CORA Cork Open Research Archive
Cartlann Taighde Oscailte Chorcaí

Title	The arts in and out of school: Educational policy, provision and practice in Ireland today
Authors	Dowling Long, Siobhán
Publication date	2015
Original Citation	Dowling Long, S. (2015) 'The arts in and out of school: Educational policy, provision and practice in Ireland today', International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 8(2), pp.267-286. Available at: https://www.iejee.com/index.php/IEJEE/article/view/112 (Accessed: 19 September 2023)
Type of publication	Article (peer-reviewed)
Link to publisher's version	https://www.iejee.com/index.php/IEJEE/article/view/112
Rights	© 2015, the Author. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-No-Derivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) license. - https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/
Download date	2026-11-15 13:33:44
Item downloaded from	https://hdl.handle.net/10468/14994

UCC
University College Cork, Ireland
Coláiste na hOllscoile Corcaigh

International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 2015, 8(2), 267-286.

The Arts In and Out of School: Educational Policy, Provision and Practice in Ireland Today

Siobhán Dowling LONG *
University College Cork, Ireland.

Abstract

The debate relating to the place and value of the arts in Irish Education is one that has dominated educational policy, provision, and practice down through the history of Irish educational policy from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Indeed, interest in this topic has been re-ignited with the recent publication of two educational policy documents, one based on the arts-in-education in and out of school *The Arts in Education Charter* (2013), and the other on the development of children and young people's literacy and numeracy *Literacy and Numeracy For Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People* 2011––2020 (2011). Despite the Irish Government's commitments to promote the arts in and out of school, this paper draws attention to the lack of any real investment in the *Arts in Education Charter* by the Irish Government, and the neglect of policymakers to include references to national and international educational research on the value of the arts for enhancing children's life-long learning. Noting the pressures on primary teachers to allocate more time to the *Literacy and Numeracy Strategy*, it highlights the potential threat of this initiative to the primary school arts education programme. Finally, it draws attention to the notable absence of an arts education programme for the majority of senior post-primary pupils who leave school without any in-depth knowledge and appreciation of their rich cultural heritage. This is an area of grave concern, and one that has received very little, if any, attention to date.

Keywords: Arts in education charter, The national strategy to improve literacy and numeracy, Arts education, Arts-in-education.

Introduction

The *Arts in Education Charter* was launched in January 2013 by Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Jimmy Denihan TD and Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Ruairi Quinn TD. This landmark document is a joint commitment by the two government departments "to promote both arts education and the arts-in-education among children and young people through the alignment of a joined up, integrated and collaborative approach across Government Departments, education agencies, and arts organizations"

* Siobhán Dowling Long, School of Education, University College Cork, Ireland. Phone: +353 21 4903232, E-Mail: s.dowling@ucc.ie
ISSN:1307-9298
Copyright © IEJEE
www.iejee.com

(cf. *Arts in Education Charter* website). Much of the Charter's content derives from the more extensive report *Points of Alignment* (2007), which was produced by the *Special Committee on the Arts and Education*. This report came about after the then Minister for the Arts, Sports and Tourism, now Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, with the cooperation of the Minister for Education and Skills, established a Special Committee on the Arts and Education to "advise the Arts Council on how best to align the Council's strategies for the promotion and encouragement of the arts with the priorities of the formal education system" (*Points of Alignment*, p. 8). The process of collaboration fulfilled a "long-standing wish" by the Arts Council to work more formally with the Department of Education and Skills (*Points of Alignment*, p. 4).

Arts Council

The Arts Council (*An Chomhairle Ealaíon*) is the Government's advisory body on the arts in the Republic of Ireland. Following the findings of the *Bodkin Report on the Arts in Ireland* (1949), it was established in 1951 as a new statutory body under the terms of the first Arts Act (1951). Its function, as broadly defined in each of the three Arts Acts (1951, 1973, 2003), is to stimulate interest in the arts; to promote knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts; to assist in improving standards in the arts; and to advise the Minister and other public bodies on the arts through various types of funding initiatives, publications of research on the arts, and by undertaking a range of projects to promote and develop the arts, in partnership with others (cf. Arts Council website). As noted in both *Points of Alignment* and the *Arts in Education Charter*, the Arts Council has been a primary agent of both policy and practice in the arts-in-education. But while it has supported key arts-in-schools resources and programmes, and acted as advocate for arts education, the primary responsibility for "arts education" remains both with the Department of Education and Skills and education providers (*Points of Alignment*, p. 3; *Arts in Education Charter*, p. 3).

The Arts Council published two landmark reports following the second Arts Act (1973), the first, *Provision for the Arts* (1976) known as the "Richards Report", and the second, *The Place of the Arts in Irish Education* (1979), known more generally as the "Benson Report". The Richards Report surveyed the state of the arts in Ireland up to and including the time of its publication, and concluded with a list of recommendations to enable the Irish Government to best support the arts in Irish society. Recommendations relating to arts education included the need to further develop arts education in schools, to include more art subjects to examination level, especially in boys' schools, and to promote not only the training of practitioners but an understanding and enjoyment of the arts among all Irish people (*Richards Report*, pp. 115–19, 99). This report was followed three years later by the Benson Report, a highly significant report that was regarded for many years as the "cornerstone for policy and action by the Arts Council in the field of education" (*Points of Alignment*, p. 3). It highlighted the place as well as the grave neglect of the arts in Irish education. The distinction between "arts education" and the "arts-in-education" that is found both in *Points of Alignment* (p. 3) and the *Arts in Education Charter* (pp. 3, 10) only emerged in Irish educational policy documents dating from the late 1980s through to the 1990s. The two areas are thus defined:

> *While these are two areas of co-dependency, arts education refers usually to mainstream teaching and learning of the arts as part of mainstream education and learning of the arts as part of general education, while arts-in-education refers mostly to interventions from the realm of the arts into education system, by means of artists of all disciplines visiting schools or by schools engaging with professional arts practice in the public arena. (Points of Alignment, p.3 /Arts in Education Charter, pp. 3, 10)*

Recent Arts-in-Education Publications and Schemes

Since the publication of the Richards and Benson reports, the Arts Council has published numerous reports on the arts-in-education. Most notable among them are *Arts, Education and Other Learning Settings: A Research Digest* (2007) containing information on seventy-two research reports based on the arts-in-education in Ireland between 1979-mid 2007; the *Arts in Education Directory* (2004, updated 2007) - a directory of arts organizations working with primary and secondary schools; *Artist-Schools Guidelines* (2006) - a practical set of guidelines produced by the Arts Council and the Department of Education and Skills to encourage partnerships between artists and teachers; and more recently, a report on Early Childhood Arts, *Early Childhood Arts: Three Perspectives* (2013).

Two very successful schemes funded by the Arts Council under its *Arts in Schools Programmes* include the *Artist in Schools Scheme* run in conjunction with various local authorities, and the *Writers in Schools Scheme* run by Poetry Ireland, with the latter featuring as one of the longest running art-in-education programmes in Ireland. The *National Architects in School* initiative is another popular scheme available to transition year pupils and their teachers in conjunction with the Irish Architecture Foundation. It is co-funded by the Arts Council, the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in partnership with the six ATECI (Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland) regions across Ireland.

The recent partnership between *Music Generation* and the Arts Council, mentioned in the *Arts in Education Charter* (*Arts in Education Charter*, pp. 14, 18, 19), "is aimed at creating better access to high quality performance music education for children and young people" (cf. link to Music Generation website). Initiated by Music Network and co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Skills, and Local Education Partnerships, the new partnership has led to an investment of E450,000 in Music Generation by the Arts Council. To date over 18,500 children and young people have accessed quality performance music education with job opportunities created for more than 220 musicians. New programmes of tuition are currently being developed and delivered by Local Music Education Partnerships nationwide in Carlow, Clare, Cork City, Donegal, Laois, Louth, Limerick City, Offaly/Westmeath, Mayo, Sligo, South Dublin and Wicklow (cf. Music Generation website).

