

# Cultural Learning Alliance Report Card 2026



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## About the Cultural Learning Alliance

The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) harnesses the power of its alliance to champion a right to Arts and to culture for every child. It uses evidence in three ways: to provide annual data-based surveys of children's access to the Arts; to share insights into the policy and practice landscape; and to demonstrate the ways in which an Arts-rich education provides skills for life and skills for work, enabling all children to fulfil their potential. CLA applies a social justice and inclusion lens to its work, supporting, platforming and empowering change. [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk)

## About this Report Card

This Report Card is a summary of the complete data for 2026 which is presented in a separate supporting document, the *CLA 2026 Report Card: Detailed Analysis*: [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#annual](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#annual)

This is CLA's third annual Report Card and distils CLA's Arts education evidence work and reporting into a clear set of annual indicators, based – as far as is possible – on national time series data drawn from government data sets. Occasionally we broaden the scope of these annual indicators in new editions of the Report Card when new evidence is available – for example, in 2026 we have included data on ethnicity and SEND in relation to Level 2 and Level 3 Arts subjects take-up; Arts apprenticeships data; and new commissioned survey findings on the Arts in primary schools.

## About the author

Written by Baz Ramaiah, CLA Policy and Evidence Associate.

### Abbreviations

**D&T** Design & Technology  
**EBacc** English Baccalaureate<sup>i</sup>  
**EA** Expressive Arts subjects\*  
**FSM** Free school meals<sup>ii</sup>  
**HE** Higher Education  
**IMD** Index of Multiple Deprivation (Office of National Statistics)  
**ITT** Initial Teacher Training  
**SEND** Special educational needs and disabilities

\*The Cultural Learning Alliance has adopted expressive Arts (EA) as the collective term for Arts subjects in schools. See page 49 for more details. This abbreviation is used throughout this Report Card.

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## CLA's work is made possible by:

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# Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs



## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs

Welcome to our 2026 Report Card. This edition lands in the context of the welcome education system change we have long been calling for. In November 2025, the Government's response to the Curriculum and Assessment Review<sup>iii</sup> confirmed a significant shift in direction that aligns closely with the ambitions set out in CLA's Blueprint for an Arts-Rich Education.<sup>iv</sup> But change will take time to deliver.

For now, we are still surveying a denuded Arts education landscape: the tide of Arts provision in schools has largely been going out in the state sector since 2010 and we are taking stock of what remains. The decline was driven primarily by the focus of previous governments (2010-2024) on a narrow range of subject areas leading to a systemic devaluing of Arts subjects and experiences in schooling in the state sector in England.

For our Report Card this year we have expanded the areas covered in each of our indicators to offer a more comprehensive understanding of barriers and progress in expressive Arts teaching in schools in England. For the first time we have commissioned new survey findings from Teacher Tapp to present a snapshot of expressive Arts teaching in primary schools – previously we have only been able to report on secondary school provision. And we can now share new data on Arts subject take-up in relation to entrant characteristics such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and ethnicity.

We also present more data on Higher Education (HE) providers and a more detailed analysis of student numbers for specific Creative, Arts and Design subjects in HE; new data on teacher qualification levels; and new data on Initial Teacher Training applications and acceptances – including by ethnicity.

All this new evidence enriches our understanding of what has been happening to Arts education in and beyond schools – between 2023/24 and 2024/25 and over time since the EBacc was first introduced in 2010. We first revealed evidence of the 'Arts entitlement gap' in our 2025 Report Card: the association between disadvantage and being less likely to pursue Arts subjects and experiences from the age of 14. We can now see how the 'Arts entitlement gap' in the education system starts in primary and has been travelling upwards as children progress through the system.

**The tide of Arts provision in schools has largely been going out since 2010.**



## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs



Understanding entries by demographic group provides some important new insights. This year our entrant characteristics data tells us that pupils with special educational needs or disabilities are under-represented in most Arts subjects at GCSE, but not in Art & Design or Drama. SEND participation for vocational entries at age 16 is more consistently positive. We now know that pupils eligible for free school meals are under-represented in all Arts GCSE subjects and over-represented in every Arts subject Level 2 vocational qualification.

We can now also see that Black and Asian students are under-represented in every Arts A Level – and we would suggest the need for further research to fully understand the barriers to Arts participation among Black and Asian students. The Lit in Colour report – published in 2021 to take down barriers to a more representative curriculum for English – told us that 34.4% of students in England were then Black, Asian or minority ethnic, but that 0.7% of students then studied a book by a writer of colour at GCSE.<sup>v</sup> The Curriculum and Assessment Review – and the government’s response to the Review – called for

a curriculum reflecting a modern society and diverse communities. The government described the need for it to be both “a mirror, in which every child can see themselves and their communities reflected, and a window through which every child is connected to the world beyond their existing horizons and perspectives.”<sup>vi</sup> We obviously welcome this approach, which is in line with our own Blueprint recommendations for a focus on representation, breadth and relevance across the Arts curriculum, resources and practice “so that children can see themselves reflected in what they are learning.”<sup>vii</sup>



**We now know that pupils eligible for free school meals are under-represented in all Arts GCSEs – and over-represented in every Level 2 Arts vocational qualification.**

## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs



### Our difficulty has been in reducing multiple new insights to just five key findings ... There are barriers to Arts opportunities and experiences at every turn for many children and young people.

Despite all this welcome new data, this third edition of our annual Report Card is not without its data gaps, and these are set out in our Explanatory Notes on page 50. We will continue to push for the government to collect data on primary Arts provision. We agree with the Curriculum Review on the importance of the government maintaining an evidence-led approach: “This must include a variety of evidence, including robust longitudinal data and research. It should include a critical approach to claims and assumptions which are not rigorously substantiated by independent research.”<sup>viii</sup>

Our difficulty this year has been in reducing multiple fascinating and valuable new insights across all of our indicators down to just five summary key findings. We have tried to pull out the most significant threads at the primary phase, then at 14, 16 and 18+, and to focus on the ‘Arts entitlement gap’ – this is the social justice lens that informs all our work. Expressive Arts take-up remains lowest in regions and local authorities with the highest level of free school meals and highest levels of deprivation. London remains a complex outlier here at A Level and we again set out a possible explanation for this.<sup>ix</sup>

The reason the Arts entitlement gap matters is made clear in our Arts Education Capabilities Framework, now available in poster format as well as an extended version.<sup>x</sup> We have a much better evidenced value narrative for Arts education than ever before. In May 2026 we are co-publishing Rapid Evidence Reviews into Dance, Drama and Music education, followed by a refresh of the existing Rapid Evidence review for Art & Design. These are a Royal Shakespeare Company/CLA co-commission, developed in partnership with Midlands4Cities, a doctoral research programme funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. We will also publish an analysis of the Reviews as an evidence base for the Arts Education Capabilities Framework.

Our first Report Card in 2024 was all about the numbers, and particularly the fact that the number of young people taking Arts GCSEs had fallen by 42% since 2010. This year the numbers provide a slightly more positive picture in some cases and a less encouraging picture in others. We continue to tell the overall story across all expressive Arts subjects.

It is clear that the receding tide has left behind pockets – or rockpools – of excellent practice in some schools and locations: we must reiterate the point we made last year that despite all the accountability drivers which have been working against Arts subjects since 2010, some schools have continued to value and prioritise the Arts as an essential component of a broad and balanced curriculum.

However, there are barriers to Arts opportunities and experiences at every turn for many children and young people in the state sector in England, some of which are darkly and damningly revealed in the Curriculum and Assessment Review, where for Drama, for instance, we are told that the lack of clarity and specificity in the requirements for the subject means that it is “not clear how the subject should be taught, what essential knowledge and skills pupils should acquire, or what outcomes are expected at the end of each key stage.” WOW. The Review also draws attention to a 2020 Education Policy Institute (EPI) report which “identified Music as having the highest disadvantage attainment gap of any subject at GCSE.”<sup>xi</sup>

## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs

It is trickier to present the general picture when some data sets are moving in very different directions. The picture can also vary from subject to subject. For example, at GCSE there are two instances of positive increases in Arts take-up (one of these is Dance where numbers are very small in the first place; the other is Music), but then there are falls *across the board* in Arts vocational qualifications entries at 16. What we present this year is a nuanced and complex picture for 14-16s in England. The situation is more uniformly challenging at A Level with a 9.8% decline – although the fall is made larger by a particularly high drop in Media/Film/TV Studies. The fall in Arts take-up at A Level is significantly higher over time since 2010 at 25%.

The outlook for some subjects is also more challenging than for others. Dance and Drama GCSE entries have fallen by 55% and 41% respectively since 2010.

Art & Design remains the subject least affected by the receding tide – and was the Arts subject where least curriculum change was recommended by the Curriculum and Assessment Review. We have taken the decision this year to distill the analysis by subject (from page 28) so that you can see at a glance the full story for each subject across all of our indicators.

Although hugely welcome, the government ambition to revitalise Arts education – set out in the government response to the Curriculum and Assessment Review in November 2025 – will be complex to deliver. Barriers such as the EBacc are being removed but incentives are harder to put in place. The new curriculum won't be published until 2027 for first teaching in 2028, with updated GCSEs being ready for 2029. Given the current context of political volatility, the aspiration for long-term cross-party consensus on education policy, rooted in evidence, feels pressing.

