Imagine*Nation*

The Case for Cultural Learning

The Cultural Learning Alliance is a collective voice working to ensure that at a time of social and economic stress all children and young people are able to have an active engagement with the creation and enjoyment of our arts and heritage.

The Alliance includes a range of organisations working across the cultural and educational sectors, including non-departmental public bodies, philanthropists, umbrella organisations, cultural partners, education specialists and schools. It is supported by a wider membership of over 6,000 individuals and organisations.

The Cultural Learning Alliance is chaired by Lord Puttnam. A Steering Group meets quarterly to oversee the work and direction of the Alliance, and an Advisory Panel offers expertise and strategic support to all aspects of the CLA activities. The signatories to this publication are a few – among many – supporters of the Alliance's work.

This publication is a contribution by the Cultural Learning Alliance to the current debate about the transformative role played by the arts and heritage in the lives of children and young people. It was developed through national consultation with the CLA's members and is available as a free pdf from the CLA website:

www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk

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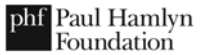

Imagine*Nation*

The Case for Cultural Learning

"I would like to propose that we let the imagination take its place at the heart of learning, and that we create a climate in which it can flourish. We need discovery; making; doing; exploring; creating; critical thinking; seeing; hearing; experiencing. Children have to be introduced to the arts in every form."

Michael Morpurgo, 2010

1. *Learning through arts and culture improves attainment in all subjects.*
2. *Participation in structured arts activities increases cognitive abilities.*
3. *Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to get a degree.*
4. *The employability of students who study arts subjects is higher and they are more likely to stay in employment.*
5. *Students who engage in the arts at school are twice as likely to volunteer and are 20% more likely to vote as young adults.*

Cultural Learning Alliance, *Key Research Findings: The Case for Cultural Learning*, 2011

Foreword

The Cultural Learning Alliance believes that the arts and heritage have the power to transform young people's lives. This document sets out how, and why. In it we argue that the knowledge, skills and experience made possible by the performing and visual arts, by museums, libraries, archives, and by heritage organisations are essential to young people's development. This cultural learning takes place formally in schools and colleges, and informally in the wider world where the arts and heritage offer children and young people opportunities to express themselves and their ideas and values. They are encouraged to explore other cultures past and present, and inspired to contribute to the arts and heritage that will be created and enjoyed in the future. Children and young people who have access to our cultural riches will be better equipped to contribute to our economic prosperity and social harmony.

The collaborations taking place between cultural institutions and those directly involved in the education of children and young people are remarkably cost effective: they extend the resources available to schools, and encourage children and young people – and their parents or carers – to make the most of what the arts and heritage have to offer. But cultural learning is under threat both from the financial retrenchment affecting cultural institutions, and from potential changes in the education system that are already leading to a decline in cultural opportunities.

Culture is the way we come to know the world, individually and collectively. It is as rich and diverse as the traditions that stand behind its making. It is the active engagement with the creation of our arts and heritage, and the expression of what and who we are as individuals, as communities, and as a nation. The quality of that culture is a measure of the way we live. At a time of social and economic stress, the case for cultural learning is stronger than ever.

Signatories

Lord Puttnam of Queensgate CBE	Chair, Cultural Learning Alliance
David Anderson OBE	Director General, National Museums Wales
Dr Maggie Atkinson	Children's Commissioner for England
Sir William Atkinson	Executive Headteacher, The Phoenix Canberra Schools Federation
Michael Boyd	Artistic Director, Royal Shakespeare Company
Christina Coker OBE	Chief Executive, Youth Music
Marcus Davey	Chief Executive, Roundhouse
Siobhan Davies CBE	Siobhan Davies Dance
Dame Vivien Duffield DBE	Founder, Clore Leadership Programme
Bernadette Duffy OBE	Head, Thomas Coram Centre for Children and Families
Dr John Dunford	Chair, Whole Education
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Sandy Nairne CBE	Director, National Portrait Gallery
Alison Peacock	Headteacher, Wroxham School
Mark Prescott	Director, Belfast Festival
Susanne Rauprich	Chief Executive, National Council for Voluntary Youth Services
Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE	Director-General, National Trust
Anthony Sargent	Director General, The Sage, Gateshead
Dr Anthony Seldon	Master, Wellington College
Sir Nicholas Serota	Director, Tate
Kevin Spacey	Artistic Director, Old Vic
David S Stewart OBE DL	Headteacher, Oak Field School
Sir John Tusa	Chair, University of the Arts London
Professor Mick Waters	Professor of Education, University of Wolverhampton

"In times of crisis, only imagination is more important than knowledge." Albert Einstein

"To limit cultural learning is to limit understanding and new ideas, suppress new ways of thinking, diminish personal development and inhibit social relations. How would this be of benefit – ever – but particularly at a time when these skills and capacities are crucial to our radically changing world?"

