



Report on the Implementation of the Cultural Strategy (2015-2021) - Arts Education and Learning

Dublin City Council will:

1. Perform an audit on existing strategic educational partnerships in Dublin City Council.
2. Establish a structure and guiding principles for these strategic partnerships in all areas of arts in education.

An Arts Education and Learning Policy was approved by the SPC and adopted by Dublin City Council in December 2016. Arts Education and Learning can occur in formal education settings, such as schools, and in informal education settings like youth clubs, galleries, parks, libraries, community centres etc. In these setting artists, teachers and young people learn through and with the Arts. This short report focuses on children although the arts are part of the lifelong learning experience.

Our city libraries are a central hub of Arts Education and Learning. The Hugh Lane is extensively involved in schools, the Arts Office authored the Arts in Education and Learning Policy and is active in schools and youth clubs, community development, social Inclusion all fund Arts Education and Learning. Children are playing and learning in parks and our city streets and play areas. Areas Office support local schools in a variety of ways. Our city Events include programming for children and families.

What is the strategic position of the SPC that will implement all policies pertaining to Arts Education and Learning in a 'joined up' way? Making maximum use of resources and guaranteeing access to quality opportunities for children?

What is the role of the Local Authority in Arts Education and Learning? How will it collaborate with other agencies?

What are the national priorities and the local priorities? Where can resources be targeted to produce the greatest impact?

Dublin City Council has no statutory role in formal education of course (but is closely connected to schools across the city) but has a statutory responsibility in the arts under the Arts Act and Local Government Act.

A major change in public support for the role of Arts in Education and Learning has been commented upon by all involved in this area of work in recent years and one national manifestation of this has been one the key pillars of the Government initiative called Creative Ireland.

Creative Ireland is an all Ireland interdepartmental initiative of the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht placing creativity at the centre of national policy. Its policy documents set out its pillars as:

Children and Youth

Creative Communities

Creative Industries

Global Reputation

Cultural Infrastructure.

The Creative Ireland Committee under the Creative Communities Pillar in Dublin City Council is chaired by Libraries and includes all culture and creative industry related sections of the Council.

The Children and Youth Pillar of Creative Ireland states:

‘Enabling the Creative Potential of Every Child

Devising an integrated implementation plan for arts in education is a priority for Creative Ireland. The plan – Creative Children – will be launched later this year.

Curriculum decision-making contributes to every child’s learning and development outcomes in terms of identity, connection with community, wellbeing, and confidence as learners and effectiveness as communicators. Children flourish through creative activities and experimenting with forms of expression using a range of media.

Over the course of the programme the Charter for Arts in Education will be embraced, fast-tracked, and resourced as a core element of the *Creative Ireland* agenda. The Charter sets out a number of clear principles and guidelines including that arts education:

- **Enables the child to explore alternative ways of communicating**
- **Encourages ideas that are personal and inventive**
- **Makes a vital contribution to the development of a range of intelligences**
- **Is life enhancing and is invaluable in stimulating creative thinking and in promoting capability and adaptability**
- **Emphasis’s the creative process and ensures that the child’s work is personal and has quality**
- **Ensures artistic expressions are valued, self-esteem is enhanced, spontaneity and risk-taking are encouraged, and difference is celebrated.’**

Creative Ireland (just 10 months old) is still forming its programme and approach nationally and the various workshops in Arts Education and Learning it has been hosting has demonstrated the different types of capacity that are required including professional development for teachers, training for artists, artists in residence in schools etc. What has emerged is that the idea of Arts Education and Learning is interpreted differently by different stakeholders whether in the Arts (artists, arts organisations, cultural institutions) education (early years, primary, secondary, 3rd Level).

As part of the Creative Ireland Programme, Creative Ireland has formed partnerships with the Department of Education and Science and in the City Of Dublin Education and Training Board (CDETb) equally. The Arts Council will roll out their Arts Rich Schools Programme in 2018.

It is notable that it is not just the arts or culture that Creative Ireland is promoting but the core activity of creativity as a function of wellness or well being. Creativity of course is part of all aspects of human life and in educational terms is as present in science and technology as it would be in the Arts. Simply put there are different types of creativity according to the context and often the problem to be solved. Parents have been communicating to Creative Ireland that Arts in Education both formal and informal will introduce their children to another form of thinking 'artistic thinking' and that would contribute greatly to their education and future employability. This advocacy for the teaching of artistic creativity has been ongoing particularly in the U.S. for some years as the STEM (Science Technology Electronics and Math) approach versus the STEAM (Science Technology Electronics, Arts, and Math) approach. Turning STEM into STEAM is gaining support from the public according to Creative Ireland and that creativity is central to STEAM Education.

With such a diversity of Arts Education and Learning practice in formal, informal and outdoor settings in Dublin City Council and a growing momentum to support this work with increased resources, I wish to recommend to the SPC that all involved in the area of Arts Education and Learning in Dublin City Council convene to listen, discuss and agree on key actions to support the enormous diversity of their work and the connections between local, national and international agencies. This convention is to occur in the first quarter of 2018.

**Ray Yeates,
City Arts Officer.**