CLA is now consulting on what policy levers and incentives will be needed to stimulate a revitalisation of the Arts in schools, and on the catalysts – the key infrastructure components which will support schools to deliver Arts subjects and enrichment and drive effective implementation of Arts education reform. This work will result in an Arts education strategy map which will enable us to align our new sector asks in a complex and changing landscape.



## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs



What is clear is that for many school leaders this new Arts ambition is not yet landing in a concrete way, and changes at school level are being delayed until the new curriculum specifications are shared. So what can bring the tide of Arts provision back in more quickly?

**The ambition is to revitalise the Arts in schools – but what can help to bring the tide back in more quickly?**

In 2025, the Researching the Arts in Primary Schools report told us that there are six conditions or factors necessary for an Arts-rich education.<sup>xii</sup> We would suggest that these are also relevant for secondary education:

- **Leadership** – leadership commitment to the expressive Arts, informed by relevant expertise
- **Status** – the centrality of the Arts to the school provision, identity and values
- **Specialist teaching** – specialist Arts staff in post as a key source of expertise
- **Breadth** – consistency and breadth of the curriculum offer around Arts and culture
- **Enrichment** – extra-curricular Arts opportunities that enhance, extend and enable the curriculum to which children are entitled
- **Cultural partnerships** – sustained partnerships with Arts organisations and artists or practitioners

We would add Arts subject curriculum progression across/between phases; and widening learning strategies to increase access, participation and achievement. The government needs to find ways to enable and support these conditions in all schools and colleges – across primary, secondary and FE – if we are to see a genuine narrowing of the Arts entitlement gap sooner rather than later.

In parallel to the ‘Arts entitlement gap’ we examine new evidence which tells a continuing story about the ways in which students eligible for free school meals are far less likely to experience out-of-school Arts activities. We refer to this as the ‘Arts enrichment gap’. We also present Teacher Tapp research commissioned by the Arts and Minds campaign that expands the ongoing narrative of how independent school pupils have privileged access to both in-school and after-school Arts opportunities and experiences in comparison with their state school peers. How will the government commitment to an enrichment entitlement for every child and young person address this Arts enrichment gap?

## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs



### Our Teacher Tapp survey provides a picture of the challenges – in terms of time, subject expertise, and Arts partnerships – for the Arts in primary schools.

Striking amongst our 2026 findings is how those universities which have predominantly home-based students seem to be seeing the steepest falls in the number of Arts students. We can see that disadvantaged students are much more likely to live at home while attending university, so this is yet another way in which the narrative of the inequity of Arts access plays out when students leave school. More research is needed to understand this pattern. Is the devaluing of the Arts in the education system – combined with diminishing access to Arts subjects and experiences over the past 15 years – now being reflected in HE data, or are there other factors at work?

The picture for teacher recruitment and retention is more positive this year. Last year we reported on a significant decline in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) recruitment for Arts subjects. Data for 2026 shows that applicant numbers are now increasing, which is excellent news – although this is offset by the recent scrapping of the Art & Design and Music teaching bursaries (worth £10,000 but only briefly available); by declines over time since 2010 in ITT applicants (particularly for Music and Design & Technology); and by the government not meeting its ITT recruitment targets for Arts subjects.

Our new data on teacher qualification levels is particularly interesting at a time when the government might want to consider the role of artist educators – or teaching artists – as part of the Arts teaching workforce. This raises questions about providing the pedagogical understanding and skills needed for artists to enable inclusive, high-quality learning. Are there models, such as the NPQ (National Professional Qualification) suite that could be developed here?<sup>xiii</sup>

The Curriculum and Assessment Review made no recommendations for the education workforce – that was always beyond scope – but the government will struggle to revitalise Arts education without trained and specialist Arts teachers across primary and secondary. Until we know more about the number of Arts specialists at primary, the full picture is not available to us, although our new Teacher Tapp survey data certainly provides a picture of the challenges – in terms of time, subject expertise, and Arts partnerships – for Arts subjects (see page 20).

The question as to whether there will now be commensurate investment in Arts teacher recruitment to meet increased demand from schools is a live consideration, as is the matter of Arts education funding more broadly. In the meantime, our data will still be informed by the Arts-limiting policies and measures of previous governments for some time.

We will continue to record and publish the data annually, and to consider its implications for children and young people. In turn we would suggest that this Report Card data continues to have implications for our creative industries. There are many new findings in this edition on which we would welcome comment, and some which suggest their own distinct research studies – for example, the Arts entitlement gap in London; we hope colleagues may wish to work with us to pursue these. Our deprivation and diversity analysis is particularly important, and we are glad to have expanded this for 2026.

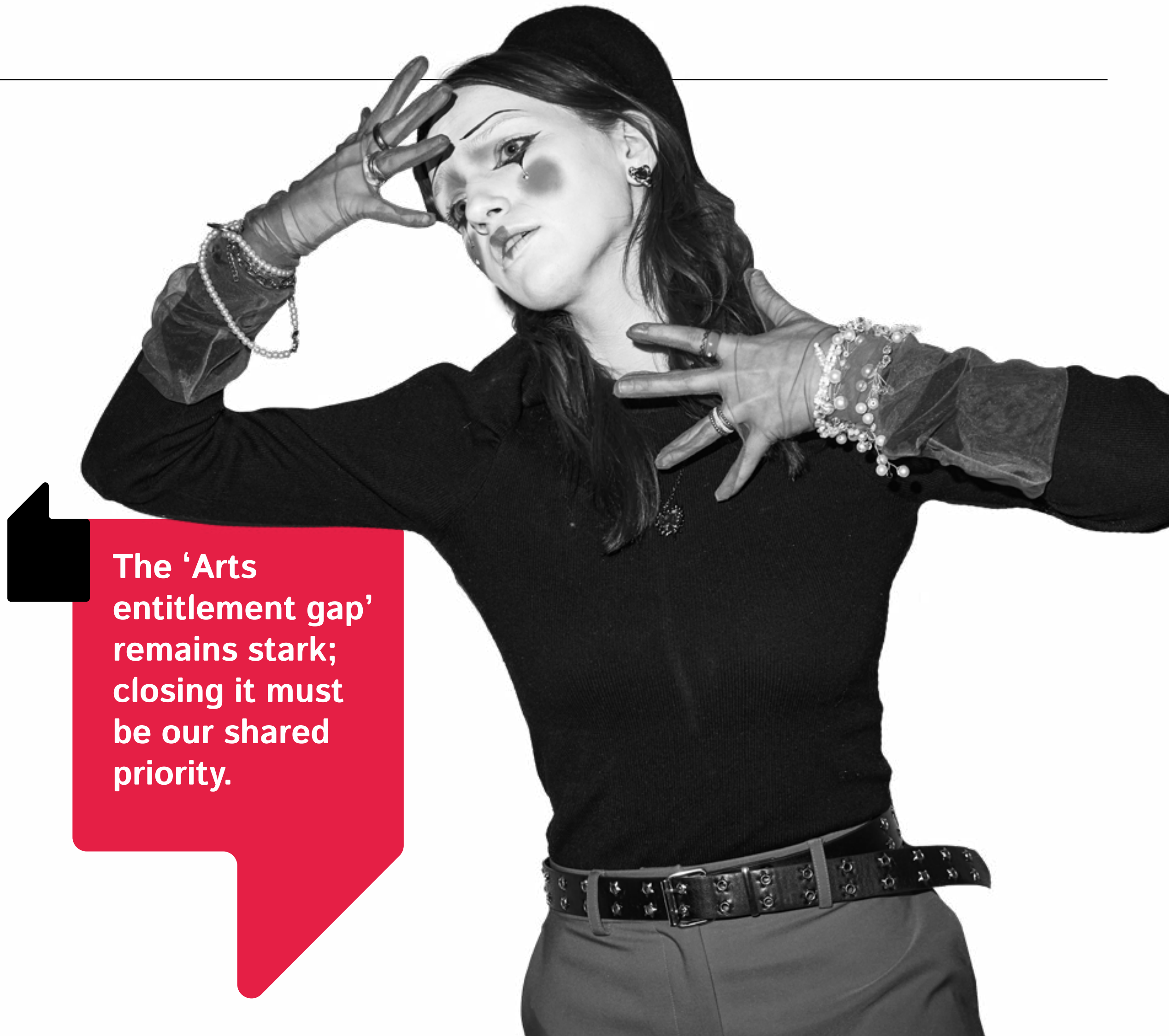
## Foreword from the Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs

The piece of the jigsaw that this Report Card does not consider is Ofsted, where we need to see the new inspection framework embracing Arts-richness as valuable. The draft proposals for the inspection of academies highlight that schools will be judged on civic responsibility and community engagement, and the quality and breadth of their enrichment programmes. It is therefore important to understand how the Arts curriculum and Arts enrichment programmes contribute to these goals: our Arts Education Capabilities Framework and its link to a substantial evidence base is important here.<sup>xiv</sup>

From autumn 2026 there will be a new National Centre for Arts Education and CLA has consulted widely to produce a vision and framework for its ambition.<sup>xv</sup> Promoting the value of Arts education – for learning and for life – to parents and young people, as well as to school leaders and teachers, will be one of its priority areas and again the evidenced Capabilities Framework can play a role here.

Having seen and recorded the long-term dismantling of the infrastructure that supports young people to access and benefit from Arts subjects, opportunities and experiences, we hope that the tide is now turning. We have in the mind the old adage that “a rising tide raises all boats”. That is exactly what is needed now, and there is no time to waste in rolling the tide back in – but the most pressing concern should always be those children and young people whose circumstances make it more challenging for them to access the Arts. The ‘Arts entitlement gap’ remains stark; closing it must be our shared priority.