Anna Cutler, Director of Learning, Tate

"When fathers and mothers talk, play, read, paint, investigate numbers and shapes or sing with their children it has a positive effect on children's later development. Mothers' and fathers' involvement in reading is the most important determinant of their child's early language and literacy skills."

Department for Education and Department for Health, *Supporting Families in the Foundation Stage*, 2011

"The arts fuel children's curiosity and critical capacity. They are every child's birthright. It is vital that children engage with the arts early in their lives. The arts contribute to the development and wellbeing of children and young people. They inspire future audiences and the next generation of artists and arts leaders."

Arts Council England, *Achieving Great Art for Everyone*, 2011

"A well-stocked library staffed by a certified library media specialist has a positive impact on student achievement regardless of the socio-economic or educational levels of the community."

BOP Consulting, DCMS, *Capturing the Impact of Libraries*, 2009

"The study of drama, dance, music, and the visual arts helps students explore realities, relationships, and ideas that cannot be conveyed simply in words or numbers. The ability to perform and create in the fine arts engenders innovative problem-solving skills that students can apply to other academic disciplines and provides experiences working as a team. Equally important, arts instruction supports success in other subjects."

President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities, *Reinvesting in Arts Education*, Washington, 2011

Using the British Cohort Study of 1970, a report by Karen Robson for the Institute for Social and Economic Research found that "Even accounting for the effects of economic capital of the family of origin, art and music-related leisure, having attended a night course, reading for pleasure, visiting a library and leisure writing at age 16 all increased the odds of having a university degree at 29."

Robson, "Teenage Time Use as Investment in Cultural Capital," 2003

"Over the past century, the UK has stopped nurturing its polymaths. You need to bring art and science back together … Lewis Carroll didn't just write one of the classic fairytales of all time. He was also a mathematics tutor at Oxford. James Clerk Maxwell was described by Einstein as among the best physicists since Newton – but was also a published poet."

Eric Schmidt, Executive Chair, Google, MacTaggart Lecture, 2011

Unlocking Learning

Teachers
Artists
Parents
Carers
Communities

There are more than 15 million children and young people in the United Kingdom below the age of 20. They make up one-quarter of the population. Each has individual potential. Together, they are our future. Schools, colleges and children's centres play an important statutory role in supporting the social and intellectual development of our young people, but responsibility for making the best of that development also lies with parents, relatives and carers, with local and national government, and ultimately with society as a whole. We all have an interest in equipping the citizens of the future with practical knowledge and technical skills, but they also need to be able to take the right decisions, to empathise with others, to exercise their imaginations, and to generate and communicate new ideas.

What we are taught in school is essential, but learning involves a great deal more. It is central to the development of social values as well as the transference of formal knowledge and skills. The knowledge of culture that young people gain becomes active through personal experience: in the home, in public spaces, through entertainment, and through the informal and formal activities that shape our ways of life.

Personal experience is enhanced and enriched by the teaching of arts subjects, by educators and artists, and by our museums and galleries, libraries, literature, historic sites, theatres and music venues. They promote our past and future heritage by celebrating creativity, enlarging the imagination, setting standards, preserving memory and interpreting the past. The experiences that they offer extend and illuminate the knowledge gained in formal learning. Cultural organisations depend on schools to introduce young people to the ideas and values that they wish to celebrate. In turn, schools need this wider resource to help generate the excitement and interest, as well as the knowledge, which will stimulate children and young people to engage with society at large and to achieve across the curriculum. In partnership, schools, arts and heritage organisations share a responsibility to unlock the potential of young people through cultural learning.

