

Campaign for the Arts and Cultural Learning Alliance
Joint representation to the Spring Budget 2023

1 February 2023



1. Summary of recommendations

School-age children's access to the arts is at risk from unequal and declining provision and rising cost pressures, inside and outside school.

To better enable **skills and opportunity**, support **mental health and wellbeing**, and deliver on **commitments made to the public**, the Government should:

- Deliver the **Arts Premium** for secondary schools that was pledged in the 2019 Conservative manifesto and 2020 Budget. The Premium should be funded with a minimum of £90 million a year and be distributed before the end of this Parliament.
- Prioritise the development and implementation of the **National Plan for Cultural Education**, in order that every child can benefit from creative and cultural opportunities in school.

2. Background

2.1 Enabling skills and opportunity

- a) **The Government's plan for economic growth and prosperity acknowledges the significant value and potential of the UK's creative industries, and the fundamental importance of education.** In his recent speech at Bloomberg, the Chancellor noted that the creative industries employ over two million people and grew at twice the rate of the UK economy in the last decade. He identified education as one of the Government's four main priorities, or 'pillars', for unlocking economic prosperity.¹
- b) **The future success of the UK's creative industries depends on high-quality creative and cultural education in our schools.** For many children, school is the only point of access to arts activities and to the skills and knowledge that they engender. Official statistics collected between 2013 and 2018 showed that, of the children participating in theatre and drama activities in England, 58% were doing so in school only.²
- c) **Employers across the economy need more school leavers to have the skills that an arts-rich education can provide.** Ten years of surveys by the Confederation of Business and Industry have shown that a majority of employers rank broader skills including listening and presenting among their top priorities when recruiting, however a large percentage (2018: 38%) are dissatisfied with young people's skills in these areas.³ The arts, especially the performing arts, have a well-documented role in improving communication skills and confidence. A systematic review of international

¹ [Chancellor Jeremy Hunt's speech at Bloomberg](#), HM Treasury

² [Taking Part Survey 2019/20](#), DCMS (Table 7, average 'In school only' figure between 2013/14 and 2017/18 as a percentage of 'In school only', 'Out of school only' and 'Both')

³ [Education and Skills survey 2018](#), CBI

evidence in 2010 found that participating in structured arts activities led to increases in transferable skills (including communication and confidence) of between 10–17%.⁴

- d) **In state schools, the teaching of arts and creative subjects has declined significantly since the introduction of the EBacc in 2010.** Since then, enrolment in arts GCSEs has fallen by 43%.⁵ Official statistics show that, despite a 9% increase in the number of secondary school pupils between 2010 and 2021, the number of teachers in arts subjects fell by 23%, and the number of teaching hours in arts subjects fell by 21%.⁶
- e) **Concurrently, the percentage of school-age children participating in dance, drama, music and art has declined significantly.** Official statistics show that, among 11-15 year olds between 2009/10 and 2019/20, participation declined by 18% in arts and crafts, 20% in music, 23% in drama and 45% in dance.⁷
- f) **There is growing inequality of access between the richest and poorest children.** At present, young people from the wealthiest tenth of the population are three times more likely to sing in a choir or play in a band than their peers from the poorest tenth. Half of young people from the wealthiest tenth play a musical instrument, compared to just a third of those from the poorest tenth.⁸ A 2019 survey of 2,200 teachers found that “schools in areas with poorer pupils deliver markedly fewer opportunities for their students to participate in music, whether through clubs and societies or by learning to play a musical instrument”.⁹ Creative potential is everywhere, but the opportunities to discover and develop it are not.
- g) **Levelling up access to creative education and opportunities will require new and purposeful intervention by the Government.** Despite the welcome £2.3billion of extra core funding announced in the Autumn Statement, schools are still likely to need to reduce expenditure because of inflation, energy prices and the statutory requirement to increase teacher pay. In a recent report for TES, headteachers reported that creative learning may be especially vulnerable to cuts because of the higher costs of materials for these subjects and the specialist teaching staff required in many schools. Additionally there is concern about the viability of “trips and visits and cultural capital aspects”, which are especially important in filling “a gap for disadvantaged pupils, but also to broaden their horizons”.¹⁰

2.2 Supporting mental health and wellbeing

- a) **In its Mental Health and Wellbeing Plan, the Government has acknowledged that “too many people, particularly our children and young people, still do not have the right tools and support to look after their wellbeing”.**¹¹ The situation is getting worse, not better: official statistics show that the percentage of 11 to 16 year

⁴ [Understanding the impact of engagement in culture and sport](#), Culture and Sport Evidence programme, 2010, p.29

