

A RIGHT TO CULTURE FOR EVERY CHILD

The right to culture for every child must be a cornerstone of our national cultural and educational policy.

We must ensure equal access for all children and young people to quality arts, cultural and creative learning opportunities.

Nearly 25 years ago the world made a promise to children. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – to which the UK is a signatory – states that all nation signatories shall “respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.”

To deliver our promise we need:

1. **Committed national and local leadership**
2. **New guidance for Ofsted**
3. **The extension of STEM to STEAM**
4. **Improved teacher training and development**
5. **High quality, industry-endorsed careers advice and guidance**

We also urge the government to:

- **Include Dance and Drama in the national curriculum as subjects in their own right (currently they are only included as elements of the PE and Sport and English Curricular)**
- **Remove the English Baccalaureate as a secondary school accountability measure. It is already included within the Progress 8 floor standard and its separate inclusion is needless bureaucracy**
- **Launch an Arts Premium, equivalent to the existing PE and Sport Premium in primary schools**
- **Renew its focus and support of Early Years, Early intervention, Family and Youth Services and provision**
- **Publically support, celebrate and endorse the value of arts and culture to the lives of children and young people**

An Arts Premium for Schools

The Government should mirror the current Premium for PE and Sport (where every school with primary age pupils gets ring-fenced funds for the promotion of PE and Sport). It should create an equivalent for the arts.

A Premium for Arts and Culture would allow schools to personalise their offer to the needs of their pupils, to the local community and to arts provision – both through extending horizons and offering access to things children already love.

Ofsted currently report on the use a school makes of the PE and Sport Premium and it is therefore a useful lever for ensuring discussion of policy and provision at Senior Management and Governor level.

The PE and Sport Premium is an existing scheme with administrative and evaluative mechanisms already in place, therefore roll-out of an arts equivalent could be relatively simple.

For maximum effect, the Premium should be extended from Primary schools to early years settings.

The Arts Premium should be funded at the same level as Sport: £150 million per year (roughly £8,000 per school with Primary age pupils).

A renewed focus on Early Years, Early Intervention and Families

Policy and provision for early years and families – both targeted to those most in need and universally offered to all – is essential to local wellbeing, community and successful social care.

The Government should consider developing training for Early Years Professionals so that they are confident and comfortable in using the arts in their practice. It should use existing structures (such as the Health Visitor network – accessed by every new parent) to signpost families to the local arts and cultural offer and to promote and support cultural learning in the home.

Early years Ofsted inspectors should also be trained to recognise and assess the development of creativity in young children as well as creative teaching

1. Committed national and local leadership

Every school to have an Arts & Culture Champion

An existing member of teaching staff in every school should be given responsibility for partnerships with local cultural organisations and artists, and reporting to governors on the quality of their school's arts and heritage provision (including within afterschool clubs). It would be preferable for every teacher to have a generic e-mail address e.g. arts@school.name.sch so that cultural organisations can easily build and sustain relationships.

Local cultural learning strategies and action plans

Addressing local need in partnership with appropriate bodies, such as schools, creative industry partners and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), a local strategy and plan would build on alliances and provision already in place, and on the work of the Arts Council Bridge organisations.

The plans would include a focus on equal access to arts and culture for all young people in an area, particularly those with low participation rates who experience multiple deprivations, and require action from arts and heritage organisations in partnership with schools.

A National Plan for cultural learning

The national plan would establish a clear framework defining the roles and responsibilities of schools, cultural organisations and their local partners in delivering high quality cultural learning to every child – as is the case in the National Plan for Music Education.

Joined-up government

Effective cross-department working between the Departments for Education; Culture, Media and Sport; Business, Innovation and Skills; and Health, to ensure continuity of experience for young people, teachers and parents.

We would like to see regular, high-profile speeches from senior politicians in support of cultural learning.

Learning trustees for publically-funded cultural organisations

Every publically-funded cultural organisation concerned with cultural learning must have at least one board member or trustee explicitly committed to cultural learning. The appointment should be monitored through the organisation's funding agreement.

2. New guidance for Ofsted

Ofsted inspections should be required to recognise and comment on the quality of arts and cultural learning in their reports.

There must be new guidance from Ofsted that no School, Academy, Youth Service or Children's Centre be judged beyond 'requires improvement' unless it offers a broad and balanced curriculum that includes the arts and culture.

3. The extension of STEM to STEAM

The 'A' of Arts subjects must be added to the STEM subjects – Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. STEAM is about making real-world, creative connections between subjects in schools. Teachers need support to develop collaborative practice across the STEAM subjects. In combination, the STEAM subjects will help to develop job-ready, creative, analytical and inventive problem-solvers.

The government must extend STEM funding, support structures and its own STEM narrative to recognise the central importance of the arts in this landscape.

4. Improved teacher training and development

Primary Initial Teacher Training add-on modules should be developed and rolled-out for all arts subjects.

All Teaching Schools, working in partnership with cultural organisations, must offer comprehensive training in the use of culture across the curriculum. A target number of Teaching Schools and early years training settings should be designated as specialist Cultural Learning Teaching Schools (building on existing pilots). These will develop new partnerships with specialist institutions in Higher Education, creative industries and will create new models of training.

5. High quality, industry-endorsed careers advice and guidance

Arts and culture are an incubator for the creative industries, which are the fastest growing sector of the economy and employ 1.68 million people.

Every young person must have the opportunity to access high quality, industry-endorsed careers advice and guidance about working in the creative and cultural industries. The education sector and careers advisors should more accurately convey the breadth of possible occupations within the creative and cultural sector, fostering a more realistic understanding of the opportunities that exist.

The benefits for young people of participating in arts and culture:

1. Learning through arts and culture improves attainment in all subjects.
2. Participation in structured arts activities increases cognitive abilities.
3. Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree.
4. The employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment.
5. Students who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer and are 20% more likely to vote as young adults.

Cultural Learning Alliance 'Key Research Findings: The Case for Cultural Learning' 2011

Cultural Learning Alliance, 2015