While there are many other exciting schemes available to children and young people, too numerous to mention here, one in particular deserves particular mention, namely *Fighting Words: The Write to Right* (*sic*), a creative writing centre established by author Roddy Doyle and Seán Love (Cf. *Fighting Words* on *TedX Dublin*). Based in Dublin's north inner city since January 2009, it provides free tutoring and mentoring in creative writing and related arts events (e.g. music, song-writing, play-writing, writing for TV, Media) to children and young people aged between 6–17 years, and adults with special needs. It fosters creative collaborations with other arts organizations, such as the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, The Irish Times, The National Gallery, The Print Museum, the Science Gallery, and Brown Bag Film Animation among others, and functions on the goodwill of over 500 volunteers. Funded mainly from private individuals and institutions, it receives grant aid for publications, written by its participants, from the Arts Council and Dublin City Council Arts Office. A recent collaboration resulted in an animated film for 9–11 year olds entitled "The Weirdest Thing in Toast and All of Mankind", written, designed and performed by children in collaboration with Brown Bag Films. Premiered at *Galway Film Fleadh* in July 2012, it has been shown at international film festivals to critical acclaim. In the first four years of opening (2009–2013), *Fighting Words* hosted over 40,000 children and young people in numerous creative writing workshops, courses, and programmes - a testament, no doubt, to the scheme's success in teaching real skills for life, among them literacy skills.

Another very popular scheme that deserves mention is *The Creative Engagement* scheme run by the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals (NAPD). This is an annual arts-in-education scheme, which seeks to foster collaboration between student, teacher and artists as set out in the *Artist-Schools Guidelines* (Arts Council, 2006). Although not supported by funding from the Arts Council, the scheme is co-funded by the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht and the Heritage Council. The projects, which span a variety of art forms, are produced in schools with the assistance of an artist/composer, and later showcased at the Collins Barracks Creative Engagement Exhibition (cf. Creative Engagements website).

National Networks for the Arts-in Education

In Ireland, the *Association for Creativity and Arts-in-Education* (ACAE) is a national network of educators and artists who are concerned with the promotion of creativity and the development of the imagination through the arts. Under the patronage of Michael D. Higgins, President of Ireland, this organization celebrates creative teaching and learning with the *Creative Schools Award* - "an evidence-based award that promotes process rather than product and looks to foster and reward creativity, the imagination and the arts." (cf. ACAE website). The Award is distributed annually to successful primary schools at a presentation ceremony in The Ark, Dublin. The Ark is "a unique, purpose-built cultural centre in the heart of Dublin's Temple Bar, where children aged 2–12 can explore theatre, music, literature, art, film, and more" (cf. The Ark website). The new national scheme "Arts Rich Schools" (ARIS) (cf. *Arts in Education Charter*, pp. 5, 17), that promises to "incentivise and recognize those schools which makes the arts a key part of school life" bears a close resemblance to the initiative developed by the ACAE.

Both the NAPD and the ACAE, mentioned above, are members of the umbrella body *Encountering the Arts Ireland* (ETAI). Launched by the Ministers for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Department of Education and Skills on the 27th November 2013, this organization includes representatives from over thirty arts, education, and cultural institutions. As a direct response to the *Arts in Education Charter,* it represents the colorful array of collaborative partnerships that have been created amongst Irish artists, cultural institutions, and educational establishments today. Two significant events, which led to the formation of this body, *Lighting a Fire Conference* (National Gallery of Ireland, 19th April, 2013), and *Schools: Access to Culture Conference* (National Gallery, September, 2013), were initiated to open the space for dialogue on the theme of the arts-in-education. Attended by pre-school, primary and post-primary teachers, the aim of the sessions was to discuss the integration of culture and creativity into pre-school, primary and post-primary schoolwork. The discussion also focused on the reality of cutbacks and the lack of resources, which militate against implementing an arts-in-education program for many schools today. Although not discussed at the conferences, one wonders why there are so many arts-in-education schemes, many of which are not financed by the Department of Education and Skills? Do they illustrate commitment to the arts by the Irish Government or the reverse?

The Irish Government's Commitments to the Arts-in Education

As noted above, the new collaboration between the Department of Education and Skills and the Arts Council of Ireland has focused attention on the arts-in-education in the educational sector in the Republic of Ireland. Despite the lack of government funding, the Arts Council's sterling work over the last number of years will enable the government to promote the "arts-in-education" with relative ease and on-going continued success. As outlined in the *Arts in Education Charter*, the Arts Council will assist the government in a variety of ways such as promoting ARIS i.e. Arts Rich Schools, (pp. 5, 17), and schemes led

by Music Generation through its newly formed Partnership Programme (p. 18). It will encourage arts organizations in receipt of government funding to develop policies and programmes in the arts-in-education as part of the new Public Service Education Dividend (PSED) (pp. 5, 12-13, 17-18). It will foster new provision "especially in parts of the country with little or no arts-in-education service and in art forms or practices where current arts-in-education work is under-developed" (p. 18), and review the professional development needs of artists and other art professionals engaged in the arts-in-education. It will also engage with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), as well as acting as a representative on relevant NCCA committees (pp. 6, 15, 18).

In addition, and as outlined in the Government's commitment to the arts-in-education, the National Cultural Institutions have ensured that every student will visit a national cultural institution at least once in their second level school career (pp. 5, 13). Their commitment to the *Arts in Education Charter* is outlined in the policy document *A Fresh View for the 21st Century: Education, Community, Outreach Policy Framework 2014* developed by the Education, Community, Outreach Working Group of the Council of National Cultural Institutions in association with Anne Gallagher. The Government has also promised that discounted tickets to National Cultural Institutions will be available to primary, post-primary and third level students (*Arts in Education Charter*, pp. 5, 13), and that artists' residencies in Colleges of Education will increase (pp. 5, 17). There is also an expectation that second level schools will develop school policies and plans that reflect their commitment to the arts-in-education (pp. 6, 14), and a promise that provision for the arts-in-education will be reflected in the design and equipping of schools (p. 6, 15). According to the commitments in the Charter, provision for out-of-hours use of school facilities will be available for children and young people accessing arts related activities (pp. 16-17). A *National Mapping Exercise* is also underway to give an up-to-date account of arts-in-education activities currently on offer in the Republic of Ireland.

The Government has committed to the development of a national programme of Local Arts Education Partnerships (p. 16), and the procurement, development and establishment of a new dedicated Arts-in-Education Portal for the purpose of providing a platform for collaborative practice for those working in the arts-in-education and arts education (pp. 5, 15, 19). Since the publication of the Charter, the Minister for Education and Skills, Jan O'Sullivan TD and Minister for Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Heather Humphreys TD launched the new online Portal at Dublin Castle Printworks on the 19th May, 2015. Supported by the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht, it was developed by *Kids' Own* Publishing Partnership, in consultation with an editorial committee, as a national digital resource of arts and education practice for teachers, artists, anyone working in the field of arts-in-education. The site provides space for the sharing of good practice, research, resources and details of case studies, along with calls for applications for initiatives involving various partners (cf. Arts in Education Portal).

