who were involved in our research felt that CBBC is good at telling children what's going on in the news in a way that is clear and understandable. The critically acclaimed documentary series *My Life* as well as *Newsround* specials received praise from stakeholders for highlighting important citizenship issues and for the way children themselves, from diverse backgrounds, presented the subjects.

47. Our last review found there had been a long-term decline in audience numbers for *Newsround* and *Blue Peter* and we asked the Executive to develop plans to reverse this trend. BBC Children's has since instigated changes to the format and length of both titles to try and better serve the target audience, although some stakeholders raised concerns over the shorter durations of the programmes. Analysis of how both

programmes have been performing on CBBC over the period of the review shows a significant uplift in average weekly reach amongst 6-12 year olds in 2010. Since then performance has been relatively stable, although both have fallen slightly in 2013.

48. Children involved in our research and responding to our consultation commented that they frequently go to the *Newsround* page on the CBBC website. Analysis of usage figures shows that *Newsround* has become a key part of the CBBC online offer, driving up to 20% of online traffic in 2012-13 with an average of 240,000 unique browsers per week.

Promoting education and learning

49. CBBC is required to promote informal learning and under its service licence is required to broadcast 550 hours of factual content a year to support the delivery of this purpose. In 2012-13, it broadcast 890 hours of such content. The commitment to education and learning by CBeebies is stronger in that most content should support the school and pre-school curricula.
50. The CBBC ethos of 'laughing yourself smart' is delivering good results. Most children involved in our research or responding to our consultation felt that factual information is delivered on CBBC in a fun and light way. They felt the channel helped them learn new and interesting facts and information, which made the channel perceptibly different from the other channels. Entertainment and comedy are incorporated well into factual formats.
51. CBeebies has a strong focus on learning, largely based on live action presenter formats and being produced in a fun and engaging way. Many parents valued this highly and felt that whatever their children watch on CBeebies it will teach them something. They believed that CBeebies encourages children to build up their knowledge of numbers and phonics and dance and movement as well as also helping to teach life and social skills.

Stimulating creativity and cultural excellence

52. Under this purpose, CBeebies and CBBC should show a high proportion of UK original productions and make a significant contribution to the UK children's production sector. It is therefore more an industry-facing measure than an audience one. Over the period of this review, both services met their annual quotas of 80% original productions for CBeebies and 70% for CBBC. In 2012-13, CBBC exceeded its quota by 11%.
53. PACT, the trade association representing independent producers felt that, overall, BBC Children's had a good relationship with the sector and was commissioning more than ever before from independent producers. As with all TV services in the BBC, 50% of original children's productions are guaranteed for BBC in-house production and 25% are guaranteed for independent producers. In the remaining 25%, known as the Window of Creative Competition (WoCC), independent producers compete with in-house producers to gain commissions for children's productions. In 2012-13, 62% of such commissions went to external producers compared with 81% the previous year and 57% in 2010-11. The year-on-year fluctuations in commissions signify that competition within this marketplace is in a healthy state.
54. PACT highlighted some concerns over the time taken by BBC Children's to communicate its commissioning decisions. It also commented that it was now less common for the BBC to fully-finance children's commissions, which means external

producers often have to fund production in other ways usually through secondary sales. Such a funding model can make certain commissions, particularly CBBC's drama output, less attractive to independent producers.

55. In terms of working more generally with the creative sector, the ambition of BBC Children's is to make its new Salford base a hub of high-quality Children's content. The move has already led to a greater degree of collaboration between the BBC and independent producers based around the UK. Both CBeebies and CBBC have, for example, commissioned a number of TV and online productions from northern independent companies. Additionally CBeebies and CBBC in-house productions are now Salford-based, which has the potential to help develop and sustain a production and post-production industry in the North.

Representing the UK, its nations, regions and communities

56. With their high proportion of UK content, both CBeebies and CBBC should reflect a wide mix of content that reflects the breadth of the UK. Most children, parents and stakeholders including our Audience Councils praised the way both services promoted diversity and inclusion by representing a wide mix of children and presenters in terms of ethnicity, gender and disability. There was some feedback that there could be more strong female characters in CBeebies programming to offer appropriate role models for children but generally CBeebies was commended for its strong output in this respect, including content that marks different types of religious and cultural events.
57. Most parents and children who took part in the review felt that the content shown on both services was relevant to them and their world. Children taking part in our research also highlighted that some popular drama shows, while atypical of their lives, did teach them about the diversity of lifestyles within the UK. However, some audience stakeholder groups voiced concern that, some key titles aside, the CBBC drama schedule is showing signs of being too skewed towards fantasy adventure rather than real life experience that reflects the breadth of society. We are clear that the channels should be free to commission the best ideas in drama and other genres and that this may lead to some imbalance in types of output at times. However, showing contemporary, real life drama on CBBC is clearly something that is valued highly by audiences and stakeholders and we would want to see the service's strong track record in this respect continue.
58. Under their service licences, CBBC and CBeebies must contribute to the BBC's commitment to make a significant proportion of all BBC television programmes outside the M25 area. In the past three years, BBC Children's has exceeded its annual targets to commit a proportion of spending in the nations and separately in the English regions outside London. Since the move to Salford, regional spend has grown significantly and is forecast to continue to do so.

Bringing the UK to the world and the world to the UK

59. Our last review resulted in the CBeebies service licence being amended to reflect and safeguard the contribution that the service was already making to the global purpose. Both CBeebies and CBBC continue to play their part in supporting this purpose, primarily by bringing the world to the UK.
60. CBBC titles *Newsround* and *Blue Peter* are of fundamental importance for the global purpose but stakeholders also cited factual programmes such as *Show Me What You're*

Made Of and *All Over The Place USA*, which successfully show children what life is like in other countries.

