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# Cultural Education, a guide for Governors

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Providing a high quality  
cultural education in schools



**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**



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“Studying cultural education subjects, such as art and design, dance, drama and music, sparks creativity across the curriculum, encouraging young people to be inquisitive, disciplined and determined. Wherever children start in life, a high quality cultural education in every school should be a right, not a privilege.

Alongside literacy and numeracy, another skill needed in our workforce today is creativity. Cultural education subjects help young people to unlock their innate creativity, enabling them to become more rounded and confident human beings.

All of our children deserve a rich cultural education, but not all of them are getting it. The Arts Council has launched the Cultural Education Challenge in response to this to encourage educational settings, arts organisations and other partners to work together in giving our children and young people the best start we can.

This guide has been developed in partnership with Arts Council England, Music Mark and the National Governors Association as a resource to support you in your role as governor and critical friend.”

Darren Henley OBE  
Chief Executive, Arts Council England

# Why do governors need to be thinking about cultural education?



Governing boards have an important responsibility to ensure that their school offers pupils a wide and varied curriculum, and creative teaching and learning is a core component of this. Engaging with the arts is a particularly powerful way to experience creative teaching and learning practices. These in turn give children and young people the skills needed to enrich their own lives and secure the future success of the UK's creative industries.

Many of our museums and galleries are envied around the world along with our visual arts, music, theatre, film, dance and fashion. It's not just the artists, designers, actors, writers, musicians, choreographers that make our cultural life so vibrant, it's everyone in supporting roles too that keep the creative industries growing and innovating at a world-class rate.

The UK's creative industries are now worth £84.1 billion per year to the UK economy. It employs 1.8 million people and the sector is growing at a faster rate than any other industry sector. (DCMS [Creative Industries Economic Estimates – January 2016](#)).

So what might the job market look like in 2030? There are suggestions that the creative industries will need a further 1 million workers. (Nesta [The Creative Economy and the Future of Employment – April 2015](#)). A survey conducted by IBM of 1,500 CEOs from 60 countries and 33 industries identifies creativity as the "most crucial factor for future success." (IBM Survey 2010). Business leaders want people who are: flexible, motivated, creative, individual, problem solvers.

Governors in maintained schools need to think about cultural education as it's a statutory requirement. Maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum, which requires Art & Design and Music to be taught up to age 14 (KS3). There are also minimum requirements for Drama to be delivered within the English curriculum, and Dance within PE. Although academies are not subject to the National Curriculum, they must teach a broad and balanced curriculum as specified in their funding agreement, which by definition will include arts subjects. Furthermore, Ofsted inspectors will consider

whether the governing board ensures the curriculum is broad and balanced; the grade descriptors for 'outstanding' and 'good' refer specifically to cultural development.

## Questions for governors to ask to support your role as governor and critical friend to your school

- Does the school offer a broad and balanced curriculum that develops creativity through cultural education?
- Is the school meeting its statutory curriculum requirements?
- Do we regularly receive information about the range and impact of cultural activities on pupils' learning, for example as part of the headteacher's report?
- What data is there in the school about pupil engagement with cultural education? What does it indicate about which pupils are most involved? What are the trends over time in this? If certain groups of pupils aren't engaging with cultural education, do we know why? What are we doing to improve this?
- Does the school work with other schools to share best practice and pool resource?
- How does the school involve parents in their children's cultural education?
- Does the school have governors who work in the creative industries?

## Cultural education includes:

Arts, poetry, music, heritage, film, drama, digital arts, design, dance, craft, theatre and more.

## Examples of creative industries:

Architecture, fashion, film, publishing, music, theatre, gaming, radio, advertising and marketing, photography, art, galleries and museums.

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# Cultural Education

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For all of us, our lives are enriched through the arts, our identity developed, our character enhanced, our understanding of life broadened.

The arts matter – for our creativity as individuals and as a society, for our health and wellbeing and for the future of our children. Through art and culture, we come to understand and articulate ourselves; the arts illuminate our inner lives, enrich our emotional world, teach us compassion and engage us in a dialogue about values.

That in itself is sufficient argument for us to ensure that every child engages with cultural education.

Cultural activity can enhance aspiration, ambition, discipline and confidence which can have a positive effect on attainment. It can encourage parental engagement with children and young people's learning, raise the expectations of teachers, parents and young people, open up career pathways to the creative industries and has a profound effect on the ethos of a school.

There is great disparity among children and young people with access to cultural activities. We must not leave to chance whether children have their lives touched by cultural education – it is too important for us to accept that these chances depend on geography, family background or special educational need.

Educational attainment and socio-economic status seem to be the key drivers for predicting parental encouragement of arts engagement (Consilium 2014). The main predictor of young people's engagement in cultural activity at primary school age are the educational qualifications attained by their parents. The children of parents with no qualifications are least likely to participate. 70 per cent of parents with no qualifications spend less than three hours a week on cultural activities. 42 per cent spend no time on cultural activities. 80 per cent of children whose parents have degrees spend more than three hours per week on cultural activities. 27 per cent spend more than ten hours.

(Parents' views on creative and cultural education report, Ipsos MORI, 2009).

All of our children and young people deserve all the chances we can give them in life, irrespective of where they begin their journey.

To be of value these cultural education experiences must be authentic, meaningful to the child or young person and of high quality, essentially about the art. They must

be embedded in the ongoing learning of children. They must be sustained over time, rather than one-off passing experiences. Registering for [Artsmark](#) and contacting your local Bridge organisation provides a supported way to establish the development of a great cultural offer. You can review the quality of your cultural learning offer using [Seven Quality Principles](#) which have been developed to raise the standard of work being produced by, with and for children and young people.

There are many sources of cultural engagement for children and young people through the education programmes of local theatres, galleries, orchestras, museums, libraries and community arts organisations. **But it is the school that is best placed to pursue the ambition that every single child and young person has that engagement.** This doesn't have to be done by the school alone – in fact quite the reverse...

## Questions for governors to ask to support your role as governor and critical friend to your school

- Are there ways the school can further integrate arts and STEM subjects to support interdisciplinary learning?
- Does the school offer a range of arts related extra-curricular activities?
- Do all pupils have the opportunity to go on cultural school visits, e.g. visiting an art gallery or watching a play?
- Is the school's pupil premium being used to support the cultural education of eligible children?
- Is the curriculum relevant and accessible to pupils, including those with special educational needs (SEN), or from Black and minority ethnic communities or different socio-economic groups?
- Does the school provide on-going cultural opportunities rather than one-off activities?

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# Cultural Education Challenge

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The Cultural Education Challenge is the Arts Council's call for the arts, culture and education sectors to work together in offering a consistent, and high quality, arts and cultural education for all children and young people.

Through the Cultural Education Challenge the Arts Council wants to make sure that more children and young people can create, compose, and perform; visit, experience and participate in extraordinary work, and be able to know more, understand more, and review the experiences they've had.

The most powerful coalition is when schools, local arts organisations, local authorities, Music Education Hubs, Bridge organisations work together to turn the ambition into a reality. This is the concept underlying the local Cultural Education Partnerships (CEPs) that are developing across the country.

See Bridge organisations page 6.

## Questions for governors to ask to support your role as governor and critical friend to your school

- Has the school registered or does it take part in Artsmark?
- Does the school deliver Arts Award?
- Does the school have links to its local Music Education Hub and/or Cultural Education Partnership?
- Does the school give pupils opportunities to engage with practitioners in the creative industries (eg musicians and artists-in-residence)?
- Does the school have someone able to give advice on career pathways into the creative industries? (Resource: [Creative Choices](#))
- Does the school actively engage with local arts organisations when seeking to recruit new governors?

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# Cultural Education through partnerships

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Schools should be key partners in delivering the Cultural Education Challenge and there are rich resources to draw on to support schools in both their curriculum and extra-curricular provision of cultural education.

- **Artsmark** celebrates schools that champion the arts. It has recently been redesigned with schools, it fits with recent educational developments and schools' Improvement Plans.
- **Arts Award** offers a range of qualifications for young people up to the age of 25 to support their development as artists and arts leaders. It connects them with the arts world through challenges in an art form – from fashion to film-making, pottery to poetry.
- **Music Education Hubs** bring together music organisations in each local area to ensure that every child and young person has the experience of music-making both in school and out, and has opportunities to follow pathways to extended music making, including those into the music industry.
- **In Harmony's** mission is to transform the lives of children in deprived communities through ensemble music-making. It focuses on areas of deprivation and low engagement with a demand-led, committed whole school approach. Working with Music education hubs, professional musicians, ensembles and orchestras to create high profile performance opportunities, continuity and progression for children and access to instruments.
- **Creative Writing in Schools** created to enable children from places with socio-economic barriers to the arts and with least arts engagement, to enjoy, learn and be inspired by art and culture. Professional writers will be placed in schools to deliver workshops and residences to children at the transition between primary and secondary school (ages 8-14).
- Many art galleries, theatres, dance companies, museums and libraries and other **arts organisations are funded by the Arts Council** and, as part of that funding, have agreed to create programmes of cultural education for children and young people in their area.
- Across the country is a network of ten **Bridge organisations**, established with the specific task of connecting the cultural and education sectors to ensure that schools and their children/young people can benefit from a visible and accessible programme of cultural education.
- In **Cultural Education Partnerships** the Bridge organisations work with schools, the local authority, voluntary and community organisations, Higher education and Music Education Hubs and funders to improve the alignment of cultural education for children and young people.
- Founded by the Department of Education in response to the new primary and secondary curriculum, the **Expert Subject Advisory Groups (ESAG)**, sponsored by Arts Council England, is a sector-led initiative that provides concrete guidance and practical support to all schools and teachers. Access the latest **ESAG resources to support the new National Curriculum**.

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# Funding sources for schools



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Find out more about funding you can apply for and access to fundraising training to support your schools' cultural education provision:

- [ERASMUS+](#)
- [Paul Hamlyn Foundation](#)
- [Clare Duffield](#)
- [Grants for the Arts](#)

If considering a funding application we advise you to contact each organisation to understand eligibility requirements and which programmes are most suited to your requirements.

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## Further reading

- [\*Skills Audit and Matrix\*, NGA](#)
- [\*Achieving Great Art and Culture for Everyone\*](#)
- [\*Wellcome Trust/NGA Framework for Governance\*](#)
- [\*Art for Arts sake?\* OECD](#)
- [\*Enriching Britain: Culture, Creativity and Growth\* Warwick Commission, 2015](#)
- [\*CIF report\*](#)
- [\*Cultural Education in England \(Henley Review\)\*](#)
- [\*ImagineNation: The Case for Cultural Learning, Cultural Learning Alliance\*](#)

### **The National Governors' Association**

The National Governors' Association (NGA) is an independent charity representing and supporting governors, trustees and clerks in maintained schools and academies in England. The NGA's goal is to improve the well-being of children and young people by increasing the effectiveness of governing boards and promoting high standards. It does this by providing information, advice, guidance, research and training. It also works closely with, and lobbies, UK government and educational bodies, and is the leading campaigning national membership organisation for school governors and trustees.

[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)



Partners:

[www.musicmark.org.uk](http://www.musicmark.org.uk)

[www.nga.org.uk](http://www.nga.org.uk)

[www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)



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