"Art, images, artefacts, songs, culture are the principal means by which human beings define themselves."	Bob and Roberta Smith, Artist
"Dance has evolved from being a personal joy in my life to being the vehicle to take me to see the world, meet people, and discover myself."	Taha, Youth Dance England, National Young Dance Ambassador
"A library in the middle of a community is a cross between an emergency exit, a life-raft and a festival. They are cathedrals of the mind; hospitals of the soul; theme parks of the imagination. On a cold, rainy island, they are the only sheltered public spaces where you are not a consumer, but a citizen instead. A human with a brain and a heart and a desire to be uplifted, rather than a customer with a credit card and an inchoate 'need' for 'stuff'."	Caitlin Moran, *The Times*, 18 August 2011
"My teacher says that rapping is not poetry, and I strongly disagree so I showed her 'Her Story' by Natalie Stewart on the Poetry Station and she was like a different teacher and she gave me house points. So I think that every teacher should know that poetry includes rapping (which is just poetry with music!). So I thank everyone at the Poetry Station for putting it up and for letting me tell my teacher who is boss!!!"	Kerry, age 14, in an email to the Poetry Station
"Art and music-related leisure, reading for pleasure and visiting a museum during the reference period at age 16 increased the odds of civic engagement at 29."	Robson, "Teenage Time Use as Investment in Cultural Capital," 2003
"I joined Voltage to be able to educate people and help them learn the skills that I'm learning myself at the moment; to get them off the streets, not in a boring way, but in a creative way, by actually doing something to engage them on the streets. The main thing is that I want to get people enjoying music as much as I do, helping them to gain confidence and develop a goal, something to work towards."	Young Volunteer, Voltage Project, Youth Music, 2008–11
"Taking part in different cultural experiences gives each child the opportunity to develop their own personal preferences and ways of expressing meaning."	Bernadette Duffy OBE, Head, Thomas Coram Centre
"Research indicates that introducing learners to artistic processes, while incorporating elements of their own culture into education, cultivates in each individual a sense of creativity and initiative, a fertile imagination, emotional intelligence and a moral 'compass', a capacity for critical reflection, a sense of autonomy, and freedom of thought and action."	UNESCO, *Road Map for Arts Education*, 2006

Exploring Identity

Empathy
Exploration
Co-operation
Expression
Experience

Cultural learning enables children and young people to form a richer sense of themselves, their communities and the world around them. By entering the limitless worlds of drama and fiction, art, music and poetry and film they experience the emotions that have motivated artists and writers, and can explore their own. By experiencing the material evidence of the past at first hand they can empathise with past generations, understand the changing conditions that shaped their own culture, and locate themselves in place and time. Cultural learning encourages young people to imaginatively explore social conflict and moral dilemmas, and so confront the challenges in their own lives. Knowledge of great art, architecture, literature and music helps them to establish critical standards and opens up the possibility of experience beyond their own.

Cultural learning is not a passive process: it is an active engagement that invites children and young people to make their own stories and images, poetry and music. Through cultural learning young people learn to co-operate with each other, to work towards a common goal, and celebrate collective achievement. The process nurtures individual talent and encourages both teamwork and leadership. Children and young people are empowered by the act of self-expression. They are able to test their skills and gain confidence and self-knowledge through the challenges of performance. They become active agents, learning imaginatively to shape the world around them.

There is no single culture, no uniform set of aesthetic principles or creative practice that defines cultural learning. What it offers is an opportunity for all communities to understand the evolution of their own identity, and so become better able to understand the customs and cultures of others. By exploring the culture that shapes individual and collective identity, we become surer of ourselves.

"Overall, Creative Partnerships is estimated to have generated or is expected to generate a net positive economic benefit of just under £4bn. Expressed as a ratio of the benefits to the costs, we estimate that every £1 invested in the programme delivers £15.30 worth of benefits."	PricewaterhouseCoopers, *The Costs and Benefits of Creative Partnerships*, 2010
In the US, large cohort studies of 25,000 students conducted by James Catterall show that taking part in arts activities increases student attainment in maths and literacy, with particularly striking results for students from low-income families. "Our analysis of the NELS:88 survey established, for the first time in any comprehensive way, that students involved in the arts are demonstrably doing better in school than those who are not."	Catterall, *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art*, 2009
"Students who participated in the National Theatre's three-year drama project performed better at numeracy and reading than a comparable group of students who did not participate."	Fleming, Merrell and Tymms, "The impact of drama on pupils' language, mathematics, and attitude," 2004
"Participation in structured arts activities improves young people's cognitive abilities… Participation of young people in such activities could increase their cognitive ability test scores by 16% and 19%, on average, above that of non-participants (all other things being equal)."	CASE, *Understanding the impact of engagement in culture and sport*, 2010
"The highlight for me was the dad of a big working class family, who has had several students through the school. He came up to me after the performance and said: 'You know, I've heard you go on over the years about letting every kid achieve their full potential, and I've always thought it was just words. But tonight you've had my boy on a stage, and not only that: doing Shakespeare! I just want to thank you.' And he shook my hand. I wish I could bottle that."	Headteacher, RSC Learning and Performance Network school
"Dance is built into the very fabric of the school and helps to drive up our examination results and value-added scores, particularly amongst students with low self-esteem. Dance has a huge impact on students' sense of connectivity to the school and their general fitness, as well as enhancing learning in other curriculum areas as a result of marked improvements in powers of concentration and overall confidence."	Elliott Furneaux, Headteacher, Heathfield Community School, Taunton, Somerset (Quoted in *Young People's Dance: A Ten Year Vision*)
"We beings need adventure / Just like we need a heart, / It's more than lazy leisure / Life's empty without art, / Ideas are like the universe / They cannot be confined, / And our ideas are so diverse / It's all in the mind."	Benjamin Zephaniah, extract from *Imagine Nation*, 2004