61. CBeebies programmes regularly feature young children from a range of cultural backgrounds and stakeholders identified programmes such as *Little Human Planet* and *Andy's Wild Adventures* as good examples of how the service is contributing to this purpose. Parents taking part in our research felt that CBeebies is doing well at reflecting their children's immediate world, and this is more important than reflecting the wider world, which is much harder for young children to understand.
62. Some stakeholders made the point that, apart from US animation, there is very little acquired overseas content on either channel but we do not think this should be a concern as the channels' main role is to offer UK programming.

Delivering to the public the benefit of emerging communications, technologies and services

63. We consider how well BBC Children's is contributing to this purpose in Part 2, where we consider the online and interactive offers of both services.

The BBC offers some bespoke audio and radio for children

64. Our last review found that the awareness and reach of the BBC's radio content for children were very low mainly because dedicated programmes were broadcast at inconvenient times and on stations which are primarily aimed at an older audience where children are unlikely to look for content when it is available. The Executive acknowledged that the existing arrangements for children's radio would need to change in the light of consistently low audience numbers and it undertook to assess the options available.
65. In late 2010, the BBC restructured its radio and audio output for children. It developed CBeebies pre-school audio available online for download, family-friendly content for older children on Radio 4 Extra, and agreed to the commercial release of children's radio archive for broadcast by third parties. We consider the progress made by each of these initiatives below.

CBeebies audio content

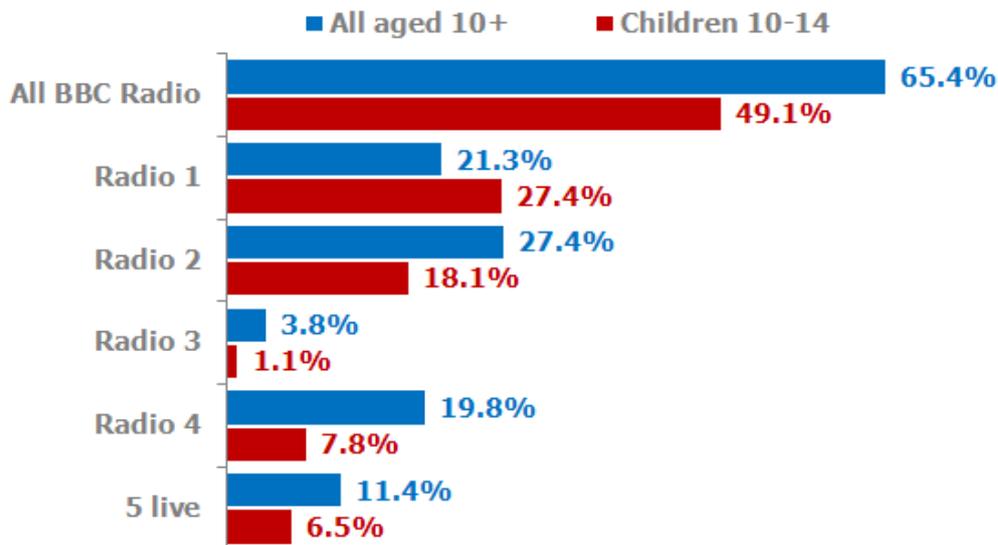
66. CBeebies audio downloads available on the CBeebies website have gradually increased in popularity. The rebuild of the site in 2011 helped significantly in this respect. 'CBeebies Radio' was given much greater prominence on the front page of the website. This change appears to have driven traffic to the offer. In 2012-13, CBeebies Radio averaged some 64,000 unique browsers per week, compared with 15,000 unique browsers per week for 2011-12. CBeebies Radio is also now available to download on the BBC iPlayer Radio mobile app. However, we found awareness of this provision was still very low amongst the parents taking part in this review, suggesting more could be done to raise awareness of this offer.

Family-friendly content that appeals to older children on Radio 4 Extra

67. Radio 4 Extra is available on digital radio and digital television platforms and online. Its remit is to provide speech-based entertainment through a schedule that includes comedy, drama, stories, and programmes that appeal to children. Most of its output comes from the BBC archive. It is currently listened to by around 26,000 children aged

- 10 -14 each week (the youngest age group for which listening hours are collated by RAJAR). This compares with overall weekly reach to the station of 1.7 million listeners.
68. Radio 4 Extra's service licence obliges it to broadcast at least 350 hours of children's programming each year as part of its contribution to its education and learning purpose. It meets this purpose primarily through *The 4 O'Clock Show*, a daily one-hour speech programme, commissioned by BBC Radio, which is designed to appeal to older children and adults. However, due to the small number of children listening to Radio 4 Extra generally we are unable to reliably measure and report on the number of children who listen to the show which has a steady audience of around 166,000 listeners.
69. None of the children who responded to our consultation question on what radio stations or programmes they listened to mentioned Radio 4 Extra, although a small number mentioned Radio 4 and Radio 5 in relation to speech-based radio. Most parents and carers responding to our consultation and involved in our research were unaware of any targeted provision for children on BBC radio. Audience Councils also reported a lack of awareness of such provision. However, the small number of parents who said they had listened to Radio 4 Extra's children's output commented that they would like to hear more programmes like this and for them to be available in formats such as downloadable podcasts. This would facilitate listening to such content when on car journeys for example.
70. Some audience stakeholder groups that responded to our consultation queried whether Radio 4 Extra, as a digital station and one that also offers more challenging content for adults throughout the day, was the most suitable place for dedicated children's radio content on the BBC. It is the Executive's responsibility to ensure that scheduling decisions are based on the audience expectations of each radio service and are informed by their knowledge of when children are particularly likely to be listening to the service. Unexpected or challenging material should be clearly signposted to avoid causing offence. Provided that content broadcast near to programmes like *The 4 O'Clock Show* complies with the BBC's stricter Editorial Guidelines that apply to children's output, the rest of the station's schedule should adhere to the BBC's general Editorial Guidelines. Given the remit of Radio 4 Extra, it would not be feasible for the whole daytime schedule to be at all times suitable for children.
71. The Executive feels that the main value children derive from BBC radio comes from their consumption of the mainstream services and it notes that there are large sections of BBC radio which are suitable for family listening. Figure 14 shows weekly reach to BBC network radio services amongst children aged 10-14 in 2012-13. Overall, BBC radio reaches 49% of older children every week. This is lower than the reach of BBC radio amongst the UK population as a whole (65%). Radio 1 and Radio 2 in particular have had some success in attracting a young audience. The former currently reaches 27% of older children, and Radio 2's family-friendly daytime schedule seems to have contributed to an increased listening amongst children over the last two years from 13% to 18%. Whether BBC or commercial, it is important to highlight in this context that older children are listening to less and less radio, with average hours per listener having fallen by some 15% in the last four years.

Figure 14: Weekly reach (%) of BBC network radio services and overall BBC Radio reach, children aged 10 -14 compared with all audiences (10+), 2012-13



Source: RAJAR

72. Children responding to our consultation named the Radio 1 and Radio 2 breakfast shows as the programmes they most listened to. The latter's short story competition for children aged 13 and under, *500 Words*, has proved very successful with 90,000 entries this year alone. Many parents who responded stated their children listen to radio stations, usually when they themselves are listening. This response supports previous research by the BBC that found radios are typically controlled by adults, or occasionally by older siblings, so younger children tend to have little influence over the choice of station or programme.

Release of the BBC children's radio archive to third parties

73. Only a small proportion of the BBC children's radio archive has been successfully released to third parties. To date, a total of 21 readings have been made available. It is clear that the Executive underestimated the time and resources the process would take. The main challenges have been establishing the suitability of the audio material, securing the necessary rights and then engaging third parties in negotiation.

74. Confused lines of communication between the Executive and third parties have contributed to several misunderstandings about what titles can be released. Further work on archive rights and data has now been undertaken and the Executive assert that syndication of the archive will be easier and faster in the future. To this end, the Executive plan to create a 'back catalogue' database of eligible children's archive content, which is automatically pre-cleared for third party use and which will be made available to interested parties subject to a holdback period following the original broadcast and on a cost recovery basis.

Action:

- 2. We support the current scope of the BBC's radio and audio output for children but the Executive should find ways to promote it more effectively so that audience awareness levels increase and more children might**

discover speech radio programming that appeals to them.

Timing: The Executive should update us on plans to increase children's awareness and listening of bespoke radio content within 6 months.

Part 2: Meeting the Strategic Challenges

The financial challenge: Safeguarding the BBC's position as the cornerstone of high-quality, UK-produced children's content

CBBC and CBeebies represent good value for money to the licence fee payer.

75. The total spend on CBBC and CBeebies content from 2008-09 to 2012-13 is set out in figure 15. The substantial increase in spend on both services from 2009-10 to 2010-11 is due to two changes made following our last review. The first was a change we recommended the Executive make to accounting policy to improve accountability. From 2010-11 CBBC and CBeebies service licence budgets cover all their expenditure on television programmes, including those that were first transmitted on BBC One or BBC Two.
76. Following the last review, the Executive also awarded BBC Children's an increase in funding from 2010-11 to 2012-13. This additional funding was designed to protect children's content from the budgetary pressures the department was then facing including difficulties in generating commercial income. BBC Children's continues to benefit from a re-adjustment to its baseline operating budget, which assumes the additional investment carries on until 2016-17, the end of the current licence fee settlement period.

Figure 15: CBBC and CBeebies service licence spend, 2008-09 – 2012-13(1)

Emillion	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11(2)	2011-12	2012-13
CBBC television content	36	39.9	78.3	81.9	81.6
CBeebies television content	16	18.1	28.5	29.2	28.9
Online and interactive content	-	-	10.5	9.5	8.5
Total	52	58	117.5	120.6	119

Note 1: Figures are stated in cash terms

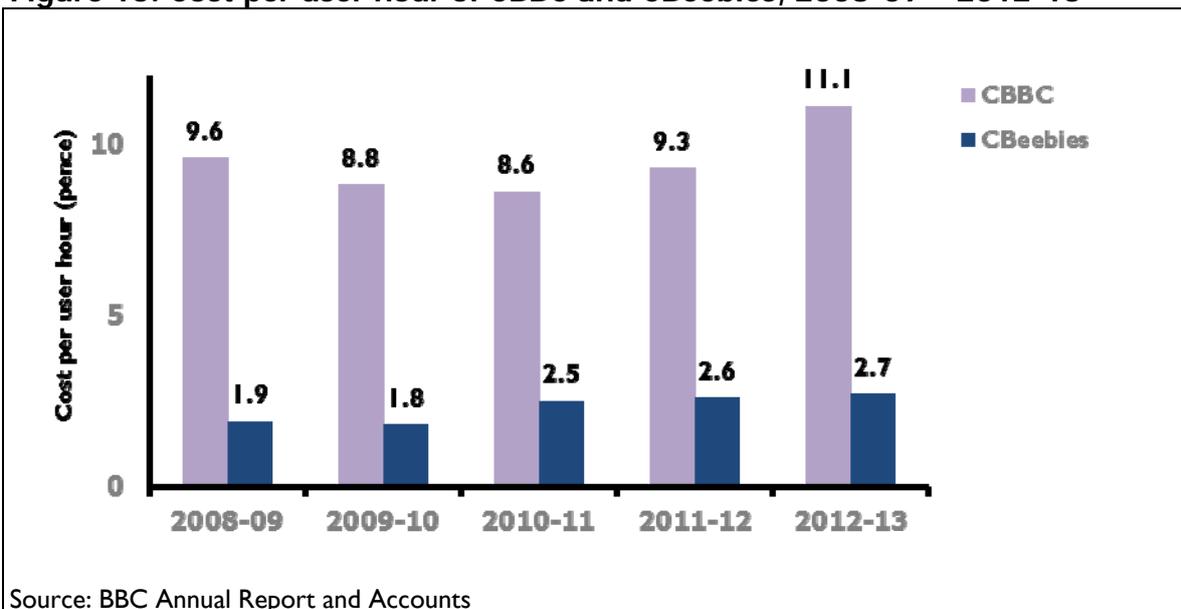
Note 2: Following redefinition of the CBBC and CBeebies service licences in 2010-11, licences from 2010-11 included all content expenditure on Children's programmes and not just the cost of programmes aired on CBBC & CBeebies. Accordingly from 2010-11, the content cost of Children's programmes was excluded from BBC One & BBC Two. Figures prior to 2010-11 have not been retrospectively adjusted. Prior to 2010-11 also, Children's did not control or report against its own online and interactive funding.

Source: BBC Annual Report and Accounts

77. The BBC uses a measure called cost per user hour to assess cost-effectiveness. This measure draws on cost and usage data to arrive at the average cost for every hour

that a person from the target audience watches a service. Figure 16 shows the annual cost per user hours for CBeebies and CBBC from 2008-09 to 2012-13. CBeebies' cost per user hour is very low in comparison to other BBC services. CBBC's is relatively high compared with CBeebies and the rest of the BBC television portfolio, because of a combination of the type of programmes it produces (drama in particular is costly) and its smaller audiences relative to the other BBC services. CBeebies aside. We think this relatively high cost is completely acceptable for a niche channel.

Figure 16: Cost per user hour of CBBC and CBeebies, 2008-09 – 2012-13



78. CBBC's strategic decision to concentrate investment on drama productions rather than (cheaper) entertainment titles accounts for some of the increase in its costs per user hour in 2011-12 and 2012-13. The relatively large increase in 2012-13 can also be attributed to the removal of children's output from the terrestrial channels as part of *Delivering Quality First*, which led to a reduction of some 600 viewing hours. The costs per user hour of both channels also went up on account of audience figures declining in 2012-13.

79. The range of evidence we've collated as part of this review, in particular the strongly positive audience perceptions on quality and impact, indicate that CBeebies and CBBC still deliver very important services for licence fee payers' money. However, effective management of a smaller budget will be essential over the next few years to prevent any long-term negative impact on performance.

Additional investment has supported the distinctiveness of children's content

80. The additional funding that BBC Children's began to receive in 2010-11 has supported the distinctiveness of both services and has helped address some of their performance challenges. The funding has supported investment in high cost animation, drama and comedy programmes that have attracted older audiences to both CBeebies and CBBC. A number of these programmes have proved popular in satellite and cable homes. Several titles supported with this extra funding have also strengthened the delivery of the public purposes, particularly citizenship, which our last review highlighted was a cause for concern.

81. The secondary purpose of the additional funding was to mitigate the shortfall in commercial income BBC Children's was then experiencing. To support animation and drama productions in particular, BBC Children's seeks out additional co-production funding. At the time of the last review, the Executive faced difficulties in meeting its commercial forecasts because of the lack of co-production involvement in children's content including a decline in the levels of CBeebies' investment support from BBC Worldwide. The extra funding has enabled BBC Children's to develop programmes that are attractive to Worldwide and the company is starting to provide greater levels of investment again.
82. BBC Children's has also formed new co-production partnerships. Since the last review, the department has developed partnerships with international companies such as Fremantle and ZDF. The deals have resulted in the commissioning of titles with strong production values such as CBeebies' *Tree Fu Tom* and CBBC's *Wolf Blood*, *Wizards vs Aliens* and *Strange Hill High*.
83. While the co-production commissions to date align well with the public purposes and support the services' distinctiveness, increased pressures to find funding and the attractions of benefiting from ancillary rights could, if not carefully managed, lead to certain types of children's programming being favoured (particularly character-based and animation) over a broader content mix. We are clear that BBC Children's must guard against this risk to protect UK distinctive content and the core public values of the services.
84. The BBC, via its commercial partnerships, can identify more opportunities for CBeebies in both domestic and global markets than CBBC. In the UK, our audience research supports the view that the CBeebies brand clearly stands out and evokes strong loyalty amongst parents. Globally there are many similar international channels targeting the same age range, and language is less of an issue as programmes are naturally less dialogue heavy. For CBBC the opportunities are far more limited as the channel brand is less strong than its most popular programme brands. As our evidence confirms, the UK audience wants to see itself reflected in the content so CBBC programmes also travel less well.

BBC Children's is intending to manage the reduction to its budget so the impact on the audience is marginal

85. *Delivering Quality First* (DQF) was approved by the Trust in May 2012. It is the BBC's plan for how it can best deliver the highest quality programmes and content to audiences until the end of the current licence fee settlement in 2017. This settlement sees the licence fee frozen to 2017 so the BBC must achieve an overall savings target of 20% by 2016-17 (equivalent to around £700 million a year).
86. In approving these proposals we supported the Executive's plans to protect investment in children's content. The Executive stated that reductions to BBC Children's would be met principally through increases in productivity and additional commercial revenue. Scope cuts were expected to be minimal beyond the savings in repeat fees from stopping the broadcasting of output on BBC One and BBC Two.
87. The Executive has honoured its commitment to protect children's content. In particular, before applying DQF targets the Executive chose to re-adjust the Children's departmental budget to assume the additional investment that BBC Children's received following our last review continued every year until 2016/17. The reduction to the

Children's departmental budget of 10.5% over the DQF period is proportionately much less than the reductions experienced by other departments.

88. BBC Children's will, of course, have to spend less money. From 2012-13 to 2016-17, it will be required to contribute cumulative savings of some £34 million. This means that, in cash terms, the department's budget will reduce from £101.7m in 2011-12 to £91m 2016-17. BBC Children's is taking steps to achieve greater efficiency in its own TV and interactive production although some of its savings targets are contingent on the success of pan-BBC initiatives. In terms of the additional commercial revenue required to protect content scope, the Executive has forecast cautious levels of investment given the inherent uncertainty of this funding source. The Executive is confident that there is sufficient contingency built in to these forecasts.
89. BBC Children's has also reduced the commissioning budgets of CBBC and CBeebies by around 8% and 5% respectively to achieve a £6.1 million efficiency saving in 2013-14. As a result, both services will commission fewer original programmes over the next two years. With the bigger budget, BBC Children's felt CBBC could better absorb the impact of the funding reduction. It is therefore responsible for making 87% (£5.3m) of the required savings. CBeebies is responsible for making 13% of the required savings (£0.8m). To maintain the level of its drama productions, CBBC has decided to replace certain higher cost factual entertainment programmes with new factual series with lower budgets. CBeebies has made these savings this year by changing the mix of its commissions across the next two financial years.
90. Through this review, BBC Children's has made it clear they believe that a reduction in the CBeebies' originations quota, which would bring it in line with the position of other BBC channels, may allow it to stretch its production budget further while maintaining the quality of its output. Such a proposal would require separate endorsement from the BBC Executive Board and Trust and approval from Ofcom.

Actions:

3. **We will continue to monitor the impact of the *Delivering Quality First* initiative on BBC Children's to ensure that there is minimal need for scope cuts beyond those achieved from stopping the broadcasting of output on BBC One and BBC Two. This is to protect the quality and scope of the output of BBC children's.**
4. **To allow us to monitor the impact of DQF more effectively, and to support performance accountability generally, the Executive should establish robust quality metrics for children's content, which are regularly analysed and reported to the Trust as standard..**

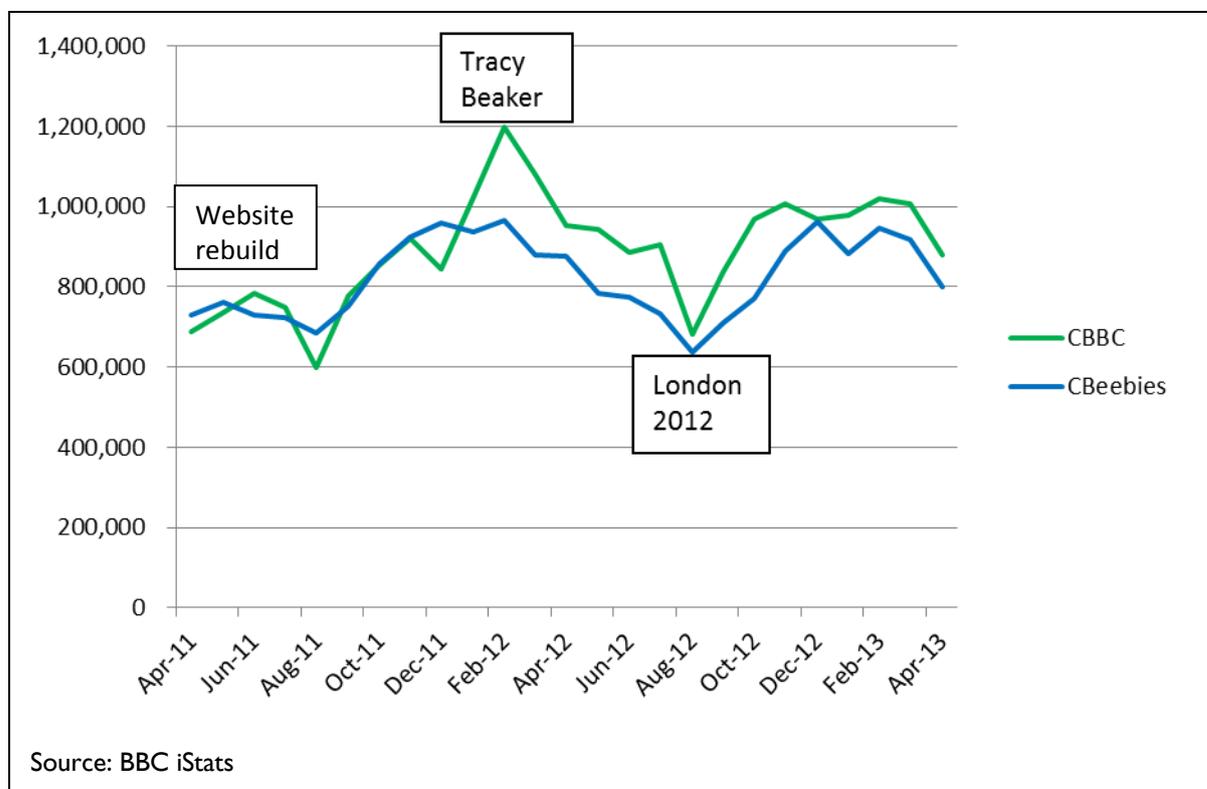
Timing: We will continue to monitor this impact on a quarterly basis each year.

The technological challenge: Being where the audience expects the services to be

The CBeebies and CBBC websites are performing well and are rated highly by the audience

91. Our previous review recommended that the Executive should address the declining usage levels of CBBC online. In 2011, following the decision to move all of the BBC's websites onto a new content management system, BBC Children's rebuilt their CBeebies and CBBC desktop websites. These rebuilds have improved navigation and discoverability of content.
92. Changes to how online performance is measured mean it is not possible to accurately track trends from 2008-09 to 2012-13. However, we know that the weekly unique browser reach to the CBBC website averaged 927,000 in 2012/13, an 8% increase compared with the previous year. For the CBeebies website, the weekly reach in 2012-13 averaged 824,000 unique browsers (figure 17). The figures fluctuate throughout the year, and are driven by the demand for popular content such as *Tracy Beaker*, but are strong given the relative size of the audiences. Year to date figures for 2013-14 (not shown on figure) do show CBBC website use has dropped compared with the same period last year.
93. The CBBC and CBeebies websites also regularly have the highest quality scores out of the ten BBC online products. Parents and children who contributed to our consultation and research and who used the websites generally found they were easy to use and provided them with what they wanted. The educational resources on the CBeebies website were praised by many parents. The CBBC website was commended by children for the variety of content.

Figure 17: Monthly online performance of CBBC and CBeebies websites, unique browsers, April 2011 – April 2013



94. Reach to the sites is mainly driven by users wanting to play games. Some 60% of the traffic to the BBC Children's online offer is currently for this purpose. This chimes with our consultation and research, with most children saying that playing games was the

primary reason for visiting the CBBC website. Usage figures indicate that they are generally proving popular with some very good performances.

95. Most of the interactive budget of BBC Children's is committed to the basic games offer but an increase in this funding following our last review has enabled BBC Children's to develop several more complex games. It has also used this budget to fund a small number of CBeebies' shows for premiering online and to develop innovations such as online spin-offs of popular programmes. It hopes much of this content will help attract children at the older end of their target audiences to the services. Some children responding to our consultation said they would like to play more challenging games. While there is evidence that such commissions have bolstered online usage, it is not possible to analyse by age as such data is not available. BBC Children's is currently part of a wider BBC trial that is assessing the public value of online premiering, which should provide more evidence of the audience benefits broken down by different demographics.

BBC Children's wants to make the services' online and interactive offers more responsive to the audience's needs and consumption habits

96. Despite the improvements made to the online offer in recent years, BBC Children's feels it is at risk of falling behind children's fast-changing media consumption habits. Desktop versions of the CBBC and CBeebies websites still account for the vast majority of unique browsers, making up just under 90% of the total web traffic, but, as we describe in Part 1, audiences increasingly expect to be able to access the same offer across platforms. Some children responding to our consultation expressed frustration at the lack of games on mobile devices and stakeholders commented that the websites are relatively basic compared with some other commercial provision. There are indications that the limitations of the current offer – at present only a minority of content is available on smartphones or tablet – may be starting to impact on online reach figures.
97. There are plans to address these issues. The Executive has re-versioned a limited number of mobile compatible games on the CBeebies mobile site and, later this year, will do so on the CBBC mobile site. It launched a CBeebies app in August, which can be downloaded onto phones and tablets and then used without access to the internet or mobile network, and plans to launch a CBBC app later in 2013-14. Our audience research and consultation responses showed there was an appetite for such apps, which provide parents with the comfort that their children are accessing content within an enclosed and safe environment.
98. As part of a pan-BBC initiative, next year the Executive intends to create fully mobile responsive children's sites so negating the need to separately upgrade the desktop and mobile versions of the sites. However, these plans do not include making all the desktop versions of the games available on mobile devices.
99. More generally, it is vital that BBC Children's works closely with the rest of the BBC to ensure that the needs of children are properly understood and accommodated in online service enhancements. We are encouraged by the increasing examples of cross-departmental working in this respect. As an important example, BBC Children's is liaising closely with BBC Future Media and Editorial Policy so the new version of iPlayer increases accessibility to both TV and interactive children's content and ensures that such content is a safe distance from adult content. Some parents and

stakeholders responding to our consultation voiced concern that the iPlayer's current design does not lend itself to children watching and finding content alone.

100. Responding effectively to changing audience consumption patterns and requirements presupposes a good understanding of their online behaviours. Currently limitations with BBC online audience measurement tools prevent the Executive gaining a good understanding of how audiences consume content across platforms. The Trust's recent service review of BBC Online recommended that the Executive prioritise its plans to improve these measurement tools. These plans will allow BBC Children's to track time spent online, allowing much more effective measurement of audience engagement with CBeebies and CBBC across digital platforms.

BBC Children's also wants to improve its connection with audiences through developing more social and personalised experiences.

101. The BBC's own research shows that children would value greater opportunities to engage with their friends. CBBC and CBeebies have had historically low levels of sign in, a prerequisite for personalisation. The launch of *My CBBC* in January 2013 has resulted in an increase in the CBBC site sign-in rate to 25% from 10% but this needs to improve further if the wider strategy of BBC Children's is to attract and retain audiences with a more bespoke user experience is to be successful.
102. BBC Children's also wants to work with external websites with social functionality. CBeebies has made greater progress in this respect as its social media offer targets parents and carers so is not subject to the same child protection and editorial policy constraints as CBBC. CBeebies Grownups *Facebook* site is currently liked by more than 62,000 users and its *Twitter* site is followed by some 20,000 users. In 2012-13, an average of 88,000 unique browsers also accessed the CBBC Grown-up website each week. The sites are important components of the CBeebies offer, where parents and carers and their children can go for more information on content but also can learn and play together. Amongst parents and carers who responded to our consultation, however, awareness and usage was low, which suggests more could be done to promote the sites.
103. CBBC has been slower to replace the message boards on its site with more current forms of social interaction due to technical and child protection issues. YouTube in particular is very popular with its target audience and CBBC content can be found on the site without any BBC moderation. BBC Children's wants to reach out to this audience and direct them, through short form content and trails, to the CBBC site. It is working with Editorial Policy and Child Protection teams to develop these plans. In doing so, it will be essential that all necessary steps are taken to minimise the risks of children accessing inappropriate content.

Action:

- 5. We support the development of plans by BBC Children's to improve its online and interactive offer to meet audience needs and expectations better. This is subject to any required approvals and subject to the plans adhering to existing syndication, editorial and other BBC guidelines and policies.**

Timing: We will assess progress of these plans in one year.

The pan-BBC Challenge: Working together with other BBC services to continue to engage children

The BBC must continue to let the audience know where to find children's content

104. In our *Delivering Quality First* conclusions, we supported the Executive's proposal to change the way children's programming is scheduled across the portfolio of BBC channels so that, after digital switchover, dedicated children's content would only be broadcast on CBeebies and CBBC. This change happened in January 2013.
105. We supported this decision on account of the fact that the number of children watching the dedicated blocks of children's programming on BBC One and BBC Two was low and had fallen significantly over recent years. Only around 7% of CBBCs target audience then watched CBBC content on BBC One and BBC Two but did not also watch the CBBC channel, while for CBeebies content the equivalent figure was 2.3% of its target audience.
106. We were clear that, following the exit from the terrestrial blocks on BBC One and BBC Two, it would be essential to ensure that children know where to find the dedicated content on the digital channels. It is also vital that licence fee payers generally including, importantly, new parents and parents-to-be continue to be aware that the BBC provides dedicated services for children.
107. As part of its usual marketing activities, the Executive is running series of campaigns on BBC One and BBC Two to raise awareness of children's content throughout 2013-14. For CBBC, the campaign will highlight new content and demonstrate the range of content on offer. For CBeebies, the focus will be on promoting the public service benefits of the offer across platforms.