**Sally Bacon and Derri Burdon**  
**Cultural Learning Alliance Co-Chairs**  
 May 2026



**The ‘Arts entitlement gap’ remains stark; closing it must be our shared priority.**

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# Key Findings

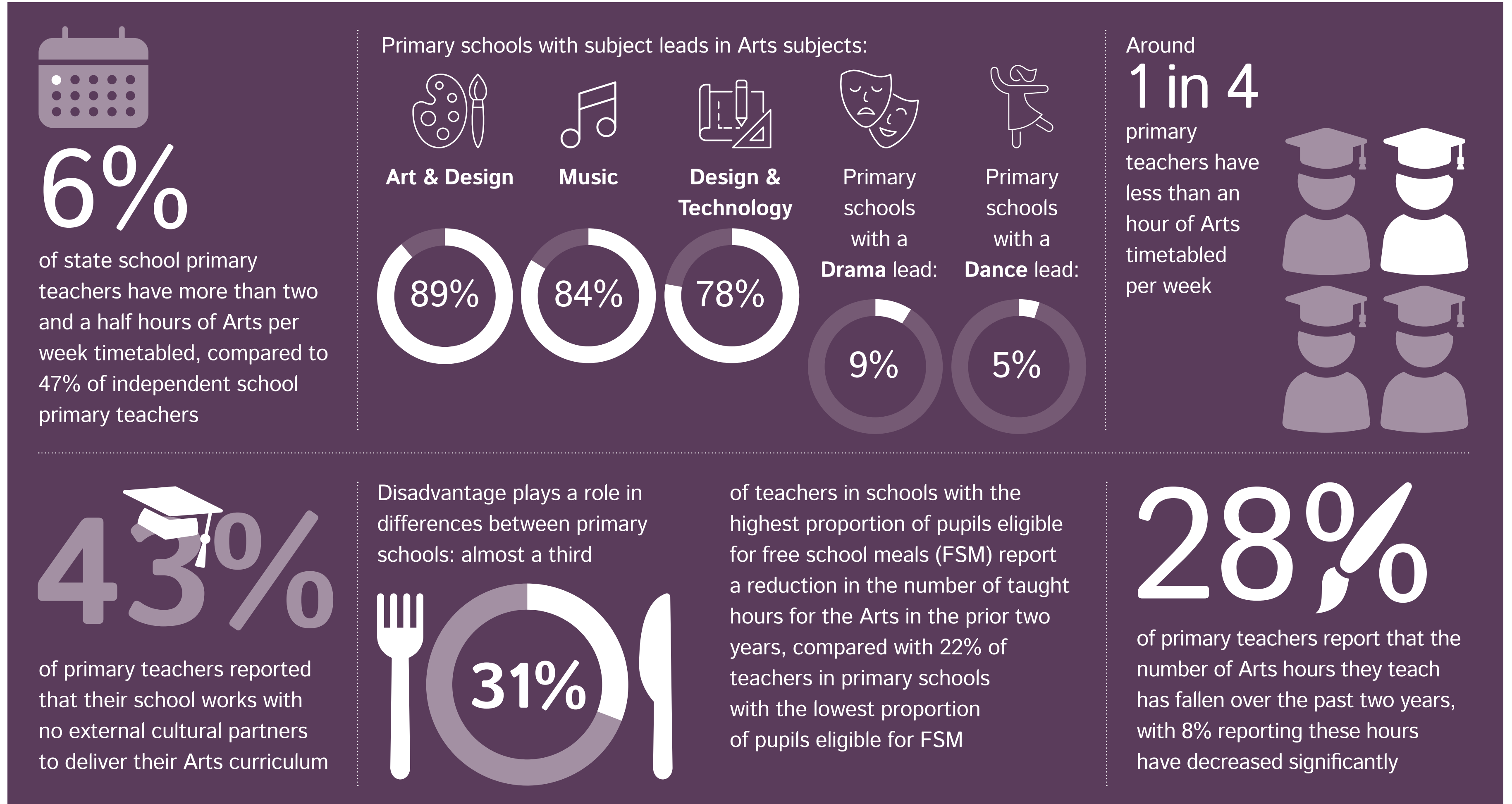


## KEY FINDING NO.1

### The Arts in primary schools

#### Differences in time, expertise and partnerships create an alarming 'Arts entitlement gap' in state primary schools.

Our new Teacher Tapp survey data of 2,900 primary teachers – commissioned in the absence of government Arts data collection for the primary phase – indicates significant differences in the hours available for Arts subjects for state and independent primary schools; a decline in the hours available for Arts teaching, which is higher for schools with more pupils accessing free school meals; a scarcity of Drama and Dance subject leads; and a worrying number of state schools with no external cultural partnerships.



## KEY FINDING NO.2

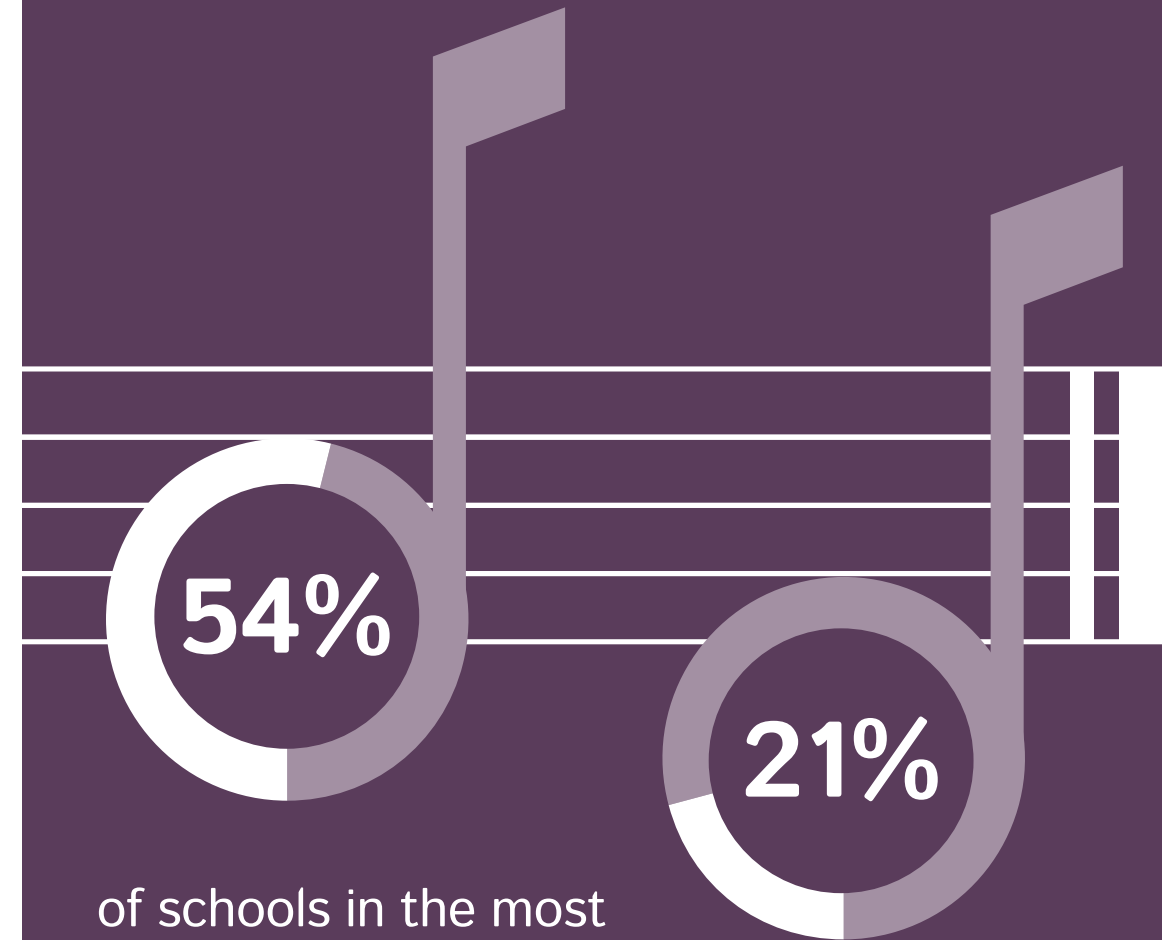
### The 'Arts entitlement gap'

**Entrenched socio-economic factors remain significant determinants in Arts subject take-up at 14, 16 and 18, and demographic group factors also play a role.**

The latest government data continues to indicate that where a child grows up and their socio-economic status are significant social determinants in whether they will access/pursue Arts qualifications from age 14, and in the type of qualifications they will select, and sometimes in which Arts subject they choose at A Level.

