



Responding, Supporting and Leading

## The Proposed Cultural Education Plan

**First Proposed in the Government White Paper: Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child March 28 2022**

### **ND Executive Response to DfE on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

A Summary of Executive Responses

After the two presentations, one by the DfE and one by Zeena Rasheed (as recorded in the power point), Executive shared their responses to the following questions, which were posed by the Government:

**1. What are the key outcomes which every child should achieve through their cultural education? In ten years, what difference should this plan have made?**

*National Drama Believes!*

Every child in ten years will ideally have excellent access to Drama, with equity to Art and Music and PE, from aged 4 to 14, in state and private schools. Drama will have become a foundation subject, with training ongoing to deliver Dance in all schools with qualified teachers (not instructors) in 15 years. Training for these subject teachers is more widely available. Class and social barriers to teaching Drama – like bursaries and golden handshakes – will have been effectively addressed so the system is fair. State schools will be monitored so we all know from a central list which schools deliver Drama, and which still do not. Ofsted now only award Excellent for curriculum teaching and learning where Drama is taught with equity, and Artsmark Silver and Gold should only be available to those schools where every child has a lesson of Drama a week (or with equity to Arts and Music) in KS3. In ten years, every child can access a progressive exciting curriculum in these subjects and be properly informed as to GCSE Options at Year 9.

Every child will have access to live theatre trips, appropriate equipment, and spaces, and in exam classes, theatre companies and practitioner expertise.

Children should access a safe space where they can work as artists and make progress with expert professionals. In ten years, the grade boundaries in Drama are more in line with core, rather than needing 65% for a 5. State schools will have their Arts opportunities in school and as extra-curricular modelled on the best provision in private schools. All children will have opportunities to take part in after school arts and cultural activities, and teachers and support staff will be rewarded – financially like cadets, or toil, in more professional ways (so the hours count towards Masters or Advanced post graduate professional qualifications for example). In disadvantaged areas, this will include adult education and funded family activities.

There will be funded opportunities for post-grad Masters and PhDs researching Drama and its impact over time in education, exploring what excellence looks like in a range of areas, and other arts activities.

In ten years, there are more socially prescribed arts projects to support better health and well-being.

**2. Cultural education is delivered through partnerships and ecology of people and organisations. Can you tell us where and how this is working well?**

*National Drama Believes!*

We think this is patchy nationally. The National's Speak Up work was excellent but is not sustainable as a national roll-out. My school is working towards this, but we are unusual. Our vice chair works with Lung Theatre and we have over time talked to Splendid, Slung Low, ETO, Theatre Centre, Paper Birds the National and others, and are aware of how challenging it is for them to offer their excellent transformational community and educational work supported by ACE, even if they are successful in becoming a portfolio company.

We would hope that their models, in ten years, have become a gold standard of evidence based work, so companies have to do less overwhelming admin and can get on with working on projects with more people, without losing quality.

**3. How can we collectively understand and capture the impact that we are having on the lives of children and young people?**

*National Drama Believes!*

We would hope for ACE supported, well designed stakeholder research, including students, local councils, governing bodies, school leadership teams, wider staff, support staff, families and arts teachers.

We would expect that a brilliant cultural education plan most importantly would ensure that all KS2 and KS3 children and young people especially in State Schools can access Drama in an equitable curriculum. The Ebacc has changed to include the Arts.

The numbers of people accessing GCSE and KS4 and KS5 qualifications would be steadily increasing, in Drama and the arts, and the subjects would hopefully be better understood, valued and seen as important in the curriculum, by leaders and governors. T levels include the Arts and BTECs and alternative provision would be more inclusive.

Government and privately - funded independent research would explore if an arts – rich education improves and potentially transforms lives, and share findings and recommendations which are actually implemented in a timely way. Profitable businesses and regional and international companies would be better at funding less-well known, higher risk, more community-based arts projects than current traditional sponsorship models, due to ACE strategies and support.

There will be national Public information short films, widely shared on multiple platforms, made by professionals, championing the way in which the arts has positively impacted people, places, children, young people and educational landscapes.

### **Questions for the Cultural Education Plan Team from National Drama.**

- How many primary state schools (inc in academy chains) teach Drama at all?
- How many have trained Drama staff, informed by at least degree level education?
- How many secondary state schools (including multi-academy chains) teach Drama at all at KS3?
- How many have trained Drama staff, informed by at least degree level education?
- Our view was, from asking government officials and our MPs and the CLA, that this information is not and has never been collected by the State Exec. Why is this? My view is that this information would help identify areas of good practice and schools where no Drama at all is available as a specialist collaborative art form. Children study it as literature, at desk, in English, without specialists or space or CPD or resource.
- What CPD is necessary for school leaders to understand this plan?
- We are not clear what significant curriculum reforms have happened that have strengthened access to expert taught Drama lessons between the ages of 4 - 14 years old. Is the CEP view that children will access this in clubs run by volunteers (usually teachers) they can attend if they want to?

- Will there be a fund for the provision of extra-curricular? Our members routinely volunteer with contact after school and at weekends for between 30 and 70 hours a year.
- What percentage of a secondary school population access after-school activities that could be deemed 'cultural' - art, music, film-making, drama, dance - when there are teachers who offer this unpaid provision? What about everyone else?
- Does the CEP consider the arts to be completely transferable and indistinct, or separate specialist areas? I am not clear why the terms Drama, Dance, Music and Visual Arts are so rarely used - instead a cover-all of arts and heritage.
- What is the connection between the CEP and this excellent piece of work - [Arts in Schools Summary – Cultural Learning Alliance?](#)
- How are arts industry partners involved? If a child accesses National Youth Theatre, for example, is that seen as a suitable and appropriate alternative to Drama teaching in schools for all, or is that additional enriching opportunity that a tiny percentage will enjoy?
- How are subject associations and unions to be involved?
- Does the CEP team acknowledge that the curriculum has narrowed, and that the omission of Drama as a NC subject, the Ebacc, the comments from national and educational leaders about facilitating subjects and low-value degrees (where the graduate has not repaid their loan after five years - so not Oxbridge, or more vocational job-related degrees like Social Work/Medicine/Electrical Engineering), but probably theatre arts or music) the vanishing Arts Premium promised after Covid, and a lack of teaching courses has been catastrophic for cultural education?
- How will students from disadvantaged backgrounds, with social, political, economic and cultural obstacles, be supported and included in this plan?
- Is it a vision, a hope, or a road map?
- Can Headteachers and governors ignore it? Will it be a key inspection document?

National Drama Executive