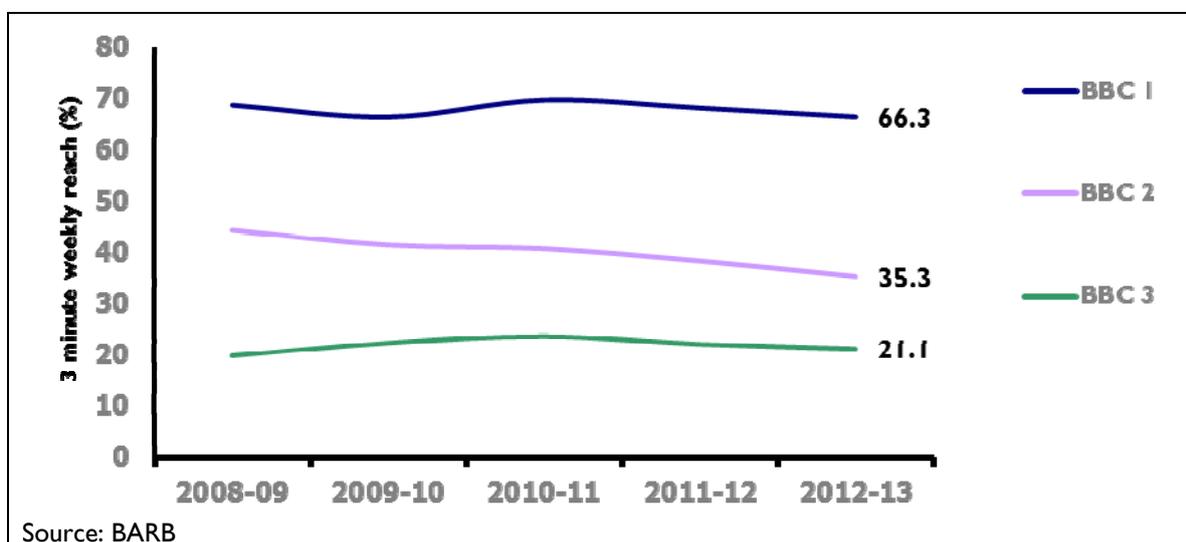
BBC Children's is working with the rest of the BBC to promote and develop its content

108. Another consequence of CBeebies and CBBC coming off BBC One and BBC Two is that other opportunities must now be found to raise awareness of their content for potential viewers. This is particularly important as, in 2012-13, 2.1 million children aged 4 to 12 year olds watched BBC One and BBC Two every week but did not watch either CBeebies or CBBC.
109. Taking advantage of such opportunities also helps the strategy of BBC Children's to attract and retain audiences in other important ways. For example, some 4.5 million 4 to 12 year olds watch TV after 7pm each week, after both channels come off air. Showing some CBBC content that would appeal to more mainstream audiences on other channels after 7pm could help extend reach and impact of high-quality programmes. The BBC's own research also suggests that older children might be more attracted to watching CBBC's older-skewing content if it were shown on other BBC channels.
110. In recent years, reversions of popular CBBC programmes such as *Horrible Histories* and *Deadly 60*, as well as the CBeebies 2012 *Christmas Pantomime*, have successfully

made the transition across to family-viewing slots on BBC One. More recently, BBC Three has aired the CBBC production *Wolfblood*. Currently these scheduling conversations take place on fairly informal basis and we feel there is scope to give fuller consideration as to how such decisions can best meet the needs of the audiences for the respective channels.

111. Looking at it from the other side of the lens, BBC One in particular has a high and stable weekly reach amongst the CBBC target audience. In 2012-13, 66% of 6-12 year olds watched the channel on average every week, significantly above the other BBC channels (figure 18). Programmes such as *Waterloo Road*, *EastEnders*, *Merlin*, *Dr Who*, and *The Voice* pull in high numbers of the CBBC target audience.

Figure 18: Weekly reach (%) for BBC One, BBC Two and BBC Three amongst children aged 6-12, 2008-09 – 2012-13



112. CBBC has added to its mix of programmes with its own versions of popular BBC One and BBC Two factual and factual entertainment shows, such as *Junior Masterchef*, *Trade Your Way to the USA* (based on a challenge from *The Apprentice*), and *Junior Bake Off*. It is also planning to offer reworked, age appropriate, versions of some of the BBC One dramas that perform well with teenagers. Properly sign-posted, such commissions should contribute to raising awareness of CBBC amongst older children who tend to primarily or exclusively watch BBC One and Two. While such strategies help deliver content cost-effectively, some stakeholders did voice concern that over-reliance on such programmes could compromise innovation.
113. BBC One does commission bespoke family content for key family viewing periods like Christmas or Easter, and such commissions tend to perform well amongst the CBBC target audience. However, opportunities for showing content that appeals to all the family on the main channels will inevitably be limited given the demands on their schedules. As an alternative, in the longer term BBC Children's is keen to develop output such as comedy that can attract a family audience as well as children.
114. Our last review identified the risk that the move of BBC Children's to the BBC North Group in Salford might have a negative impact on both the continuity of the services as well as communication with other parts of the BBC, where close links are important to serve the needs of young audiences. Two years on from the move, we have found there to have been no discernible impact on the quality of content output as a result.

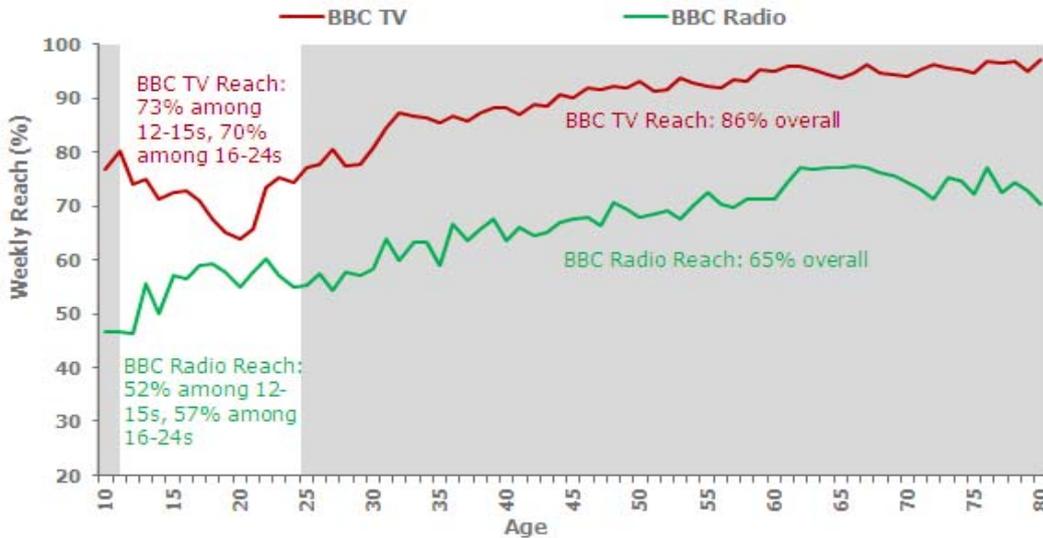
We are also encouraged by the evidence we have seen of the increased collaboration now taking place between BBC Children's and other departments.

115. BBC Children's has developed particularly strong links with BBC Learning, with the move to Salford to be part of the same BBC North group helping in this respect. As part of its commitment to support learning for the under 19s audience as well as family learning, BBC Learning has invested £3.7 million in Children's programming over the past three years and is working together with BBC Children's on a number of community outreach projects. BBC Children's is also starting to work more closely with BBC Sport on a range of content. Older boys who took part in our research commented that they would like to see more sport-related content on CBBC.
116. There are, however, areas where more effective pan-BBC communication or decision-making processes would help meet the needs of children. These include:
- greater consideration by TV, radio and online teams on how to promote and show strong Children's content, which may appeal to their audiences
 - closer collaboration with Future Media so features like sign in, personalisation and playlists can take account of children's needs
 - fuller consideration of how the small number of films that CBBC acquires together with BBC One and BBC Three could be better scheduled. These films bring in large numbers of viewers to CBBC for relatively low cost, and with smart scheduling could help attract more of the audience to originated programming

The BBC is considering how to serve young audiences better after they move on from CBBC

117. The BBC made a choice to close BBC Switch, its offering targeted at children aged 12 – 15 years old, in December 2010 and since then it has been relying on its existing services to provide content which can appeal to these audiences as part of their wider offer. Figure 19 shows that the overall reach of BBC TV and BBC Radio is lower amongst younger audiences compared with older audiences but, for TV, the reach is lowest amongst 16-24 year olds.

Figure 19: Weekly reach of BBC TV and BBC Radio by age, 2012-13



Source: BARB for TV and RAJAR for Radio, 2012-13. *Note: Radio reach based on individuals aged 10+, whereas TV is aged 4+

118. The BBC Executive continues to develop ways to serve audiences better after they move on from CBBC through mainstream TV, radio and online services.

Action:

6. We would like to see more concerted action taken by other BBC TV, radio and online services to consider children as an audience for mainstream output and to continue to seek opportunities to include relevant BBC Children’s output as part of their offer. The Trust will consider children as an audience when we are reviewing BBC television and radio services over the next few years.

Timing: Our review of BBC Television will commence this autumn and reviews of BBC Radio in following years.

Annex 1: Main findings and conclusions of the Trust's first review of BBC Children's services, published in October 2009.

The full report can be accessed here:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/bbctrust/our_work/services/television/service_reviews/children.html

Performance

CBeebies and CBBC were generally performing very well in terms of reach and quality. The BBC was delivering popular children's content which successfully appeals to a wide audience. There was however scope for improvement in a number of areas, particularly increasing the channels' appeal to older children, in cable and satellite homes, and to children from lower income households (C2DE), as well as from ethnic minority homes.

CBBC's online content was an important aspect of the BBC's strategy for children's services. At the time of the review, the website reached a large audience but usage levels were declining year on year.

Contribution to public purposes

BBC children's content made an important contribution to the BBC's public purposes but we noted a decline in audiences to programmes which made an important contribution to the BBC's citizenship and global purposes, notably *Blue Peter* and *Newsround*.

Significant changes in the marketplace meant the BBC's role as a provider of UK originated content had become even more important. We felt that the Corporation's then 'Fewer, Bigger, Better' strategy, if taken too far, could limit the range of children's output and undermine the BBC's ability to meet the needs of a diverse audience.

Particular areas of concern we identified in this respect included the increasing reliance on repeats and the diminishing number of UK-produced dramas. A lack of small commissions also risked making it more difficult for smaller independent production companies to win business, threatening their survival.

Financial planning

The evidence indicated that CBeebies and CBBC were providing good value for money and BBC Children's had made expenditure savings without adversely affecting quality. Value for money measurement could be improved however by the Executive monitoring the full investment in CBBC and CBeebies television programmes, including programmes first shown on BBC One or BBC Two.

We found that pressures to make efficiency savings meant that, while the percentage of total resources spent by the BBC on children's content would remain broadly constant, investment would fall in real terms over the five years following the review.

The efficiency targets that BBC Children's had been set were challenging and relied on making content more commercially viable. If these plans were not managed effectively, this pressure could divert attention from delivery of the BBC's public purposes.

The Executive had set out its vision and strategy for investment in children's content but had not determined what level of performance was required to deliver this vision.