Building Knowledge

Intellect
Quality
Achievement
Engagement
Skills

There is clear evidence that cultural learning produces positive educational and social outcomes. It helps young people to learn more effectively, developing their cognitive skills and inspiring new ways of thinking. It also helps them to achieve more: participation in the arts helps children to do better right across the whole curriculum. By embedding the arts in their school, teachers have demonstrated that they are able to improve literacy and numeracy. They are also able to harness young people's passion for culture and create environments where they feel valued, empowered and motivated – attendance, attitude and wellbeing are all improved by engagement with culture.

Cultural learning is indispensable to the curriculum. Its subjects constitute a body of knowledge, skills and understanding that has intellectual depth and critical rigour as challenging as any other school subject area. Like any subject, it needs to be taught by committed specialists and given the necessary time and resources. There should be opportunities for progression and to evaluate achievement. All formal learning provided by schools and other settings should ensure that young people access a rounded education, building emotional development, skills for life and for leisure.

It is essential that children and young people have the fullest possible access to diverse forms of art, culture and heritage. Children and young people who have the opportunity to learn through and about culture are better equipped for learning – and for life. The arts and heritage constitute cultural capital that can be drawn on throughout their lives, and which will allow them to contribute both socially and economically, as active consumers and creators.

"The creative sector has huge growth potential. By 2013, the sector is expected to employ 1.3 million people, potentially greater than financial services. The digital and creative industries are a natural export strength for the UK, providing the UK's third largest export sector – only behind advanced engineering and financial and professional services."

CBI, *Skills for the Creative Industries: Investing in the Talents of our People,* 2011

"Young people that studied arts subjects tend to have higher employability and are more likely to maintain employment than those that did not study arts subjects. In addition, young people who took two or more arts subjects at standard grade tend to have a higher rate of employment than those who took only one arts subject."

DTZ Consulting & Research, *Arts and Employability,* 2006

"Learning through culture and the arts leads to creative thinking, confidence and problem solving – all skills which are prized by employers and which young people need. If we fail to offer our young people the opportunity to participate in the arts and culture, then we fail to support them in becoming the leading thinkers, innovators, creative business and community leaders of the future."

Lord Puttnam, Chair, Cultural Learning Alliance

"Great products, according to [the late Steve] Jobs, are a triumph of taste, of 'trying to expose yourself to the best things humans have done and then trying to bring those things into what you are doing'. The Macintosh, he has said, turned out so well because the people working on it were musicians, artists, poets and historians who also happened to be excellent computer scientists."

Steve Lohr, *The New York Times Magazine*, 12 January 1997

"I spent a lot of my early childhood in London's wonderful, diverse museums ... People don't think that retail is creative, actually what we do every single day of the week is create new products, new services and new ideas for the 20 odd million customers we have every week. I probably couldn't have done that if I hadn't had that stimulus when I was very young."

Sir Stuart Rose, former Executive Chairman, Marks and Spencer, 2010

"Let me tell you the story of a young man – Jez. Now Jez has a learning disability and lives in a group home with other disabled young people, and Jez loves music. One day an arts programme involves his group home, and he gets to work with a musician and write his own songs. Fast forward 20 years and where is Jez now? Well, he still has a learning disability and still lives in a group home. That is, he lives there when he is not on tour – performing or working as a musician."

Jo Verrent, Director, ADA inc., published in *Youth Arts Transfoms Lives*, Artswork 2011

Generating Wealth

Invention
Ingenuity
Talent
Enjoyment
Employment

The future prosperity of this country depends on the creativity of its citizens. Training of the hand, eye and ear is also training for the mind. Children and young people who are imaginative, articulate, and emotionally mature will be more intellectually curious and physically inventive. They will seek innovation and change because they have been encouraged to express themselves, and are confident in doing so. Scientific and technical invention is just as much an act of the imagination as writing, painting and composing: the more children and young people are encouraged to develop their imaginations in one area, the more prepared they will be to be ingenious and innovative in another.