⁵ [Joint Council for Qualifications & AQA](#)

⁶ [School Workforce in England](#) statistics and [school census data](#), Department for Education

⁷ [Taking Part Survey](#), DCMS

⁸ [Beyond School](#) report, Onward

⁹ [2019 Teacher survey](#), BPI

¹⁰ [Costs crisis: 70% of teachers warn of curriculum impact](#), TES

¹¹ [Mental health and wellbeing plan: discussion paper](#), DHSC

olds with a probable mental disorder increased from 13.3% in 2017 to 20.4% in 2022.¹² In 2021, the Royal College of Psychiatrists said that “children and young people are bearing the brunt of the mental health crisis caused by the pandemic”.¹³

- b) **Mental illness damages children’s wellbeing, education and development – with cost implications for the UK Government.** In 2012, mental health disorders were estimated to result in increased costs of between £11,030 and £59,130 annually per child including direct costs to families and costs related to education, social services and youth justice.¹⁴ The IFS has projected that people who experience mental illness in childhood will lose over £300,000 each in income, on average, during their lifetime; across the whole population, this is a cost of £550 billion in lost earnings and tax revenue.¹⁵
- c) **Participation in the arts has a well-documented, positive impact on the mental health of children and young people.** Theatre, drama and group music-making have been shown to improve young people’s social skills and emotional wellbeing¹⁶. Music and learning to play an instrument has been shown to help children cope better with stress¹⁷ and anxiety¹⁸. Visual art as a therapeutic vehicle has been shown to lead to improvements in emotional and behavioural difficulties¹⁹. After participating in arts activities, 82% of people report greater wellbeing.²⁰
- d) **Better supporting mental health with creative education and opportunities will require new and purposeful intervention by the Government.** The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic have been severe, from learning loss (including deterioration of social and emotional skills) to the increased need for mental health support. In DfE-commissioned interviews from autumn 2021, many school leaders reported that increased funding and support from the Government was necessary to respond to these pressures specifically. The Recovery Premium was deemed the most useful type of support they were receiving, but insufficient to meet all the additional needs their schools faced.²¹

2.3 Delivering for the public

- a) **Parents, pupils and teachers all support greater access to extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities for young people.** Recent polling shows that - whilst the majority recognise that children and young people need extra support with formal,

¹² [Mental health of children and young people in England](#), NHS Digital

¹³ [Country in the grip of a mental health crisis with children worst affected, new analysis finds](#), Royal College of Psychiatrists

¹⁴ Murphy M, Fonagy P. Mental Health Problems in Children and Young People. Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer; (2012). p. 1–13.

¹⁵ [Mental illness costs UK £550bn in lost earnings](#), The Times, 2015

¹⁶ Schellenberg E. G., Corrigan K. A., Dys S. P., Malti T. 2015. “Group Music Training and Children's Prosocial Skills.” *PLOS ONE* 10(10): e0141449. Accessed 5 May 2017 <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0141449>

Hughes, J. & Wilson, K. 2004. “Playing a part: the impact of youth theatre on young people's personal and social development.” *Research In Drama Education: The Journal Of Applied Theatre And Performance* Vol. 9 (1)

¹⁷ Roden, I., Zepf, F. D., Kreutz, G., Grube, D., Bongard, S. 2016. “Effects of music and natural science training on aggressive behavior” *Learning and Instruction*, 45, 85-92

¹⁸ Hallam, S. 2015 *The Power of Music*. London: Music Education Council: 99

¹⁹ Cortina, Melissa A and Mina Fazel. 2015 “*The Art Room: An evaluation of a targeted school-based group intervention for students with emotional and behavioural difficulties*” *The Arts in Psychotherapy* 42: 35-40

²⁰ Leadbetter & O'Connor, 2013

²¹ [School Recovery Strategies: Year 2 findings](#), Department for Education

academic catch up (58% of teachers, 63% of parents and 68% of children and young people agreed with this proposition) - even larger proportions think there is a need for increased access to extracurricular activities and wider learning experiences (88% of teachers, 78% of parents and 80% of children and young people).²²

- b) **There is overwhelming public support for ensuring children and young people have access to the arts and culture.** A 2020 poll by YouGov for Campaign for the Arts found that 83% of British adults, and 80% of 2019 Conservative voters, think it is important that children in the UK have access to arts and culture.
- c) **The delivery of the Arts Premium was promised at the last election.** The 2019 Conservative manifesto said: “[we] want young people to learn creative skills and widen their horizons, so we will offer an ‘arts premium’ to secondary schools to fund enriching activities for all pupils.”²³

3. Key recommendations

3.1 Deliver the Arts Premium that the Government pledged

As Chancellor, Rishi Sunak announced £90 million a year of funding for the Arts Premium – an average of £25,000 per secondary school. The 2020 Budget Report said:

“The funding will help schools to provide high quality arts programmes and extracurricular activities for pupils, including those delivered in partnership with arts organisations, as well as supporting teachers to deliver engaging and creative lessons in the arts.”

Given the context outlined in Section 2 above, this funding is now even more essential:

- to harness the creative potential of children and young people in every part of the country, laying the foundations for future prosperity;
- to redress ongoing declines in the quality, range and accessibility of arts provision in state schools;
- to support pupils’ more acute mental health needs, and assist with the recovery and development of social and emotional skills in the aftermath of the pandemic;
- to respond to the popular demand for children and young people to have access to the arts, and to more extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities.

In addition to the benefits for pupils, teachers and parents, the Arts Premium would benefit potential partners within the cultural sector at a time when they are in greater need of support. Most artists and arts organisations are still recovering their incomes following the pandemic, and official statistics show that arts attendance in England has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.²⁴

²² [Enriching Education Recovery](#), Centre for Education and Youth, 2021

²³ [Conservative Party Manifesto](#), 2019

²⁴ [Arts attendance in England: Oct 2020 – Sep 2022](#), Campaign for the Arts, 2023

Ring-fenced Arts Premium funding should be delivered as soon as possible, and certainly before the end of this Parliament, so it can begin to be used:

- to enable high-quality, sustained provision of arts programmes and activities in schools;
- to improve access to cultural experiences and capital;
- to allow schools to forge strategic partnerships with local artists and cultural organisations;
- to train and develop arts leaders at all levels within schools, and build teachers' understanding of pedagogy;
- to strengthen links between schools, cultural providers, Arts Council Bridge Organisations, Music Hubs and mental health and wellbeing services.

The Arts Premium should be structured to actively support schools to meet the requirements of the new Ofsted Framework, using the language of Intent, Implementation and Impact; broad and balanced curriculum; and the delivery of Cultural Capital.

It should not replace existing arts subject budgets, be added into a school's generalised teaching and learning budget, or be used to outsource provision so that arts and cultural partners deliver arts activity as 'entertainment' (rather, it should support 'enrichment').

We suggest that the Arts Premium could be integrated into existing targets, accountability measures and planning. It could be distributed and inspected in the same way as the existing PE and Sport Premium for primary schools.

The proven success of the PE and Sport Premium for primary schools indicates the potential for the Arts Premium to have similarly transformational impacts. A 2019 research report for the DfE found that primary schools were “overwhelmingly positive about the [PE and Sport] Premium and the effects they think it is having in their school”. Almost 9 in 10 respondents felt that the quality of teaching of PE lessons had increased, the confidence, knowledge and/or skills of all staff in teaching PE had increased, and the profile of PE/Sport in supporting whole school improvement had increased.²⁵

3.2 Develop and implement the National Plan for Cultural Education

There are many different initiatives, organisations and systems supporting cultural education in the UK. Learning outcomes would be considerably improved by enabling these disparate elements to work better together, and by focussing them towards clearer strategic objectives.

We warmly welcomed the announcement of a Cultural Education Plan in the 2022 Schools White Paper. It offers a major opportunity to create that vision of a more joined-up and strategically-directed offering.

²⁵ [Primary PE and Sport Premium Survey](#), Department for Education, 2019

However, we are concerned that the plan may be running behind the delivery timeline laid out in the summer of 2022. Given its importance to improve children and young people's access to high quality cultural learning – including in primary schools, which are not currently expected to benefit from the introduction of an Arts Premium – it is vital that the Department for Education and Department for Culture, Media and Sport prioritise its development and implementation.

We suggest that the Cultural Education Plan could emphasise the potential of better collaborative working and partnership building, as well as more long-termism, reaching beyond short-term funding cycles.

4. About us

About the Campaign for the Arts

The Campaign for the Arts is the UK's grassroots alliance for the arts, with over 250,000 supporters nationwide. We champion, defend and expand access to the arts and culture, for and with the public.

www.campaignforthearts.org

About the Cultural Learning Alliance

The Cultural Learning Alliance champions a right to arts and culture for every child. We do this through policy analysis and evidence gathering; dissemination of advocacy materials, including briefing papers, evidence and statistics; lobbying and advocacy; building strategic relationships across arts, culture, education and policy; and supporting our members.

www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk