
IDEAS AND IMAGINATION

CREATIVITY AND LEARNING

**OUR
CREATIVE
VOICE**

93% of the Scottish population believes that creative activity is essential for children and young people's learning and well-being

Scottish Opinion Survey 56 Degree Insight,
December 2020

Art and creativity are essential in providing the rich, extensive and quality education that children and young people deserve. Whether it be through subjects such as music, visual arts, theatre and film, or through access to places like museums and libraries, creative experiences and arts education support learners' skills and talents, help them develop and articulate ideas, and bring significant positive effects to their learning.

The impact of art and creativity also extends beyond arts subjects themselves, with their positive influence being felt across a range of other areas. For example, music workshops on rhythm and keeping time can improve skills in maths, creating reviews at a film club can encourage pupils to focus on literacy skills, and working with a theatre company can develop children's confidence in reading. In addition, creativity can help increase attainment across all subjects, and contribute to the development of literacy and numeracy skills.

In early years settings, participation in art and creativity can bring significant boosts to the development of some of our youngest children. It can help support their speech and language skills, concentration and memory, and their ability to share and interact with other children. Simple melodies heard in singing support communication and language development in babies, while verbal communication can be improved through access to picture storybooks for infants and theatre programmes for pre-school children. These, along

with a range of other creative activities such as dance, can all enhance development and help children make the transition to school.

Art and creativity help children and young people to progress in education, fostering a sense of enjoyment in learning and encouraging students to attend school. Access to creative activities and subjects can support pupils to thrive, increasing levels of engagement and attainment across the curriculum. It is therefore vital that we advocate for the protection and development of arts education and creative experiences, especially given the particular significance of these benefits to children who might not otherwise have the chance to access and engage with such opportunities. Creative projects can encourage participants to think about learning and how they can apply their skills in other contexts. This is particularly important when pupils may not be fully engaged in formal education as it enables them to apply skills learned 'non-formally' to formal contexts.

77% believe that arts education in schools is as important as science education

Scottish Opinion Survey 56 Degree Insight, December 2020

Participation in art and creative activities foster skills that support young people to be responsible citizens, such as curiosity, tolerance, open-mindedness and cultural awareness. It also offers the opportunity to develop and enhance a multitude of transferable skills, such as listening and concentration, resilience, team-work and communication. Such attributes all contribute to academic success: learning through art and creativity can help children develop the skills and behaviour that lead them to do better in school and beyond. It can also advance skills in creative thinking, collaboration and problem-solving, skills which benefit not only young people when they are pupils but also when they move into the world of work.

Employers are increasingly seeking those with an aptitude for innovation, decision-making, flexibility and problem solving, skills which are greatly enhanced by having access to creative experiences and arts education. In addition, our industries and reputation rely on fostering young people's interest and aptitude in creative activities. Scotland's impressive reputation in areas such as design, gaming and film is dependent upon talent from a multitude of creative sectors which is, in turn, contingent upon young people choosing to pursue a career within these industries. Arts subjects in formal education should, therefore, be viewed as just as valuable as other areas of study: our society benefits from and requires citizens

Research suggests that studying the arts improves children's life chances, their health and employability

The Arts for Every Child: Why arts education is a social justice issue – Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2019

who have the skills acquired through creative subjects. Further Education and Higher Education settings also play a crucial role as hubs of creative and cultural significance. The Arts, Culture and Creative Sector has a significant relationship with Scotland's knowledge economy, with world-leading institutions and high-quality graduates and research. The creative industries are developers and users of innovation, tech and emergent forms of creative practice (**Scottish Government 2021**).

Art and creativity make a vital contribution to all stages of our education and to lifelong development and learning. It brings tremendous developmental benefits, from encouraging infants to make their first words to supporting our young people as they venture into adulthood. Art and creativity can engage learners, enhance skills and promote achievement for all ages.

Through creative experiences, we are better placed to navigate the world we live in, play a positive role in our society and develop the skills we need for life.

FIND OUT MORE:

The Arts for Every Child: Why arts education is a social justice issue

(Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) and Paul Hamlyn Foundation, 2019)

Understand more about arts as a social justice issue and the huge range of ways access to the arts can enhance life chances, including its impact on health and wellbeing, employability, citizenship and diversity.

How do you draw a rainbow the wrong way? Understanding young people's development in creative activities

(BOP Consulting, 2017)

Discover more about CashBack for Creativity, managed by Creative Scotland and funded through the Scottish Government's Cashback for Communities programme. Using funds recovered from the proceeds of crime, money was invested into a range of free arts and creative projects to generate opportunities for young people experiencing additional challenges or barriers to access.

ImagineNation: The Value of Cultural Learning

(Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA), 2017)

Read about the value of cultural learning within and beyond the education system and the important of working together to champion children and young people's right to access quality cultural learning.

Youth Music Initiative, Impact Evaluation Report, Royal Conservatoire Scotland, 2018-19

Find out more about the impact of the Youth Music Initiative (YMI) programme which aims to put music at the heart of young people's lives and learning.