Despite the many initiatives to promote the arts-in-education, and the Charter's frequent references to arts education (pp. 3, 4, 7-9, 11, 14, 16, 18, 20), arts education in schools has received very little attention to date. Factors such as limited investment in arts education, the emphasis on literacy and numeracy, standardized testing, and the failure to fully integrate arts education into the post-primary curricula have reduced arts education to the periphery of Irish education. At a European level, it has been noted in the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe* (Council of Europe and the ERICarts Institute) that the *Arts in Education Charter* "has occasioned mixed responses" in Ireland …. and that it suffers from a "lack of commitment to real investment":

> *The arts in Ireland were and still are the domain of the privileged or the lucky. The new* Arts in Education Charter, *which might have the potential to achieve greater spread for the arts and to improve access, has occasioned mixed responses, some commentators feeling that it lacks commitment to real investment and relies overly on publicly funded artists and organisations, requiring them to donate time to education projects (cf. link to Website of the Council of Europe and the ERICarts Institute).*

At the launch of the Arts in Education Charter, Prof. John Coolahan, Chairman of the High-Level Implementation Committee, also noted the worrying lack of investment in the *Arts in Education Charter* by the Irish Government (cf. link to *The Irish Times*). By comparison, the *National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People* has received considerable financial support from the Irish Government probably to the detriment of arts education programmes in some schools today.

The Irish Government's Commitments to Arts Education?

As witness to this, a key pillar of the Programme for Government, and a national priority for the Minister for Education and Skills, the *National Strategy* has called for the improvement of children's literacy and numeracy through "a strong focus on literacy and numeracy skills within a broad and balanced curriculum" (*National Strategy*, p. 10). As a vital part of Ireland's Labour Market Policy, the *National Strategy* aims to achieve smart growth by 2020 as part of a wider European strategy *Europe 2020,* i.e. a ten year jobs and growth strategy for Europe, which set ambitious objectives for smart, inclusive and sustainable growth for the European Union. Key concerns of this international strategy include literacy, numeracy, science and technology (cf. European Commission, "Education and Training").

The *National Strategy* to improve children and young people's literacy and numeracy has been supported by generous funding of €9 million from Budget 2014 and €13.8 from Budget 2015. The ambitious targets are set to be achieved through the administration of annual standardized tests of reading and mathematics for primary school children in 2nd, 4th and 6th classes and for young people in 2nd year post-primary school. The results of the assessments will be reported to parents, boards of management, to other schools on the transfer of pupils to another primary school, and on transition of every pupil to post-primary school. In addition, schools are required to report the aggregate standardized test results to the DES once annually. Despite the intention of the DES not to publish data for the compilation of league tables, there is some anxiety among teachers on the ground that government officials could use data from the standardized test results to assess teacher performance, especially those with poor records of standardized test results. An American study into the perception of teaching in an environment of standardized testing by Franklin and Snow-Gerona (2007) indicated that "increased emphasis on preparing students to test well had occurred in 93% of the classrooms" and "a lack of student choice in terms of curricular decisions had increased in more than 50% of the classrooms" (Franklin and Snow-Gerona, p. 12). In addition, a segment from an interview with one teacher revealed how some teachers had cut back on science, health, social studies and **art** to focus on the content that was tested. The teacher expressed a fear that pupils would end up only knowing curricular content that was the subject of the test, and remain ignorant of other curricular content necessary for the development of important life-skills (Franklin and Snow-Gerona, p. 12).

In a background report on *Cultural Education: The Promotion of Cultural Knowledge, Creativity and Inter-cultural Understanding through Education* (Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe, 2008), Barbara Putz-Plecko has discussed the importance of children and young people's aesthetic education and education in the arts. She noted that one potential consequence of an education that reduces or neglects the aesthetic dimension is

the non-development of important competences and qualities necessary for society as a whole (Putz-Plecko, p. 5). Among a long list of outcomes provided by an aesthetic education she highlights the importance of "the faculty of discriminative observation and perception; imagination, inventiveness and vision; creativity; emotional intelligence; a capacity for critical reflection; and the capacity to make decisions independently" (Putz-Plecko, p. 5). Putz-Plecko attributes the clear hierarchisation of school subjects, exacerbated by the OECD instrument of the PISA study, as inhibiting the aims of cultural education which values creativity, and which can neither be "measured", "produced according to scale" nor "categorized" (Putz-Plecko, p. 7).

The Three Rs vs Arts Education

The current focus on standardized tests and teachers possibly teaching-to-the-test call to mind nineteenth century Irish educational policy by the Board of Education in which the promotion of the Three Rs through standardized tests and Payment-by-Results contributed to the marginalization of the arts in Irish education. While the arts in school were included as part of the curriculum, most notably music and drawing, the narrow approach, which was enacted by teachers under pressure to reach the required standards for fear of losing payment for poor results, contributed to more time dedicated to the teaching of the Three Rs and less time to teaching and learning in the arts. This outcome had a devastating effect on arts education in Ireland resulting in limited Government funding and resources for the arts, inadequate teacher training and eventual poor take-up by pupils. In the twenty-first century, the *Primary School Curriculum* (1999), lauded for its holistic approach, integrated curriculum, and excellent arts education, now faces a similar threat to its arts programme (cf. hyperlink to *Irish Primary School Mathematics Curriculum* for examples of an integrated curriculum). If "elementary schools have traditionally been places where more creative action and thinking have occurred than in further stages of education" (Sahlberg, p. 338), then the increasing focus on standardized testing in Irish primary schools will most likely result in teaching and learning that is "less creative and less imaginative, with less focus on collaborative and cooperative learning, less space for teachers to take worthwhile risks, and more intolerance for learning that is wrong" (Sahlberg, p. 338). Sahlberg points out that the most important enabling factors for schools to be creative are "collaboration, risk-taking, and learning to be wrong" (Sahlberg pp. 342–44) - enabling factors, I might add, which are not achieved through an emphasis on teaching-to-the-test.

The Threat to Primary School Arts Education

Before the introduction of the National Strategy to improve literacy and numeracy, an INTO discussion document on *Creativity on the Arts in the Primary School* in 2009 noted that the arts were "alive and well in Irish schools" (*Creativity on the Arts in the Primary School*, p. 31). This positive state of health was due in no uncertain terms to the greater emphasis on arts education as a compulsory component of the *Primary School Curriculum* - a revision of the primary school curriculum that replaced *Curaclam na Bunscoile* (1971) in 1999 (cf. Fig. 1).

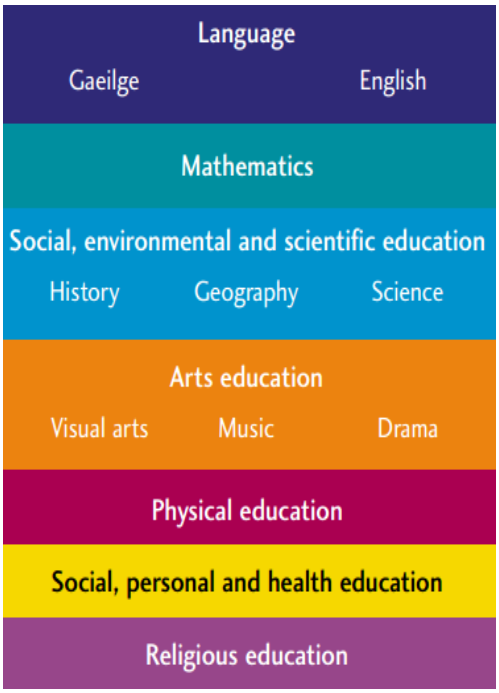


Figure 1. *Organizational Framework of the Primary Curriculum*

Primary School Curriculum (p. 40).

The Irish primary school arts education programme, unlike most primary arts curricula in European schools, includes drama, namely process drama alongside the visual arts and music. The importance of educational drama in the lives of children, and in their learning, is lauded in the *Primary School Curriculum Introduction* as follows:

> *It involves children's experiences, concerns and needs, things they imagine or read about, aspects of life from the past, present or possible future that arouse their curiosity, and particular issues the teacher may wish children to explore from any of the other curriculum areas. What is special about children's learning through drama is that it harnesses children's imaginative potential and leads them to new knowledge and perspectives not available to them in any other activity. Primary School Curriculum Introduction (p. 54).*

European experts Anne Bamford and Michael Wimmer have noted in their paper, *The Role of Arts Education in Enhancing School Attractiveness: a literature review* (2012) that "drama, dance, media arts and architecture are rarely if ever taught in their own right" (p. 5). Within a European context then, the emphasis on drama in the Irish primary school arts curriculum is a unique feature, and its inclusion, along with music and the visual arts, fosters the aesthetic dimension of every child's learning:

> *The curriculum enables the child to perceive the aesthetic dimension in every area. This enriches the learning experiences for the child and the different aspects of conceptual development. The uniqueness of the child is perhaps most apparent in the innate creativity of each individual, while valuing the child's creative response and expression of perceptions, insights, interpretations and knowledge is an important principle of the curriculum (Primary School Curriculum, p. 15).*

Circular Letter (0056/2011)

A Circular Letter (0056/2011) issued to Irish primary schools set out the requirements for schools to increase the time allocation for literacy and numeracy within the primary curriculum (cf. *Circular Letter 0056/2011*). It mandated an increase of 60 minutes per

week for literacy [i.e. from 5.5 to 6.5 hours per week for infants with a shorter day, and to 7.5 to 8.5 hours per week for students with a full day], and 70 minutes per week for numeracy [i.e. from 2.15 to 3.25 hours per week for infants with a shorter day, and from 3 to 4.10 hours per week for students with a full day]. With effect from 2012, all primary schools are requested to make provision for these arrangements through a variety of approaches that include "integrating literacy and numeracy with other curriculum areas, using some or all of the discretionary curriculum time for literacy and numeracy, reallocating time spent on other subjects to literacy and numeracy, and/or prioritising curriculum objectives which are considered most valuable in supporting children's learning and delaying the introduction of elements of some subjects" (cf. *Circular Letter 0056/2011*). While a more integrated approach to literacy and numeracy would foster the inclusion of other curricular subjects - such as music, drama, visual arts and dance - and avoid "a narrowing of the curriculum", the reality for some teachers finding themselves under pressure to achieve "good test results" is likely to result in decisions to teach-to-the-test, using non-creative pedagogical approaches. Franklin and Snow-Gerona referencing Amrein & Berliner, 2002; Birkmire, 1993; Darling-Hammond, 1991; Madaus, 1988; Pedulla, 2003 have indicated how the trend toward teaching-to-the-test leads to an emphasis on content that is tested and an increasingly narrow curriculum with less focus on higher-order thinking skills (Snow-Gerona, p. 3). In Ireland, at present, there is a danger that teachers would take time away from the teaching and learning of compulsory core areas, such as music, the visual arts and drama, to focus solely on the task of children's attainment of literacy and numeracy skills.

In the light of the possible reduction in time from the teaching of the various strands of the arts programme from the Primary School curriculum, it is worrying then that more attention is not given to the value of arts education in the *National Strategy*. With the exception of two passing references to the arts (*National Strategy*, pp. 44, 56) one is immediately struck by a notable absence of references to the value of learning in and through the arts, which as I point out later are not only proven modes of learning that develop mathematical and linguistic abilities, skills and knowledge but the means to developing and enhancing the capacity to foster creativity, imagination, critical and divergent thinking including intra and interpersonal, spatial and kinesthetic abilities. It is a well-known fact among educational researchers that the arts embrace pupils' humanity, support social and emotional learning and, depending on the level of teaching and expertise of individual teachers, contribute to the overall happiness of pupils in particular and to the school and wider community in general.

Lessons from Finland: The Integration of the Arts across the Curriculum

In Finland, arts education is prioritized in children and young people's education up to the age of 15 or 16 years of age. Music, the visual arts, and crafts are included in the compulsory *National Core Curriculum* as stipulated by the Basic Education Act (628/1998) (cf. *Syllabus of the National Core Curriculum*). Students also have an opportunity to study dance and drama as part of the respective PE and Mother tongue language and literature curricula. The chart below, (cf. Fig. 2 and hyperlink to the Website of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture), illustrates the distribution of lesson hours in Basic Education, and highlights the prominence given to arts education in Finland over the first ten years of compulsory education.

Distribution of lesson hours in basic education

The minimum number of lessons in annual weekly lessons

Subject	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Mother tongue and literature	14		14			14				42
A-language	----------			8			8			16
B-language	----------						6			6
Mathematics	6		12			14				32
Environmental Studies	Environmental and natural studies									31
Biology and Geography	9				3		7			
Physics and Chemistry					2		7			
Health Education							3			
Religion/Ethics	6					5				11
History and Social Studies	----------				3		7			10
Music	Arts and practical			4-			3-			56
Visual arts	subjects	26		4-		30	4-			
Craft,Technical work,Textile work				4-			7-			
Physical Education				8-			10-			
Home Economics	----------						3			3
Educational and vocational guidance	----------						2			2
Optional subjects							(13)			13
Minimum number of hours	19	19	23	23	24	24	30	30	30	222
Voluntary A-language	----------				(6)		(6)			(12)

Figure 2. *Finnish Basic Education*

Students also have the option of participating in a non-compulsory Basic Education curriculum in the arts for a small fee after school. The Finnish National Board of Education decides upon the objectives and core curricular content in music, the literary arts, dance, performing arts [circus and theatre], and visual arts [architecture, audio visual art, visual arts, and craft]. This course of study is designed to develop students' hobbies in the arts, to support their personal development, and to provide them with knowledge and skills to enable them to apply, if desired, for professional studies within a given art form. The arts are also woven through the *National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary School 2003* (cf. *National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary School*), and feature in an array of compulsory courses, such as *Finnish Culture and Literature* (FINA6) (cf. Fig. 3, as found in *National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary School,* p. 93). This course supports not only the development of literacy, but highlights Finnish national identity, integrated with a study of and acquaintance with the work of internationally renowned Finnish artists, authors, and composers.

Finnish culture and literature (FINA6)

The course will acquaint students with key areas of Finnish culture and arts and will also deal with internationally renowned Finnish artists and authors through basic texts, works of art or study visits. During the course, students will read at least one free-choice Finnish language work and present it either orally or in writing and discuss its content. Upon completion of the course, students will be capable of naming a few well-known Finnish artists, composers, and authors, describing them briefly and mentioning something about their major works. In terms of grammar, the course will deal with attributes and involve reflection on issues of style and variation relating to texts. (*National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary School*, p. 93).

Figure 3. *Compulsory Course on Finnish Culture and Literature* (FINA6)

Unlike the majority of Irish post-primary pupils, Finnish pupils leave school with an in-depth knowledge of their cultural heritage, along with an appreciation of key compositions by Finnish composers and works of art by Finnish artists. In Upper Secondary School, students also take compulsory and specialization courses in music and the visual arts. For the latter, the objectives include, among others, "supporting the development of students' imagination, creative thinking and associative skills", and "encouraging reflection and justification for pupils' own aesthetic and ethical value choices in their own lives, the visual arts, the media and the cultural environment" (*National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary School 2003,* p. 204). By comparison, in Ireland at present, the arts (i.e. music and art) are not a compulsory component of the post-primary curriculum, but are selected as optional subjects by a minority cohort of students. As in the past, the poor take-up of arts subjects by Irish students has contributed to the marginalization of the arts at post-primary level. Professor John Coolahan noted in an Overview Essay "The Changing Context of the Arts in Irish Education" (Appendix. *Points of Alignment*) "that there is evidence that a great deal remains to be done so that the arts are genuinely embedded as part of holistic education" (Coolahan, p. 38). He pointed out that "of the 171, 313 pupils who sat the Junior Certificate programme in 2005, only 44% participated in the Art and Craft programme and only 23% took the Music course." At the Established Leaving Certificate examination, "20% took Art and only 4% studied Music" (Coolahan, p. 38). Despite the fact that the statistics are ten years old, they highlight the notable absence of an arts education programme in the final two years of post-primary school for the majority of Irish pupils. And while it might be argued that there is a very good arts education programme as part of the Leaving Certificate Applied programme i.e. a two-year programme that prepares students for adult and working life, only 2,902 students sat this examination in 2015 compared to 55,963 students who sat the Established Leaving Certificate (cf. State Examinations Commission "Press Release 2015 State Examinations).

The trend away from arts education in post-primary education was observed by Bamford and Wimmer who, citing evidence from Eurydice 2009 on the *Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe,* noted how the focus on the arts diminishes as the child moves from primary to post-primary school, how the arts are relegated to the margins of the post-primary curriculum, and how some art forms are not taught at all (Bamford and Wimmer, p. 8). The present non-compulsory dimension to Ireland's post-primary junior curriculum explains Ireland's low ranking, i.e. 26th place out of 28 countries surveyed in 1996, 2002 and 2009 by the OECD for instruction-time of arts subjects as a percentage of total compulsory instruction time for 12-14 year-olds (cf. OECD, *Art for Art's Sake? The Impact of Arts Education*, p. 28). This ranking is set to change however with the introduction of a revised curriculum at junior post-primary level - *A Framework for Junior Cycle* (2012) (cf. Department of Education and Skills, *A Framework for Junior Cycle*, 2012). While priority will be given to literacy and numeracy, six other key skills for learning, living and working in the 21st century will be named and embedded in every subject, among them "Being Creative" (cf. *Key Skills of Junior Cycle* and *Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle*). Students will choose a maximum of eight to ten full subjects out of a total of twenty-one subjects, and a maximum of four short courses. The NCCA is presently developing a number of short courses, one entitled "Artistic Performance: Engagement with the Arts" (cf. *Draft Specification for Junior Cycle Short Course*). This course aims to engage students "in creative activity and artistic practices, by offering a structure that can be used to facilitate imaginative initiatives both individual and collaborative, culminating in a single group production" (NCCA, p. 6). Non-certified involvement in "other learning experiences and achievements" such as the staging of a drama, musical or show, will also be documented on the School's "Junior Cycle Achievement Profile" (cf. DES "Briefing Note" 4th October, 2012, p. 11). Curriculum reform of the traditional Established Leaving

Certificate programme, however, is a long way off, and any discussion of an integrated curriculum involving arts education remains, for the time being, "the stuff of dreams" (Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, Act 4, scene 1, 156-57).

The Right of Children and Young People to a Cultural Education

As outlined in *UNESCO's Road Map for Arts Education: Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century* (2007), the basic rationale for making arts education an important and compulsory part of the educational programme in any country emerges from Articles 22, 26, and 27 of the *International Declaration of Human Rights* (1948), and Articles 29 and 31 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989). Within Ireland, the Government's ten year plan for impoving the lives of children, *The National Children's Strategy: Our Children - Their Lives* (2000) has also highlighted the importance of the arts in children's lives under the third of *Three National Goals*. In this document, Objective D (*The National Children's Strategy*, p. 58) points to the rights and entitlements of children to participate in arts and cultural activities with a commitment by the Government to increase children's engagement in the arts through various plans of the Arts Council. But is this happening?

Words are certainly happening. For example, the Education Act (1998), which highlights the arts in and out of education, states that one of the functions of a recognized school is "to promote the development of the Irish language and tradition, Irish literature, the arts, and other cultural events" (cf. *Education Act*, Section 9, f). Similarly, in the White Paper on Education, *Charting Our Education Future* (1995), the Government affirmed the centrality of the arts within educational policy and provision, particularly during compulsory schooling (cf. *White Paper*, pp. 22-23). Noting the positive benefits of artistic and aesthetic education, it regards the arts as "key elements within the school experience of young people" because an education which includes the arts fosters "a nurturing of creativity" and "assists the young person to become a tolerant, critically aware and socially committed citizen who can live with confidence in the world" (*White Paper,* p. 22). A good arts education, according to the *White Paper*, "develops the imagination as a central source of human creativity, and fosters important kinds of thinking and problem solving, as well as offering opportunities to symbolise, to play and to celebrate" (*White Paper*, p. 22). As noted already, while efforts are being made to increase the provision of arts education at post-primary school through the reform of the Junior Certificate curriculum, more attention needs to focus on the integration of the arts at Leaving Certificate level. In reality, however, the rigidity of the Leaving Certificate programme, and the pressure of the Points Race have resulted to date in a high percentage of young people leaving school with limited knowledge of their rich cultural heritage.

Actions Not Words

Numerous reports and studies have provided evidence demonstrating the contribution of the arts for learning across other subject areas, most notably for the attainment of literacy and numeracy skills. For example, a well-known report from the United States *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning* (1999) edited by Edward B. Fiske demonstrates how involvement in the arts enables young people to attain higher levels of academic achievement. The study, conducted by seven teams of notable researchers from the United States, examines why and how young people were changed, academically and behaviourally, through their arts experiences. Similarly, a report by the Centre for Arts Education *Staying in School: Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates* (October, 2009) noted the correlation between exposure to the arts and improved skills in cognition and attention for learning" (cf. hyperlink *Staying in School: Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates*, p. 6). Furthermore, the Dana

Consortium Report on *Arts and Cognition Learning, Arts and the Brain*, conducted by leading cognitive neuroscientists from seven universities across the United States, noted among its many findings correlations between music training and reading acquisition and sequence learning, links between high levels of training in music and acting on memory skills (cf. *Arts and Cognition Learning, Arts and the Brain,* pp.v-vi, 11-16), and links between music and mathematics. Commenting on this report, Mariale Hardiman, Professor of Clinical Education and co-founder and Director of the School of Education's Neuro-Education Initiative (NEI) at John Hopkins University stated that the time had come for educational policymakers to pay attention to studies highlighting the influence of the arts on cognition, thinking and learning. Given the wealth of neuro-scientific evidence, she has called for such findings to be a part of the research agenda and a central focus in educational policymaking (cf. "Commentary: The Arts Will Help School Accountability", Mariale Hardiman).

A more recent report published by the OECD *Art For Art's Sake? The Impact of Arts Education* (2013) has demonstrated not only the positive impact of the arts on students' social and behavioural skills but also the impact of arts education on academic achievement in subjects measured by scores on verbal and mathematical standardized tests. It also pointed to numerous studies which have investigated the impact of students' participation in theatre education as a means to strengthening students' verbal skills and improving reading and writing, oral language, vocabulary, and reading readiness. The importance of educational drama in education has also been highlighted in the two-year International EU-supported cross-cultural quantitative and qualitative research project "Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competencies in Education" (DICE). This study, which involved 5000 young people aged between 13-16 years of age, demonstrated the positive effects of educational theatre and drama on five of the eight Lisbon key competencies, namely, "Communication in the mother tongue, Learning to Learn, Interpersonal intercultural and social competences – civic competences, Entrepreneurship, and Cultural Expression." It mentions an additional competency, "All this and more" - not mentioned among the key Lisbon competences, and which explores what it means to be human. The project concluded that the six competences are life-learning skills necessary for the personal development of young people, their future employment, and active citizenship (cf. DICE Consortium, pp. 49–52).

The above named international studies and reports illustrate the transferability of learning in and through the arts to other subject areas, most notably for the attainment of literacy and numeracy skills. But despite the insights from educational research, and the Government's acknowledgement of the need to draw upon such research (*Arts in Education Charter*, p. 15), it is regrettable, then, that there are no references to national and international research findings or to neuro-scientific evidence on the influence of the arts on cognition, thinking and learning either in the *Arts in Education Charter* or the *National Strategy for Literacy and Numeracy*.

Young People's Voices: The Need for More Arts-Based Subjects

The importance of listening to children's voices and involving them in national decision-making is a topic that is found in numerous Irish policy documents, including *The National Children's Strategy, Our Children, Their Lives* (2000) (The Department of Health and Children, pp. 29-36)*, Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014–2020* (pp. vi, vii, 2, 4, 8, 17, 20, 22, 31, 100, 112, 141, 150), and more recently in the Action Plan for the *National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015–20* (Department of Children and Youth Affairs, 2015). The latter, which includes over a hundred references to the importance of children's voices, sets out the commitments and actions of various Irish Government

departments and agencies to include children's voices in decision-making. All three documents acknowledge the importance of the arts and culture in children and young peoples' lives. For example, the National Policy Framework *Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures* notes that the arts and culture, along with play, recreation, sport and the natural environment, are "essential to the health and wellbeing of children and young people, and promote the development of creativity, imagination self-confidence and self-efficacy, as well as physical, social, cognitive and emotional strength and skills" (*Better Outcomes, Brighter Futures*, p, 55).

Within Education, the *Report of a Consultation with Young People on Reform of the Junior Cycle* (2011) includes a record of young people's voices on the reform of the Junior Cycle. Compiled by Sandra Roe after a consultation with 88 young people, aged 12–18 years, from various *Comhairlí na nÓg* around Ireland, it includes the findings of students who were currently at Junior Cycle level and those who had progressed through the Junior Cycle. Key findings revealed that young people enjoyed learning "sports, arts-based activities, and life-skills" because they were "fun, interesting and practical", and encouraged "creativity and self-expression" (Roe, p. 1). The most enjoyed learning in primary school included arts-based activities, followed by sport and playing, and subjects such as Irish, history, maths, English, science, religion, French and geography; social skills, such as how to make friends and be part of a team; and cooking" (Roe, p. 7). The most enjoyed subjects at Junior Cert level included history, maths, **music** and English (Roe, p. 7). Commenting on the most enjoyed learning in their whole lives, Senior Cycle students mentioned arts-based activities, such as "art, music, drama and dancing", followed by "sport, life skills, self-discovery and learning about others, learning a language, creative writing, public speaking and woodwork" (Roe, p. 14-15). Overall, the young people involved in the day-long consultation called for a wider range of subjects to be available to students at Junior Cycle level and highlighted "more arts-based subjects and cultural studies" (Roe, p. 29). Given the prominence to the importance of children's voices in the above mentioned national policy documents, along with the documentation of children's voices in Roe's Report, it is regrettable then that no references to the children and young people's voices are included in the *Arts in Education Charter* or the *National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy*.

Recommendations for the Future

The Learning Metrics Task Force (LMTF), which was convened by UNESCO's Institute for Statistics and the Centre for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution, released recommendations for measuring and improving the learning experiences of children and youth worldwide in a report entitled *Toward Universal Learning: Recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force* (2013), based on the findings of a series of three reports *What Every Child Should Learn* (No. 1), *A Global Framework For Measuring Learning* (No. 2), and *Implementing Assessment to Improve Learning* (No. 3). The task force called upon all stakeholders working in the field of education, national governments, civil society groups, assessment institutions and universities to carry the recommendations forward into action, and to endorse a broad and holistic definition of learning across the seven domains of learning across three levels of education from early childhood to post-primary school. It is envisioned that the seven learning domains (cf. Fig. 4) will be acquired over the course of a child and young person's education as the means to enabling a person to lead a productive and healthy life, and to acquire a sustainable livelihood.

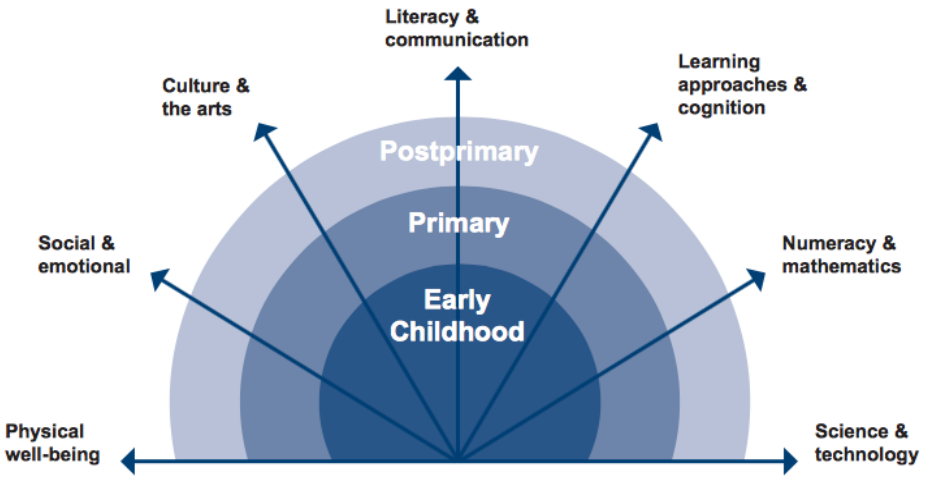


Figure 4. *The Global Framework of Learning Domains taken from Toward Universal Learning: Recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force, p. 20.*

With regard to the third learning domain "Culture and the arts" there is an expectation that children and young people will have opportunities for creative expression in a wide variety of art forms and cultural experiences to foster knowledge and skills in the area of the creative arts and culture, personal and communal identity, and awareness of and respect for diversity. While it is gratifying to see a reference to *Culture and the Arts* alongside *Numeracy and Mathematics, Literacy and Communication,* and *Science and Technology* one wonders when the rhetoric of educational policy, both national and international, will become a reality for Irish children and young people in and out of school.

Conclusion

Despite the Government's lack of funding for targeted investment in the *Arts in Education Charter,* and the lack of attention given to arts education at senior post-primary school, one must acknowledge the pioneering work of the Arts Council in promoting the arts-in-education in Ireland today. At a recent plenary meeting of the Arts Council on the 25th March 2015, the Council discussed "the integration of the arts into the education experience of children and young people". Professor John Coolahan, who was at this meeting, reported that the High-Level Implementation group for the *Arts in Education Charter* was impressed with the range of work relating to the arts-in-education across the Republic of Ireland. However, alluding to provision for the integration of arts education into the experience of every child, he re-iterated that "greater targeted investment in this area is necessary in order to ensure substantive progress" (cf. Arts Council Website "Ireland needs to integrate the arts into the education experience of children and young people"). Arts Council Chair, Sheila Pratschke, concluded the meeting saying that the Arts Council is committed to ensuring that opportunities to participate in the arts are central to children's experience growing up in Ireland. Given the Art Council's new partnership with the Department of Education and Skills, there is hope for the arts in and out of school, and that some day soon, the rhetoric of national and international policy will become a reality in the educational experiences of young people who:

> *have a right to develop their imaginations, to participate in the arts, and to develop their own interests and skills across different art forms .... this should be a central aspect of their experience in and out of school (Sheila Pratschke, Meeting of the Arts Council 25th March 2015.).*

• • •

Siobhán Dowling Long is a lecturer in the School of Education at University College Cork. A contributor to scholarly journals and edited collections, she is the author of *The Sacrifice of Isaac: The Reception of a Biblical Story in Music* (2013), and with Prof. John F.A. Sawyer, *The Bible in Music: A Dictionary of Songs and Works and More* (2015).

References

Arts Council of Ireland, The & Department of Education & Skills, The. (2006). Artist~Schools Guidelines: Towards Best Practice in Ireland. Dublin: The Arts Council. Available at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Arts_in_Ireland/Young_people,_children_and_education/ArtistsSchools06_English.pdf

Arts Council of Ireland, The. (2007). Arts in Schools Directory. Dublin: The Arts Council. Available at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Arts_in_Ireland/Young_people,_children_and_education/ArtsinEducationDirectory07_Eng.pdf

Arts Council of Ireland, The. (2008). Points of Alignment: the Report of the Special Committee on the Arts and Education. Dublin: The Arts Council. Available at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Arts_in_Ireland/Young_people,_children_and_education/Arts_education_en_08.pdf

Arts Council of Ireland, The. (2013). Early Childhood Arts: Three Perspectives. Dublin: Arts Council. Available at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Research_and_Publications/Young_people,_children,_and_education/EarlyChildhoodArts.pdf

Bamford, A. (2006). The Wow Factor: Global Research Compendium on the Impact of the Arts in Education. Munster: Waxmann.

Bamford, A. & Wimmer.M. (2012). The Role of Arts Education in Enhancing School Attractiveness: a literature review. EENC (European Expert Network on Culture). Available at: http://www.kulturnibazar.si/data/upload/school_attractiveness_paper_final_website.pdf

Benson, C. & Ó Tuama, S. (1979). The Place of the Arts in Irish Education. Dublin: The Arts Council.

Bodkin, Thomas. (1949). Report on the Arts in Ireland. Dublin: Stationary Office.

Colgan, Anne. Young Voices: Guidelines on How to Involve Children Young People in Your Work. (2005). Dublin: The National Children's Office/The Children's Rights Alliance/The National Youth Council of Ireland. Available at: http://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/publications/31267_Young_Voices_.pdf

Coolahan, John. (2015). 'A Portal to the Future of the Arts in Education' in The Irish Times

19th May, 2015. Available at: http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/a-portal-to-the-future-of-the-arts-in-education-1.2212746

Council of Europe & the ERICarts Institute. Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe (Council of Europe and the ERICarts Institute). [Online] Available at: http://www.culturalpolicies.net/web/ireland.php?aid=33&cid=1240&curl=43

Council of National Cultural Institutions in association with Anne Gallagher. A Fresh View for the 21st Century: Education, Community, Outreach Policy Framework 2014. Available at: http://artsineducation.ie/wp-content/uploads/FreshViewFrameworkDoc2014.pdf

Dooley, T. et al. (2014). Mathematics in Early Childhood and Primary Education: Teaching and Learning (3-8 years). Research Report No. 18. Dublin: NCCA. Available at: http://ncca.ie/en/Publications/Reports/NCCA_Research_Report_18.pdf

Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, The & Department of Education and Skills, The. (2013). Arts in Education Charter. Dublin: Government Publications. Available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Arts-In-Education-Charter.pdf

Department of Children & Youth Affairs, The. Better Outcomes Brighter Futures: The National Policy Framework for Children and Young People, 2014-2020. Dublin: Stationary Office. Available at: http://dcya.gov.ie/documents/cypp_framework/BetterOutcomesBetterFutureReport.pdf

Department of Children & Youth Affairs, The. The National Children's Strategy, Our Children, Their Lives. (2000). Dublin: Stationary Office. Available at: http://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/Aboutus/stratfullenglishversion.pdf

Department of Children & Youth Affairs, The. National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making, 2015-20. (2015). Dublin: Stationary Office. Available at: http://www.dcya.gov.ie/documents/playandrec/20150617NatStratParticipationReport.pdf

Department of Education, The. (1995). White Paper: Charting our Education Future. Dublin: Stationery Office. Available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Charting-Our-Education-Future-White-Paper-On-Education-Launch-Copy-1995-.pdf

Department of Education & Skills, The. (2011). Literacy and Numeracy For Learning and Life: The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011––2020. (Dublin: The Department of Education & Skills. https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/lit_num_strategy_full.pdf

Department of Education and Skills, The. (2012). A Framework for Junior Cycle. Dublin: Department of Education and Skills. Available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/A-Framework-for-Junior-Cycle-Full-Report.pdf

Department of Education and Skills, The. (2011). Circular Letter (0056/2011). Available at: https://www.education.ie/en/Circulars-and-Forms/Active-Circulars/cl0056_2011.pdf

DICE Consortium (Drama Improves Lisbon Key Competencies in Education). The DICE has been cast: A DICE Resource research findings and recommendations on educational theatre and drama. Available at: http://www.dramanetwork.eu/file/Policy%20Paper%20long.pdf

Douglas, I. (2009). Staying in School: Arts Education and New York City High School Graduation Rates. New York: The Centre for Arts Education (CAE). Available at: http://www.creativenz.govt.nz/assets/ckeditor/attachments/1029/staying_in_school.pdf?1410234540

Eurydice. (2009). Arts and Cultural Education at School in Europe. Brussels: Eurydice/ Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACE). Available at: http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/113EN.pdf

Eurydice. (2013). Recommended Annual Taught Time in Full-time Compulsory Education in Europe 2012/13. Brussels: Eurydice/Audiovisual and Cultural Executive Agency (EACE). Available at: http://www.indire.it/lucabas/lkmw_file/eurydice/taught_time_EN.pdf

Finnish National Board of Education. National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003. (Helsinki: Ministry of Education). Available at: http://www.oph.fi/download/47678_core_curricula_upper_secondary_education.pdf

Fiske, E.B (ed.). (1999). Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning (Washington D.C., Arts Education Partnership. Available at: http://artsedge.kennedycenter.org/champions/pdfs/champsreport.pdf

European Commission. (2010). Europe 2020: A Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth. Communication from the Commission. European Commission: COM Document. Available at: http://eurlex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2010:2020:FIN:EN:PDF

Franklin, C. A., & Snow-Gerono, J. L. (2007). "Perceptions of teaching in an environment of standardized testing: Voices from the field". The Researcher, 21(1), 2-21 (33). Available at: http://nrmera.org/PDF/Researcher/Researcherv21n1Franklin.pdf

Government of Ireland. (1999). Primary School Curriculum Introduction. Dublin: Stationary Office. Available at: https://curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/93de2707-f25e-4bee-9035-92b00613492e/Introduction-to-primary-curriculum.pdf

Government of Ireland. Education Act (1998). Available at: http://www.oireachtas.ie/documents/bills28/acts/1998/a5198.pdf

Hibernian Consulting & Martin Drury. (2007). Arts, Education and Other Learning Settings: A Research Digest. Dublin: Arts Council. Available at: http://www.artscouncil.ie/uploadedFiles/wwwartscouncilie/Content/Arts_in_Ireland/Young_people,_children_and_education/Research_Digest.pdf

INTO (Irish National Teachers' Organisation). (2009). Creativity and the Arts in the Primary School. Discussion Document and Proceedings of the Consultative Conference on Education. Dublin: INTO. Available at: https://www.into.ie/ROI/Publications/CreativityArtsinthePS.pdf