Cultural learning as a young person is the gateway to cultural enjoyment as an adult. This country has an international reputation as the home of artists and writers; tourists are attracted by our theatre, music, art and heritage; the work of our performers, film and television makers, and the music industry, constitute some of our most profitable exports. The creative skills developed in children's centres, schools, youth centres, community spaces and cultural organisations are the drivers of the wider economy of the cultural industries, spanning fields as diverse as product design and fashion, advertising and video games. These are skills that need to be developed early, to be encouraged and nurtured. Exposure to the best of contemporary art, art of the past and performance of all kinds acts as a stimulating challenge, inspires new ideas, and sets standards against which children and young people can consider their own work and can create and innovate freely.

Our museums, galleries and heritage organisations have a further important economic role to play: they encourage a critical engagement with the past that treats it as a rich, regenerative, and sometimes challenging resource. Cultural learning is the key to creating the audiences that sustain the cultural institutions which enhance our towns and cities – institutions that generate both material and social wealth.

Glebe School in Bromley, a mixed special foundation school, had an OFSTED report in May 2010 which described community cohesion as "outstanding" and said that "… the hugely successful FILMCLUB has had a major impact on helping students to develop and share their beliefs, cultures, and information about their religions and experiences".

Film: 21st Century Literacy, *Using Film in Schools: A Practical Guide,* 2010

"To bring a group of strangers together with only a single strand of interest in music between them (some of them that had never ever experienced 'Opera' before), and create a whole family working together and moving as one, is truly a wonderful achievement."

Sam and Issy Byrne, participants in the Royal Opera House's Purfleet Opera community project

"It is more important to invest in education for a civilised society for the future than to entertain ourselves now."

Anthony Sargent, Director General, The Sage, Gateshead

Citizen Power Peterborough is a partnership between Peterborough City Council, the Royal Society of Arts and Arts Council England. "In Peterborough the arts are playing a vital role in creating new connections between people and where they live in order to strengthen community participation. A flourishing arts community is good for people – giving us access to creative experiences and engaging our imaginations."

Jocelyn Cunningham, Director of Arts and Society, RSA

"High-arts students are about 15% more likely to register to vote, more than 30% more likely to have voted in the most recent presidential election, and about 20% more likely to have voted in any election in the 24 months leading to the last NELS survey panel."

Catterall, *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art,* 2009

"Taking part in the arts project and gaining my Arts Award inspired me to take risks, do more with my community, have fun with my children by visiting our local theatre and now I'm getting back into college!"

Silver Arts Award participant from a young mum's group, Art Depot

In a nationwide survey conducted by Ipsos MORI, people were asked about beauty and the built environment. MORI made a set of films, Beautiful Sheffield, *to build up a detailed understanding of how beauty is understood and experienced. Thirteen-year-old Jack talked on film about finding beauty in a ruined castle on the edge of the city. "It's somewhere we hang out and look after. We stand up to other people who don't. What's the point in trashing things? If there is no beauty in your life, just horrible stuff, you're not going to be a nice person."*

People and Places, commissioned by CABE in collaboration with the Arts and Humanities Research Council, 2010

Creating Community

Opportunities
Horizons
Motivation
Participation
Partnership

Our country faces a period of turbulence and crisis. The disruption to the world economy has been echoed by the disruption on our streets. This is not the time to restrict the opportunities available to children and young people by narrowing their imaginative horizons. The case is entirely pragmatic. If we ignore our responsibility to offer children and young people what is most imaginative and creative about our society, we risk failing an entire generation: one that will not thank us for our neglect of their future.

This document is an argument for the motivation, participation, achievement and sheer enjoyment that cultural learning brings. Not all individuals will see themselves as artists or as creators in a more general sense, but each has a right to self-expression, and to be able to explore the ideas, images and values that constitute the culture of their community, and of society at large. By denying children and young people access to the riches of culture, and not encouraging them to express their enthusiasms, we are excluding them from the cultural wealth that exists, and preventing them from adding to that wealth in the future.

Cultural learning offers a partnership between the settings for children and young people, both in and outside formal education, between professionals and practitioners, between families, communities and the cultural organisations that have a responsibility to articulate the best values of our society. Whether defined by ideas, locality, practice, ethnicity or faith, communities will be strengthened by the offering that cultural learning makes. That offer is to help us to understand ourselves, and therefore understand others; to express ourselves and therefore appreciate the self-expressions of others; to know our history and therefore acknowledge the history of others. The values that are embodied by our arts and heritage are central to our identity as a nation, and help to bind our society together.