#### GCSEs and Level 2 vocational qualifications

Schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities are more likely to have no entries in some Arts subjects at GCSE:



of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities have no GCSE **Music** entries compared to ... of schools in the least deprived fifth of local authorities

This disparity is similarly stark for **Dance**, **Drama** and **Design & Technology**

Year 11 pupils eligible for free school meals are under-represented in all Arts GCSE subjects, while pupils eligible for free school meals are over-represented in entries for every Arts Level 2 vocational qualification



**Dance** has the lowest participation rate for FSM-eligible pupils at GCSE

and **Art & Design** has the highest

The regions with the highest percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals – the **West Midlands** and the **North East** – have the lowest proportion of Arts GCSE entries



Pupils with SEND are typically under-represented in Arts subjects at GCSE, with representation lowest in **Dance**, **Music** and **Media/Film/TV Studies**



Representation is higher in **Art & Design** and **Drama**, where SEND pupils are very slightly over-represented



SEND participation for Level 2 vocational Arts entries is more consistently positive, with over-representation in **Music**, **Speech & Drama** and **Art & Design**



Black pupils are under-represented in GCSE **Dance**, **Art & Design** and **Design & Technology** but slightly over-represented in **Drama**



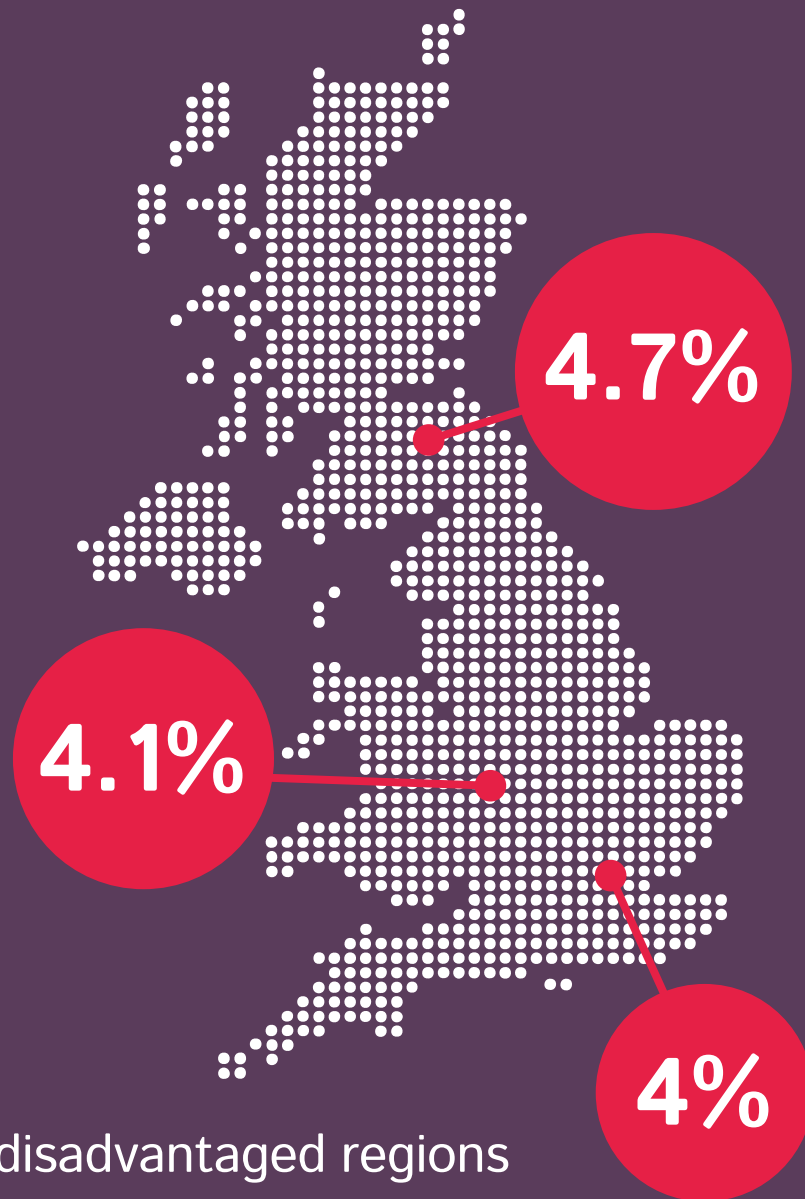
Asian pupils are under-represented in **Dance** and **Drama**, but representation is stronger in **Music** and **Art & Design**



## KEY FINDING NO.2

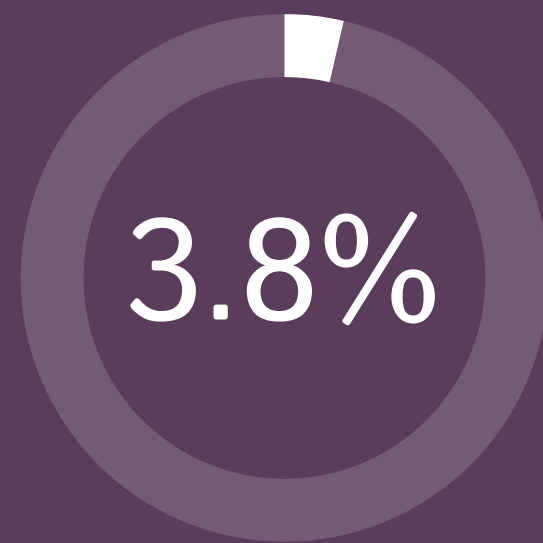
### The 'Arts entitlement gap' continued ...

#### Post-16 qualifications

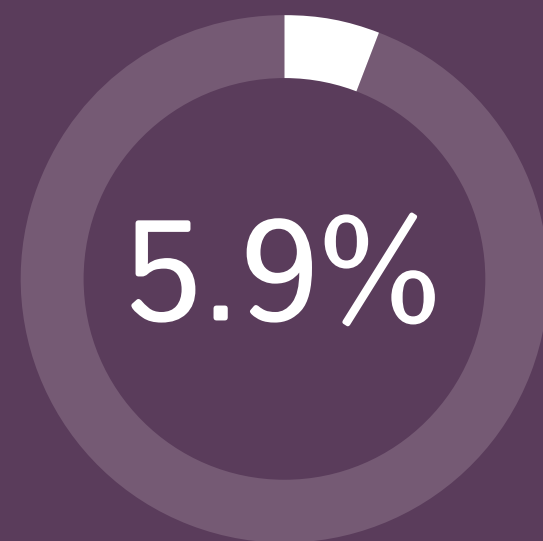


The most disadvantaged regions have the lowest A Level Arts take-up, the exception being London, which is an outlier: the smallest proportions of all A Level entries are in **London** (4%) the **West Midlands** (4.1%) and the **North East** (4.7%)

Arts A Level entries make up



of all entries in the most deprived fifth of local authorities; they make up

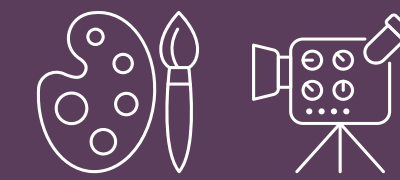


of entries in the least deprived fifth of local authorities

Students eligible for free school meals



were under-represented in A Level **Music** **Dance** **Drama** and **Design & Technology** in 2024/25 ...



... while being slightly over-represented in **Art & Design** and **Media/Film/TV Studies**

Students with SEND are over-represented in Arts A Level subject entries, as well as in Level 3 vocational qualifications  
Black and Asian students are under represented in every Arts A Level

#### Higher education



9 of the 10 universities

with the largest falls in the number of Creative Arts & Design domestic undergraduates are modern universities (formerly known as polytechnics). These play an outsized role in the UK in educating students from lower participation backgrounds, with 67% of all HE students from low participation neighbourhoods studying at modern universities.<sup>xvi</sup> 65% of all Black university students study at modern universities<sup>xvii</sup>

## KEY FINDING NO.3

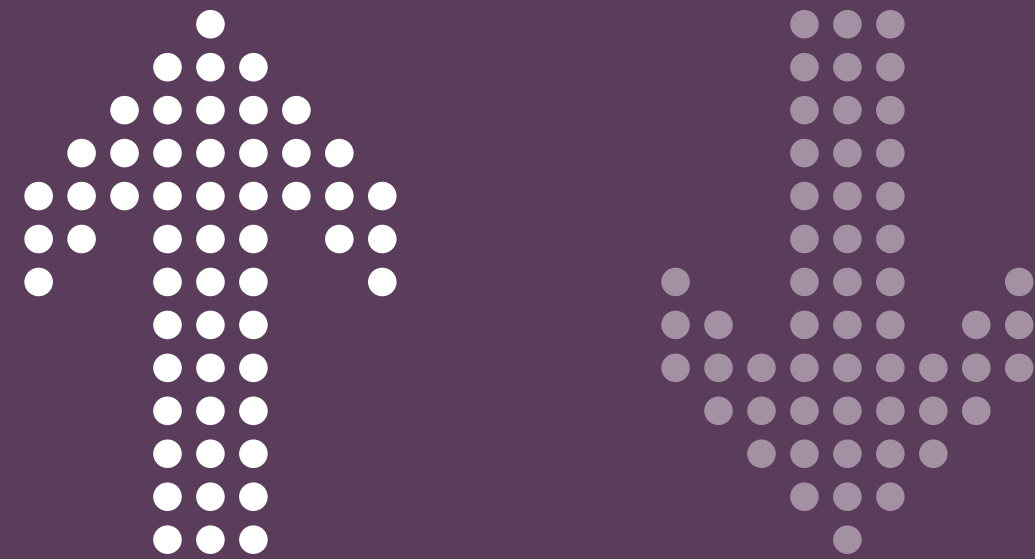
### The Arts at Key Stage 4

#### The outlook for Arts subjects at Key Stage 4 (ages 14 to 16) is largely stable but remains concerning.

Although there is a new government ambition to revitalise Arts education, the long tail of EBacc damage to Arts subjects will continue to impact subject choices at Key Stage 4. Data for Key Stage 4 provides a significant indicator of Arts education trends in England.

There has been a 41.7% decrease in the total of expressive Arts entries at GCSE between 2009/10 and 2024/25; this is a 0.3% improvement on 2025 when the figure stood at 42%.

Overall, the picture has settled but remains concerning



At GCSE, there have been increases in take-up for **Music** and in **Dance**



These are offset by falls in other GCSE Arts subjects and by a decrease across the board for Level 2 Arts vocational qualifications entries. The decrease in Arts subject take-up since 2010 now stands at

**41.7%**

A high percentage of schools offer no GCSE entries in some Arts subjects

This is now case for:



While this figure also stands at a disappointing



for **Music** and for **Drama**, it has improved from 2024, when it stood at 42% and 41% respectively

## KEY FINDING NO.4

### Arts subjects post-16

#### Arts subjects in the post-16 education landscape are characterised by decline and instability.

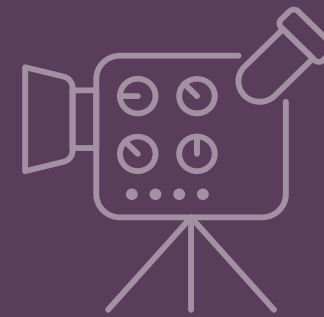
At post-16 we are seeing the impact of reduced Arts access moving through the system, combined with the impact of qualifications instability – likely due to policy changes since 2022, and uncertainty about which qualifications will be continued. The situation is compounded by instability for Arts subjects within a febrile Higher Education environment.

#### A Levels

Arts subjects are in decline at A Level across the board; entries to Arts A Levels fell by

↓ **9.8%**

between 2023/24 and 2024/25 (although this is in part driven by a significant decline in **Media/Film/TV studies**)



Arts A Level entries have fallen by

↓ **25%**

between 2011/12 and 2024/25



#### Apprenticeships

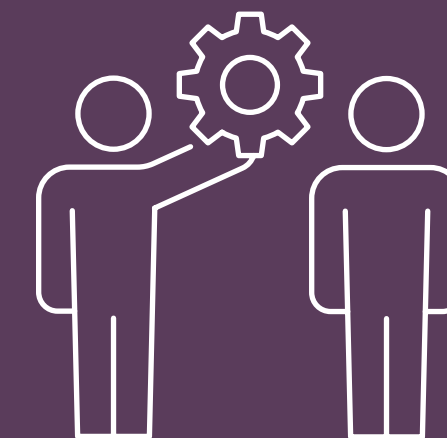
The number of students pursuing Creative & Design apprenticeships has fallen significantly:

for **under-19s** a fall of

↓ **35%**

and for **19- to 24-year-olds** a fall of

↓ **22%**



#### Higher Education

There have been small falls in the total number of students for Creative Arts & Design courses, but these seem largest amongst modern universities – these are the providers that play an outsized role in educating students from low participation backgrounds.<sup>xviii</sup> Some providers have experienced particularly large falls in academic staff numbers for Creative Arts & Design subjects



## KEY FINDING NO.5

### The Arts education workforce

**Although Initial Teacher Training recruitment has notably improved for Arts subjects since 2025, many more teachers lack specialist Arts qualifications.**

Strong and welcome increases in Initial Teacher Training (ITT) applications for Arts subjects between 2023/24 and 2024/25 are set against significant falls in ITT applications for Arts subjects since 2010, and a recent marked surge in the number of teachers with no post-school subject-relevant Arts qualifications.

#### Subject-relevant qualifications

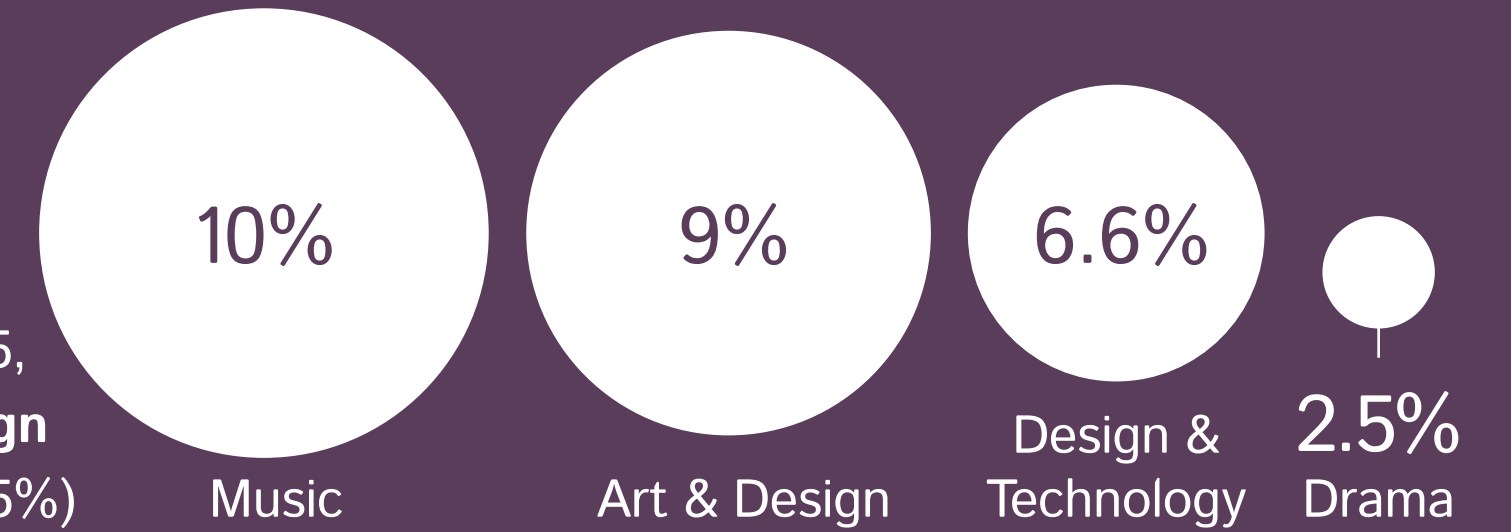
Just under

**23%**



of all expressive Arts teachers have no subject-relevant post-A Level qualification

The largest increase in the number of teachers with no subject-relevant post-A Level qualification has been in **Music**, with this figure increasing by 10% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, followed by **Art & Design** (9%), **Design & Technology** (6.6%) and **Drama** (2.5%)



#### Patterns in expressive Arts teacher recruitment

We can discern some broad patterns in changes in expressive Arts teacher recruitment between 2010/11 and 2024/25:

Although the number of ITT entrants in **Art & Design** increased by

**↑ 22%**

between 2010/11 and 2024/25 ...



... the number of ITT students in **Music** fell by

**↓ 51.3%**

and by

**↓ 52.3%**

for **Design & Technology**



The number of ITT entrants in **Drama** has fallen by

**↓ 4%**

between 2013/14 (the earliest available year for data) and 2024/25



#### Ethnicity

In 2024/25, the acceptance rate for Black and Asian applicants to Arts ITT routes was mostly slightly below the 20.7% average rate rate across all secondary subjects; by contrast

**Music** had a

acceptance rate for Black and Asian ITT applicants



As such, there is arguably a general picture of decline across expressive Arts ITT recruitment between 2010/11 and 2024/25

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# 2026 Indicators



# Methodology

## Data and scope

Our analysis focuses on data for the 2024/25 academic year for secondary schools in England, using data mostly drawn from official and publicly available Department for Education (DfE), Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) or Office for National Statistics (ONS) data sets.

Departing from previous Report Cards, the 2026 edition includes data on expressive Arts (EA) teaching in primary schools, using new survey findings from Teacher Tapp. The areas covered in each Indicator are also expanded to offer a more comprehensive understanding of barriers and progress in EA teaching in schools in England.

## Our indicators

As in previous editions of our Report Card, our analysis this year includes data relevant to five key indicators for access to and participation in the expressive Arts for secondary school-aged children and young people in England. Further to these, we have also expanded the indicators this year to include Indicator Primary, focussed on Arts teaching in primary schools. The indicators this year are therefore as follows:

- **Indicator Primary:** Expressive Arts taught hours, Arts staffing and Arts partnerships at the primary phase
- **Indicator 1:** Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualification entries
- **Indicator 2:** Level 3 expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design subjects in Higher Education
- **Indicator 3:** Number of expressive Arts teachers and hours taught in Arts subjects
- **Indicator 4:** Expressive Arts teacher recruitment and retention
- **Indicator 5:** The Arts 'entitlement' and 'enrichment' gaps

## New for 2026

For each of these indicators, we focus on data for the 2024/25 academic year but also use government data to analyse changes over time from previous academic years. For 2026, we also include a wide range of new data under each indicator:

- **Indicator Primary:** Original survey findings on primary school teachers' attitudes and experiences
- **Indicator 1:** New data on GCSE and Level 2 vocational entries at the school level, local authority level and by entrant characteristics
- **Indicator 2:** New data on Level 3 entries by entrant characteristics, changes in Creative, Arts & Design students and staffing by Higher Education provider, as well as more detailed analysis of student numbers for specific Creative, Arts & Design subjects
- **Indicator 3:** New data on teacher qualification levels

- **Indicator 4:** New data on Initial Teacher Training applications and acceptances, including by ethnicity
- **Indicator 5:** New original survey findings on teachers' attitudes and experiences, as well as new research literature from the 2024/25 academic year

## Detailed Analysis

This Report Card is a summary of the complete data for 2026 which is presented in a separate supporting document, the *CLA 2026 Report Card: Detailed Analysis*: [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#annual](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#annual)

# 2026 Indicators

## Indicator Primary: Expressive Arts taught hours, staffing and enrichment at the primary phase

We commissioned a Teacher Tapp survey of around 2,900 primary teachers to understand the number of Arts hours they teach in a week, the number and range of Arts subject leads in their setting, and their use of external partnerships for Arts curriculum delivery.<sup>xix</sup>

- Around one in four primary teachers have less than an hour of Arts per week timetabled, while 47% teachers have two or more hours timetabled. Noticeably, 47% of independent school primary teachers report having over two and a half hours of Arts per week timetabled compared to 6% of state school primary teachers.
- 28% of primary teachers told us that the number of Arts hours they teach has fallen over the

previous two years, with 8% reporting that these hours have decreased significantly. Disadvantage plays a role in differences between primary schools, with 22% of teachers in primary schools with the lowest proportion of FSM pupils reported a reduction in the number of Arts taught hours in the prior two years, compared to 31% of teachers in schools with the highest proportion of FSM pupils.

- EA entries made up 6.8% of all GCSE entries in 2023/24 and still make up the same proportion in 2024/25. This figure stood at 14% in 2009/10.



**43% of primary teachers report that their school works with no external partners to deliver their Arts curriculum.**

- The majority of primary schools have subject leads in Art & Design (89%), Music (84%) and Design & Technology (78%). By contrast only around 9% of primary schools have a Drama lead and 5% have a Dance lead.
- Around a third of primary teachers reported that their school works with a Music Hub as part of their Arts curriculum delivery. By contrast, only one in ten primary schools works with a freelance artist or a local arts organisation, and 43% of primary teachers reported that their school works with no external partners to deliver their Arts curriculum.



## 2026 Indicators

### Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

#### Overall entries

- The total number of EA GCSE entries has fallen by 0.3% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the largest falls in Media/Film/TV Studies (of 2.8%), Design & Technology (2.9%), and Drama (1.6%). However, these decreases have been offset by increases in entry numbers of 8.8% in Dance, 7.7% in Performing/Expressive Arts and 5.7% in Music. EA Level 2 vocational entries have decreased by 5.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the largest fall in Art & Design (6.9%), followed by Speech & Drama (6.2%), Dance (3.9%) and Music (3.7%). More broadly, there has been a 41.7% decrease in the total number of EA GCSE entries between 2009/10 and 2024/25.

- At a national level in 2024/25, large proportions of secondary schools had no GCSE entries in EA subjects: 83% of schools for Dance; 76% for Media/Film/TV Studies; 37% for Design & Technology; and 36% for Drama and Music respectively. We note that these null-entry figures have increased over time, increasing from 28% in 2016/17 to 36% in 2024/25 for Music, from 29% in 2016/17 to 36% in Drama, and from 77% in 2016/17 to 83% in 2024/25 for Dance.
- EA entries made up 6.8% of all GCSE entries in 2023/24 and still make up the same proportion in 2024/25. This figure stood at 14% in 2009/10.

#### Entries by geographic area

- The regions with the highest percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM) – the West Midlands and North East – have the lowest proportion of GCSE entries in EA subjects. Similarly, the East of England, South East and South West – the three regions with the lowest percentage of FSM-eligible pupils – have the highest proportions of EA subjects in GCSE entries. Similarly, in 2024/25 EA entries made up 6.4% of all GCSE entries in the most deprived fifth of local authorities compared to 8.6% of all entries in the least deprived fifth of local authorities.
- Schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities are more likely to have no entries in EA subjects at GCSE. In particular, 54% of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities have no GCSE Music entries, compared to 21% of schools in the least deprived fifth of local authorities. This disparity is similarly stark for Drama, Design & Technology and Dance.



Regions with the highest percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals have the lowest proportion of GCSE Arts entries.



## 2026 Indicators

### Entries by demographic group

- FSM-eligible Year 11 pupils are under-represented in all EA GCSE subjects. This under-representation is greatest for Dance, with only 15.5% of entries from FSM-eligible young people, followed by Music (18%) and Design & Technology (21.3%), while Art & Design has the best participation rate at 26.3%. By contrast, FSM-eligible pupils are over-represented in every EA subject area of Level 2 vocational entries.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) are typically under-represented in EA subjects at GCSE. Representation is lowest in Dance, with 13.5% of pupils entered at GCSE having an identified SEND, and similarly low for Music (15.3%) and Media/Film/TV Studies (15.4%). Representation is higher in Art & Design (18.7%) and Drama (18.1%), where SEND pupils are very slightly over-represented. SEND participation for Level 2 vocational EA entries is more consistently positive, with over-representation in Music, Speech & Drama and Art & Design.
- Examining ethnicity, Black pupils are under-represented in GCSE Dance (making up 4.6% of entries), Art & Design (5.3%) and Design & Technology (5.3%) in 2024/25. By contrast, Black pupils are slightly over-represented in Drama (7.6% of all entries). Asian pupils are under-represented in Dance (3%) and Drama (7%), but representation is stronger in Music (9.5%) and Art & Design (10.7%).

### Indicator 2: Level 3 Expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design at Higher Education

#### A Level and Level 3 vocational entries

- The number of A Level entries in EA subjects fell by a concerning 9.8% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The largest drops in entries were in Media/Film/TV Studies, with a decline of 33.7%, followed by Drama (6.2%), Dance (3.2%), Music (2.9%) and Art & Design (1.2%). As a result, EA subject entries made up 9.5% of all A Level entries in 2024/25, a fall from 10.7% in 2023/24. For Level 3 vocational qualifications, there has been a 1.3% fall in entry numbers between 2023/24 and 2024/25. More broadly, the total number of A Level EA entries has fallen by 25% between 2011/12 and 2024/25.
- London remains the region where EA entries make up the smallest proportion of all A Level entries at 4%, followed by the West Midlands (4.1%) and the North East (4.7%) – the two regions with the highest rate of FSM-eligible pupils in England. Entries are highest as a proportion in the South East (5.8%) and the East of England (6%), the two regions with the lowest rates of FSM-eligible pupils. Similarly, while entries in EA subjects make up 3.8% of all entries in the most deprived fifth of local authorities, they make up 5.9% of entries in the least deprived fifth of local authorities.
- In 2024/25, FSM-eligible students were under-represented in A Level Music, Dance, Design & Technology and Music, while being slightly over-represented in Art & Design and Media/Film/TV Studies.
- Students with SEND are over-represented in EA subject entries at A Level, as well as in Level 3 vocational qualifications.

## 2026 Indicators

- In terms of ethnicity, Asian students are under-represented in every A Level EA subject, with the highest participation rate being for Design & Technology. Black students were similarly under-represented across all EA A Level subjects in 2024/25, although by slightly smaller margins than their Asian peers.

### Apprenticeships

- There has been a 35% fall between 2023/24 and 2024/25 in the number of starts for Level 3 Creative & Design apprenticeships among those under the age of 19, accompanied by a 13.3% fall in the number enrolled in an apprenticeship, and a 9.3% fall in the number completing one.
- For Levels 4, 5 and 6, Creative & Design apprenticeship starts for 19- to 24-year-olds have fallen by 22% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, while completions have fallen by 18.8% over the same time period.

### Higher Education

- In total, just over 251,000 prospective students applied for Creative Arts and Design undergraduate degrees in the 2025 application cycle. This is a 3% fall on 2024 (259,120 applicants), and a 7.6% fall on the late pandemic 2022 peak in applicants.
- While the total number of domestic students at providers in the UK has increased by 0.6% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of Creative Arts & Design students has decreased by 0.5% over the same period.

- Some providers have experienced considerable falls in their numbers of Creative Arts & Design undergraduates between 2020/21 and 2024/25, particularly University College Birmingham (a fall of 85%), the University of Wolverhampton (58%) and St Mary's University (51%). Nine of the ten universities with the largest falls in Creative Arts & Design domestic undergraduates are modern universities (also known as post-92 universities) – these play an outsized role in the UK in educating students from lower participation backgrounds: 67% of all HE students in the country from low participation neighbourhoods study at modern universities.
- Both the University of Aberdeen and the University of Greenwich have respectively tripled their number of Creative Arts & Design academic staff between 2014/15 and 2023/24. However, over the same period, Roehampton University, the University of Kent and the University of Cumbria have all lost 66.7% of their Creative Arts & Design academic staff.



**Asian students are under-representation in every Arts A Level; Black students are similarly under-represented by slightly smaller margins.**

## 2026 Indicators

### Indicator 3: Number of expressive Arts teachers and hours taught in Arts subjects

#### Overall teacher headcount

- The overall EA workforce in secondary schools in England has grown by 1.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the largest increases in headcount in Music (2.6%) followed by Design & Technology (2%), Drama (1.3%) and Art & Design (0.7%). These figures are largely in line with the 1.1% increase in the overall secondary teacher workforce size. Despite these increases, it remains the case that 2024/25 EA staffing figures are well below where they were in 2010/11, with a fall of 6,000 teachers over those 15 years.

- Despite these welcome increases, there has also been a 15% increase in the number of EA teachers without Qualified Teacher Status between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with a nearly 23% increase in the number of non-qualified Art & Design teachers. In 2024/25, Design & Technology had the highest proportion of non-qualified teachers (5.4%) out of the EA subjects, followed by Music (5.1%) and Art & Design (3.8%).
- There has been a similar 5.3% increase in the number of EA teachers with no subject-relevant qualification post-A Level between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with just under 23% of EA teachers falling into this category. Despite these changes, it is worth noting that the proportion of EA teachers with no relevant post-A Level qualification has fallen between 2010/11 and 2024/25, decreasing from 29.8% to 22.6%.

#### Taught hours

- Across the whole of the secondary phase, the number of hours of expressive Arts taught has fallen by 0.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The total number of taught hours has fallen most for Media Studies, with a decline of 0.7%, followed by Art & Design at 0.3% and Drama at 0.2%. By contrast, the total hours taught in Music has increased by 1.4% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- At Key Stage 3 (KS3) the total number of taught hours in Music increased by 2.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, while the number of taught hours for Drama has increased by 0.7%. The number of KS3 taught hours in Art & Design fell by 0.6%, and Media Studies taught hours have fallen by 10%. Between 2010/11 and 2024/25, the number of EA taught hours has fallen by 8.9% at KS3, with a 28% fall in Design & Technology taught hours and a 51% fall in Media Studies taught hours.
- At Key Stage 4 (KS4), taught hours correspond to the number of GCSE entries in a subject. As such, there was a slight decrease in taught hours in Drama (1.1%) and Design & Technology (0.1%) between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Between 2010/11 and 2024/25, the number of taught hours in English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects rose by 30%, while the number of EA taught hours at KS4 fell by 26% over the same time period.
- For Key Stage 5 (KS5), the number of taught hours in EA subjects fell by 0.9% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The largest falls in taught hours between the two years have been in Drama (a fall of 3%), Music (2.3%), Art & Design (1.2%) and Media Studies (0.5%). However, taught hours have increased in Design & Technology (an increase of 1.5%). Taking a historical view, the total number of KS5 EA taught hours has fallen by 35% between 2010/11 and 2024/25, with the largest falls in Drama (40%), Design & Technology (40%), Media Studies (37%) and Music (33%).

## 2026 Indicators

### Indicator 4: Expressive Arts teacher recruitment and retention

#### Applications and acceptances

- There was a 32.6% increase in the number of EA Initial Teacher Training (ITT) applications between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with especially large increases in application numbers for Art & Design (60.6%), followed by Music (33.7%) and Design & Technology (21.5%). There has also been an increase in the proportion of applicants going for salaried ITT routes, increasing from 8.6% in 2023/24 to 18.1% for Art & Design, from 8.9% to 17% in Drama and from 15% to 23% in Design & Technology.

- In response to this increasing number of applications, the proportion of accepted applications for Art & Design has increased by 5 percentage points, while there has been a 6 percentage points increase for Music. However, the proportion of accepted applications has decreased by 3.8 percentage points for Drama and 4.6 percentage points for Design & Technology.
- In 2024/25, the acceptance rate for Black and Asian applicants to EA ITT routes was mostly slightly below the average rate for these groups across all secondary subjects (20.7%), with an acceptance rate of 15.8% for Design & Technology, 17.5% for Drama and 19.7% for Art & Design. By contrast Music had a 30.3% acceptance rate for Black and Asian ITT applicants. The acceptance rate for White candidates is far higher for every EA subject.

#### Overall numbers of Initial Teacher Trainees

- Overall, there has been a 51% increase in the number of EA ITT trainees between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The largest increase for a specific EA subject has been for Art & Design, where the number of trainees has almost doubled between 2023/24 and 2024/25 (with a 98% increase). Music has also benefitted from a 53% increase in the number of trainees, and Design & Technology has experienced a 42% increase in the number of trainees.
- Despite the general narrative of improvements, the number of trainees in Drama has unfortunately decreased by 7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This follows the number of Drama trainees already falling by 27% between 2022/23 and 2023/24 leaving Drama with more than three times fewer trainees in 2024/25 than Art & Design.

- Taking a historical view, the number of ITT students in Music and Design & Technology fell by 51.3% and 52.3% respectively between 2010/11 and 2024/25. The number of ITT entrants in Drama has fallen by 4% between 2013/14 (the earliest available year for data) and 2024/25.

**In 2024/25, the Arts ITT acceptance rate for Black and Asian applicants was mostly slightly below the average.**

## 2026 Indicators

### Recruitment targets

- Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the government's ITT targets for most EA subjects on which it gathers data increased, with a 50% increase for Drama, 33% increase for Art & Design, and 4% increase for Music – but a 26% fall for Design & Technology.
- Despite these increases, the government met 66% of its recruitment target for Art & Design (a 22 percentage points increase on 2023/24), 40% of its target for Music (a 13 percentage points increase on 2023/24), and 39% in Design & Technology (a 12 percentage points increase on 2023/24) in 2024/25. Drama is an unfortunate outlier to this pattern, where the percentage of the ITT recruitment target met has fallen from 79% in 2023/24 to 49% in 2024/25.

- While these are promising developments, the government was exceeding its ITT recruitment targets in Art & Design by 15% in 2010/11, 16% in Design & Technology and 19% for Music. These figures highlight the historic decline in the government's performance against its own recruitment targets.



### Teacher retention

- The number of unfilled vacancies across all EA subjects fell by 35% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Design & Technology vacancies fell by 45% between 2023/24 and 2024/25 and Music vacancies by 40% over this same time period. The number of vacancies also fell by 32% in Drama and 13% in Art & Design.
- The vacancy rate has also fallen for EA subjects between 2023/24 and 2024/25, dropping by 0.8 percentage points in Design & Technology, 0.7 percentage points in Music, 0.2 percentage points in Drama and Media Studies respectively and 0.1 percentage points in Art & Design.

- Nevertheless, the number of unfilled EA vacancies has increased considerably between 2010/11 and 2024/25. The number of unfilled vacancies in Art & Design and Music is 3.8 times higher in 2024/25 than it was in 2010/11. The increase has been slightly lower for Drama, where the number of unfilled vacancies is 3.1 times higher in 2024/25 than in was in 2010/11.



Drama is an outlier to the pattern of ITT improvement, down from 79% to 49% of ITT recruitment target met.

## 2026 Indicators

### Indicator 5: The Arts 'entitlement' and 'enrichment' gaps

#### The 'Arts entitlement gap'

- Using new survey responses gathered by the Arts and Minds Campaign with Teacher Tapp, we can see that 11% of school leaders in the independent sector report planning to increase the number of taught hours in EA subjects over the next two years, compared to 7% in the state sector. The survey also revealed that 8% of independent school senior leaders similarly stated plans to increase the number of hours given to extra-curricular EA activities over the next two years, compared to 5% of leaders in the state sector.
- The survey data also highlights that while 21% of state school senior leaders cited lack of funding or resources as a barrier to spending more curriculum time on EA subjects, this was the case for only 4% of private school senior leaders.

- Similarly, while 16% of state school leaders reported lack of suitable facilities as a barrier to EA delivery, this was the case for only 7% of independent school senior leaders. The net result of these disparities is that 52% of independent school senior leaders believe that they spend enough time teaching EA subjects, compared to only 28% of state school leaders.

#### The 'Arts enrichment gap'

- A Sutton Trust survey of English teachers and school leaders found that 34% of primary school leaders in 2024/25 have had to cut back on the extra-curricular activities they offer pupils due to funding challenges. In secondary, 18% of school leaders stated the same need to cut extra-curricular activities.
- A survey by the NCFE also found that 57% of working-class parents cut back on extra-curricular activities for their child in 2024/25, compared to 45% of parents in general. A survey of young people by Sport England also found that 45% of children from the least affluent families are less likely to be physically active.

- New qualitative findings from the Children's Commissioner show young people unable to participate in enrichment activities due to the up-front costs of participation, as well as the costs of equipment and transport to activities.