Kay, M. (2013). Sound Before Symbol: Developing Literacy Through Music. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Kennedy, E. et al. (2012). Literacy in Early Childhood and Primary Education (3-8 years). Report No. 15. Dublin: NCCA. Available at: http://www.ncca.ie/en/Publications/Reports/Literacy_in_Early_Childhood_and_Primary_Education_3-8_years.pdf

LMTF (Learning Metrics Task Force). 2013. Toward Universal Learning: Recommendations from the Learning Metrics Task Force. Montreal and Washington, D. C.: UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/Research/Files/Reports/2013/09/learning-metrics-task-force-universal-learning/LTMF-RecommendationsReportfinalweb.pdf?la=en

LMTF (Learning Metrics Task Force). 2013a. Toward Universal Learning: What Every Child Should Learn. Report No. 1 of the Learning Metrics Task Force. Montreal and Washington, D.C.: UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. Available at: http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/lmtf-rpt1-toward-universal-learning-execsum.pdf

LMTF (Learning Metrics Task Force). 2013b. Toward Universal Learning: A Global Framework for Measuring Learning. Report No. 2 of the Learning Metrics Task Force. Montreal and Washington, D.C.: UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. Available at: http://www.uis.unesco.org/Education/Documents/towards-universal-learning-a-global-framework-for-measuring-learning-metrics-task-force-education-2013-en.pdf

LMTF (Learning Metrics Task Force). 2014. Toward Universal Learning:Implementing Assessment to Improve Learning. Report No. 3 of the Learning Metrics Task Force. Montreal and Washington, D. C.: UNESCO Institute for Statistics and Center for Universal Education at the Brookings Institution. Available at: http://www.brookings.edu/~/media/research/files/reports/2014/07/implementing-assessment-improve-learning/unescolmtfreport3web3.pdf

Ministry of Education & Culture. Basic Education in Finland. Available at: http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/perusopetus/?lang=enhttp://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Koulutus/perusopetus/?lang=en

National Gallery of Ireland. (2013). Schools Access to Culture: Report of the Art, Education and Schools Conference 2013 at the National Gallery Ireland. Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland. Available at:

http://www.nationalgallery.ie/en/Learning/Schools/~/media/Files/Education/SchoolsReport13.ashx

NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment). (2013). Artistic Performance: Engagement with the Arts. Draft Specification for Junior Cycle Short Course. (Dublin: NCCA). Available at: http://www.juniorcycle.ie/NCCA_JuniorCycle/media/NCCA/Documents/Curriculum/Short%20Courses/Artistic-performance-Oct-13-Final.pdf

NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment). (2014). Key Skills of Junior Cycle. Dublin: NCCA. Available at: http://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/def48e3f-68f9-42e4-95de-f30086321fd0/JSEC_Key_Skills_of-JC_English).pdf

NCCA (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment). (2011). Towards a Framework for Junior Cycle. Innovation and Identity: Schools Developing Junior Cycle. Dublin, NCCA. Available at: http://ncca.ie/framework/doc/NCCA-Junior-Cycle.pdf

OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). PISA 2012 Results in Focus: What 15 year olds know and what they can do with what they know (2014). Available at: http://www.oecd.org/pisa/keyfindings/pisa-2012-results-overview.pdf

Putz-Plecko, Barbara. Background Report on Cultural Education: The Promotion of Cultural Knowledge, Creativity and Inter-cultural Understanding through Education. (2008). Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe: Paris. Available at: http://www.kulturskoleradet.no/upload/bruker/dokumenter/Dokumentarkiv/11_Internasjonalt_og_nordisk/2008_12_Cultural_Education_-_Europaradet.pdf

Richards, J.M. (1976). Provision for the Arts. Dublin: Arts Council.

Roe, Sandra. The Report of a Consultation with Young People on Reform of the Junior Cycle. (2011). Dublin: Government Publications. Available at: http://www.ncca.ie/en/Curriculum_and_Assessment/Post-Primary_Education/Junior_Cycle/Junior_cycle_developments/Dáil_na_nÓg_report_.pdf

Sahlberg, P. "The Role of Education in Promoting Creativity: Potential Barriers and Enabling Factors". (337-44). Available at: http://0nulled.com/doc/pdf/download/www__greenschool__org--wp-content--uploads--2012--03--Pasi-Sahlberg.pdf

The Dana Foundation. (2008). Learning, Arts, and the Brain: The Dana Consortium Report on Arts and Cognition. New York; Washington, D.C.: Dana Press. Available at: http://www.dana.org/uploadedFiles/News_and_Publications/Special_Publications/Learning,%20Arts%20and%20the%20Brain_ArtsAndCognition_Compl.pdf

UN (United Nations) General Assembly. (1992). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Available at:

http://www.childrensrights.ie/sites/default/files/submissions_reports/files/UNCRCEnglish_0.pdf

UN (United Nations) General Assembly. (1948). Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Available at: http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). (2006). Road Map for Arts Education: Building Creative Capacities for the 21st Century. UNESCO: Paris. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/CLT/pdf/Arts_Edu_RoadMap_en.pdf

Wallace, Arminta. 'The seeds Sown are Rarely Wasted: A Charter for Change in Arts Education' in Irish Times April 23, 2013. Available at:

http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/the-seeds-sown-are-rarely-wasted-a-charter-for-change-in-arts-education-1.1368792

Winner, E., Goldstein, T. R. & Vincent-Lancrin, S. (2013). Art For Art's Sake? The Impact of Arts Education. Educational Research and Innovation, OECD Publishing.

Websites

Ark, The. http://ark.ie/

Arts Council. http://www.artscouncil.ie/About/Our-role/

Arts Council News: http://www.artscouncil.ie/News/Ireland-needs-to-integrate-the-arts-into-the-education-experience-of-children-and-young-people/

Arts in Education Charter Website http://artsineducation.ateci.ie

Arts in Education Portal. http://artsineducation.ie/en/watch-listen-read/

ATECI (Association of Teachers'/Education Centres in Ireland). http://www.ateci.ie/component/seminar/?task=3&cid=1420

Commentary: The Arts Will Help School Accountability by Mariale Hardiman. http://www.dana.org/News/Details.aspx?id=42952

Creative Engagement. http://www.creativeengagement.ie/index.php/about-us/

DES, "Briefing Note" 4th October, 2012. https://www.education.ie/en/Schools-Colleges/Information/Curriculum-and-Syllabus/Junior-Cycle-/A-Framework-for-Junior-Cycle-Briefing-Note.pdf

Encountering the Arts Ireland (ETAI). http://www.lec.ie/media/docs/ETAIPRESSRELEASE131113.pdf

European Commission. "Education and Training". http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/school/math_en.htm

Fighting Words. http://www.fightingwords.ie/about-us

Irish Architecture Foundation (IFA). http://www.architecturefoundation.ie

Irish Primary School Mathematics Curriculum. http://www.curriculumonline.ie/getmedia/9df5f3c5-257b-471e-8d0f-f2cf059af941/PSEC02_Mathematics_Curriculum.pdf

Irish Times, The. http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/a-portal-to-the-future-of-the-arts-in-education-1.2212746

Music Generation. http://www.musicgeneration.ie/about/

State Examinations Commission "Press Release 2015 State Examinations. https://www.examinations.ie/misc-doc/PR_Examstart_15.pdf

TedX Dublin. You Tube. http://www.tedxdublin.com/portfolio-item/fighting-words-sean-love/ Writers in Schools Scheme. http://www.artscouncil.ie/funds/Writers-in-schools-scheme/