The Principles of Cultural Learning

1. **Every child** and young person should have equality of access to a baseline of quality cultural learning opportunities.
2. Cultural learning happens inside and outside of schools and colleges, and in a **wide range of settings**.
3. **Families, parents and carers** are important providers of cultural learning.
4. **Young people shape the cultural landscape** and are the arts professionals of the future. They should be **empowered** and supported to engage with, lead and drive the cultural learning agenda.
5. **Cultural learning involves diverse practice** and encompasses the arts, heritage and knowledge valued by all individuals, cultures and communities.
6. Arts subjects taught in schools and other settings as part of the curriculum have **depth, rigour and an established canon** of knowledge. They are of equal weight, status, value and importance within the curriculum as other subjects, and require equal resource and provision.
7. **Partnership**, collaboration, a shared commitment and a collegiate approach from those who use cultural learning in their work with young people are key to its successful delivery.
8. Cultural learning **enriches our national life** and intrinsically makes a contribution to our society. It is critical to the development of our **economy**. Through cultural learning young people gain the skills to become creative and cultural professionals and to contribute effectively to the wider workforce.
9. It inspires civic **engagement** and helps neighbourhoods to make positive changes through collective ownership of culture. This leads to personal, social and community benefit and a shared sense of place.
10. Cultural learning has **clearly evidenced educational and social outcomes**. Young people who have the opportunity to learn through and about culture are better equipped to achieve across the curriculum, and to take responsibility for their own learning. Attendance, attitude and wellbeing are all improved by engagement with culture. Cultural learning practice should be informed by rigorous **research and evaluation** into impact and outcome.

A Note on Definitions

1. Cultural learning is an active engagement with the creation of our arts and heritage.
   - 'The arts' is a broad term that includes a wide range of disciplines from theatre, dance, literature, storytelling, music, craft and visual arts to film, spoken word, digital media, photography and beyond.
   - The term 'heritage' encompasses an individual's understanding of themselves, their material culture and the world around them. Cultural organisations and specialists such as museums, libraries, archives, archaeological sites, historic houses and other built environment institutions safeguard and contribute towards this knowledge and understanding.
2. Culture, in all its richness and diversity, can be experienced as listening, playing, seeing, watching and interacting, performing, devising, designing and composing, making, writing and doing. Arts and cultural subjects in schools include English, Drama, Art and Design, Music, Dance, History and Performing Arts. Good cultural learning takes place across all subjects, including science and the humanities, and through digital means. Cultural learning involves both learning through culture, and learning about culture, and involves critical thinking, creativity and the development of original ideas and action.
3. The CLA uses the term 'children and young people' to mean individuals from 0-19 years of age. It also includes young people from 19-25 who do not have the opportunity to access cultural learning independently. Equality of access to cultural learning does not involve every child accessing the same thing: it involves every child experiencing a parity of access to regular, ongoing opportunities for meaningful engagement.
4. Young people, teachers, families and communities can create, participate in – or be audiences for – culture: they are its makers and consumers. Cultural learning leaders practise at all levels in organisations and communities. They innovate and drive cultural learning. They can include young people, parents, professionals and practitioners.
5. The term 'cultural learning settings' encompasses a wide range of provision, including: formal and informal youth and early years settings and services; local authority provision; voluntary, community and private sector provision; services for vulnerable young people, disabled young people, looked-after children and those at risk; cultural organisations and their initiatives; children's centres, education settings; Further Education provision, universities and schools.

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"The key issue for me, as Children's Commissioner, is that learners' entitlements are captured in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and we are bound by its Articles: 28 the right to education, whoever and wherever you are; 29 that such education should be about your personality, skills, talents and aptitudes in the round; 31 that you are entitled to leisure, culture and play activities. We are in effect by this international treaty, given permission and exhortation to work to ensure our children are rounded citizens, ready to take on what the world asks of them. Involvement in cultural learning, as Ofsted and others have said many times, is part of fulfilling their – and our – promise."

Dr Maggie Atkinson,
The Children's
Commissioner
for England

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cultural
learning
alliance

The Cultural Learning Alliance is a collective voice working to ensure that at a time of social and economic stress all children and young people are able to have an active engagement with the creation and enjoyment of our arts and heritage.

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www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk