

DRAMA, THEATRE AND YOUNG PEOPLE - A MANIFESTO

We are calling for every child and young person to have an entitlement to drama and theatre throughout their education.

Making drama and theatre is an essential part of being human. Participating helps us to express what we care about, and why; reminding us of who we are and what we can be. Drama is a source for cultural capital, identity and heritage; it inspires us to take risks, think critically and builds social cohesion through collaboration. It can change and shape our lives through developing creativity, cognition, empathy and resilience.

The value of learning drama is educational, social, moral and economic, but it is more than the sum of these parts. Children and young people thrive in schools where drama is accessible to all through the curriculum. When they are taught by trained, confident specialist teachers who are recognised and supported, children and young people's creative potential is developed, and their wellbeing strengthened.

We are calling for:

- High quality drama teaching to be made a curriculum entitlement for every child and young person
- High quality theatre experiences to be made a cultural entitlement for every child and young person
- Young people to be supported to enter the theatre workforce
- A world class education workforce and infrastructure in drama and theatre education

High quality drama teaching and theatre experiences to be made a curriculum and cultural entitlement for every child and young person

How will the curriculum entitlement be secured?

Provision of high quality drama teaching and learning in all schools requires:

- Drama to be a subject in the National Curriculum
- Subject specialist teaching, relevant resources and appropriate drama and theatre teaching spaces and time
- A drama curriculum that is representative of the diversity of the UK
- Ofsted to ensure that inspectors have specialist knowledge of drama education
- Commitment from the Department for Education to act on and disseminate the research that demonstrates the impact of drama and theatre pedagogy on children and young people

How will the cultural entitlement be secured?

Provision of high-quality youth theatre and professional theatre requires:

- Every young person to experience a wide range of high-quality live theatre every year
- Coherent professional support structures for theatre specialists and drama practitioners who work in Children and Young People's theatre
- Support for specialist young people's theatre artists, companies and venues

- Funded training for theatre practitioners to work alongside teachers in classrooms or youth theatre settings
- Investment in stronger and more coherent links between formal education and youth theatres and professional theatres

Young people should be supported to enter the theatre workforce

How will progression opportunities and pathways be secured and developed?

- Young people, parents, careers advisors and schools develop a wider understanding of the economic importance of the creative industries and the range of employment and volunteering opportunities it offers
- The Careers and Enterprise Company to work with drama subject associations and the Theatre sector to support schools to work towards the eight Gatsby Benchmarks
- Regular opportunities within schools, colleges and youth theatres for young people to produce, direct, write and stage theatre
- Create, develop and maintain spaces and places where young people can visit and make theatre
- More work experience and schemes that engage directly with theatre professionals
- Resources to facilitate collaboration between schools and colleges, cultural organisations, local clubs, youth theatres and drama groups, linking with Local Cultural Education Partnerships where they exist
- Support for young people to develop as cultural entrepreneurs
- Ensure drama training is accessible to young people of all social and cultural backgrounds and abilities

A world class education workforce and infrastructure in drama and theatre education.

How do we secure a world class workforce and infrastructure?

- Offer Drama PGCE (Postgraduate Certificate in Education) tax free bursaries in line with those currently offered for other subjects
- Provision of high quality sustainable courses of Initial Teacher Training Education (ITE) and Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) for drama specialists
- ITE and CPDL training in drama-based teaching methods for primary teachers as part of the Early Career Framework
- A coherent policy of CPDL for all drama specialist teachers, theatre practitioners and learning support teachers that is designed to develop both theoretical practice and technical skills
- Ensure sustainability of high quality drama and theatre degree level qualifications
- Establish a common code of good practice and safeguarding to cover partnerships between formal education providers and theatre artists or companies
- Improve signposting of careers in young people's drama and theatre
- Strengthen mentoring and support networks for new entrants to the drama and theatre workforce
- Training for building-based theatre employees, including arts educators and front of house staff, in how to work with young people and with teachers

- Agreed pay scales for accredited arts educators following the model of Arts Council Wales
- Cultural organisations to ensure the effectiveness of the voluntary workforce and to provide appropriate training and support to practitioners, theatre workforce and volunteers

Definitions

Drama and Theatre education: creative education that provides opportunities for students to engage in, about and through drama as a learning medium, develop a range of theatrical skills and apply them to create performances. Students work collaboratively to generate, develop and communicate ideas, and develop as creative, effective, independent and reflective citizens who are able to make informed choices in process and performance.

Children and young people: This document uses the term 'children and young people' and 'young people' to mean individuals from 0-25 years of age.

Live Theatre: attending performance work in person as opposed to via digital media and streaming services.

Theatre: theatre is performative in nature. Alongside traditional stage productions it includes theatre at festivals, site-specific activities, as well as live and recorded digital transmission.

Drama: drama involves creating, performing and evaluating. It is a practical art form in which ideas and meaning are explored by the participant and communicated to an audience through choices of form, style and convention (DfE GCSE specification definition). It communicates through the language and conventions of theatre.

Gatsby Benchmarks: a framework of 8 guidelines that define the best careers provision in schools and colleges. The Government's careers strategy sets out that every school and academy providing secondary education should use the Gatsby Benchmarks to develop and improve their careers provision.