**57% of working-class parents cut back on extracurricular activities for their child in 2024/25.**

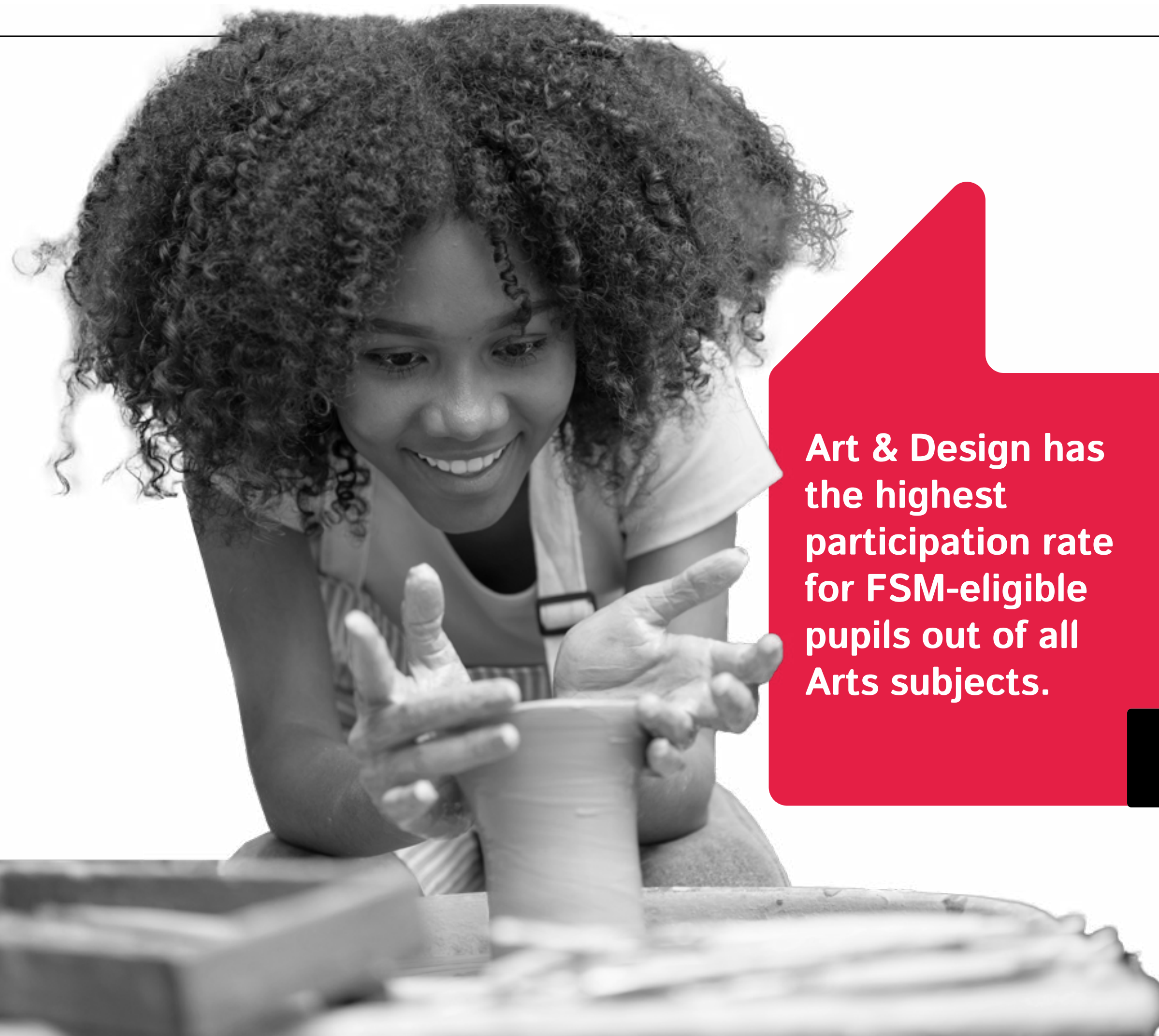
# Analysis by subject



# Art & Design

## Note

Art & Design GCSE and A Level is offered as a general specification, and also as five specialist options: Fine Art; Graphic Communication; Textile Design; Three-Dimensional Design; and Photography. Since the 2019 introduction of a new GCSE specification for Design & Technology, there has been a marked increase in entries for GSCE options in Graphic Communication, Textile Design and Three-Dimensional Design – and a fall in entries for Fine Art and the general specification, as well as a very significant fall in entries for Design & Technology GCSE and A Level. It is likely that these Art & Design options are being offered as an alternative to Design & Technology.



**Art & Design has the highest participation rate for FSM-eligible pupils out of all Arts subjects.**

## Indicator Primary: Expressive Arts taught hours, staffing and enrichment at the primary phase

### Subject leadership

89% of primary school teachers reported that they have an Art & Design subject leader in their school. 95% of primary teachers in schools with the highest proportions of FSM-eligible pupils report having an Art & Design subject lead, compared to 90% in schools with the lowest proportions of FSM-eligible pupils.

## Subject summaries: Art & Design



### Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

#### GCSEs

Art & Design GCSE entries decreased by 0.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Historically, entry numbers have increased, going up by 11.3% between 2009/10 and 2024/25 and by 0.8% between 2019/20 and 2024/25. Art & Design entries made up 3.3% of all GCSE entries in 2024/25, largely the same proportion as the 3.5% in 2009/10.

#### Vocational entries

Art & Design Level 2 vocational entries fell by 6.9% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

#### GCSEs, vocational qualifications and disadvantage

98% of all secondary schools in England have at least one entry in Art & Design GCSE (2024/25). This is an increase from 97% in 2023/24. By contrast, 94% of secondary schools had no entries in Level 2 vocational Art & Design in 2024/25. In 2024/25, 92% of secondary schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities have at least one GCSE entry compared to 95% in the least deprived fifth.

#### Free school meals

Art & Design has the highest participation rate for FSM-eligible pupils out of all the EA subjects, with 26.3% of entrants falling into this group. There has also been a two percentage points increase in FSM-eligible pupil participation in Art & Design between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Similarly, 29% of all Art & Design Level 2 vocational entries are from FSM-eligible pupils.

#### SEND

18.7% of all 2024/25 Art & Design GCSE entrants had an identified SEND, slightly above the 16.9% of all Year 11 pupils. This is similar for vocational Art & Design, where this was the case for 21.2% of entrants. This means that SEND pupils are well represented in Art & Design entries at Level 2.

#### Ethnicity

5% of all Art & Design GCSE entries were from Black pupils and 4.8% of Level 2 vocational Art & Design entries were from this ethnic group. This means that Black pupils are under-represented in Art & Design entries at Level 2. 10.7% of all GCSE entries are from Asian pupils, while this is the case for 12.6% of Level 2 Art & Design vocational entries. This means that Asian pupils are under-represented at GCSE, but not on Level 2 vocational pathways.

## Subject summaries:

### Art & Design

#### Indicator 2: Level 3 expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design subjects in Higher Education

##### Level 3 qualifications

The number of A Level Art & Design entries has fallen by 1.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25 and by 5.8% between 2010/11 and 2024/25. However, entries did increase by 3.2% between 2019/20 and 2024/25. On vocational pathways, there was a 0.2% increase in Crafts, Creative Arts & Design entries between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

##### Free school meals

9.3% of all A Level students were FSM-eligible in 2024/25. 10.3% of Art & Design A Level entries in 2024/25 were from FSM-eligible pupils, making this group slightly over-represented in Art & Design at A Level. Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the proportion of vocational Creative Arts & Design entries from FSM-eligible students increased by two percentage points from 15.9% to 18%.

##### SEND

While 4.8% of all A Level students had an identified SEND in 2024/25, 8.2% of Art & Design A Level entrants had an identified SEND. This is the case for 13.7% of vocational Creative Arts & Design students.

##### Ethnicity

5.8% of all A Level entrants are Black; only 4.2% of Art & Design A Level students are Black. While Asian students made up 15% of all A Level entries in 2024/25, they made up only 7.2% of Art & Design students.

##### Higher Education

Creative Arts and Design (non-specific) undergraduates decreased in number by 2.9% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Art also experienced a similar fall in undergraduate numbers of 1.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. In 2024/25, Design Studies students made up 35% of all Creative Arts & Design domestic undergraduates.

#### Indicator 3: Number of expressive Arts teachers and hours taught in Arts subjects

##### Workforce size fluctuation

The Art & Design teaching workforce increased in size by 0.7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This is a smaller between-year increase than for other EA subjects but may be due to there being more limited headroom for the Art & Design workforce to grow (given that there were 70% more Art & Design teachers than Music teachers in 2023/24, and 39% more than Drama). The Art & Design workforce has grown by 3% between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

##### Non-qualified teachers

There have been increases in the number of non-qualified Art & Design teachers, with the number going up by 36.5% between 2010/11 and 2024/25 and by 22.8% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This leaves the proportion of all Art & Design teachers who are non-qualified at 3.8% in

2024/25. The number of Art & Design teachers with no subject-relevant post-A Level qualification increased by 9% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. In 2010/11, teachers with this qualification level made up 9.1% of all Art & Design teachers. This figure has fallen to 5.8% in 2024/25.

##### Hours taught at KS3

The total number of Art & Design taught hours in the secondary phase fell by 0.6% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. In 2010/11, Art & Design taught hours made up 22.4% of all KS3 taught hours for all EA subjects, increasing to 24.9% by 2024/25. There was a 1.3% increase in KS3 taught hours in Art & Design between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

##### Hours taught at KS4 and KS5

There was a 0.5% increase in KS4 taught hours in Art & Design between 2023/24 and 2024/25, but an 11% fall in taught hours between 2010/11 and 2024/25. The number of taught hours at KS5 increased by 1.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25 but fell by 22% between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

## Subject summaries: Art & Design

### Indicator 4: Expressive Arts teacher recruitment and retention

#### Initial Teacher Training recruitment

Art & Design ITT experienced the largest increase in applicants between 2023/24 and 2024/25 of all the EA subjects, with a 60.6% increase. The proportion of applications for salaried routes also increased from 8.6% in 2023/24 to 18.1% in 2024/25. The number of accepted applications for Art & Design also increased from 39.2% to 44.2% (a 5 percentage points increase) between 2023/24 and 2024/25. We also note that the acceptance rate for Black and Asian applicants was only 19.7% in 2024/25. It was 51% for White applicants.

The picture was much starker in 2024: comparing 2023/24 to 2020/21 when ITT recruitment was particularly strong (during the pandemic), the number of recruits for Art & Design had fallen by 84%.

#### Initial Teacher Training trainees

The total number of ITT trainees has increased by 98% in Art & Design between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the largest increase of any EA subject. Looking further back, there has been a 22% increase in ITT students from 2010/11 to 2024/25.

#### Government ITT targets

The government's Art & Design recruitment target increased by 33% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the government meeting 66% of its target in 2024/25 (a 22 percentage points increase from 2023/24). The government's ITT recruitment target for Art & Design has more than doubled (a 102% increase) between 2010/11 and 2024/25. The government was exceeding its recruitment target by 15% in 2010/11.

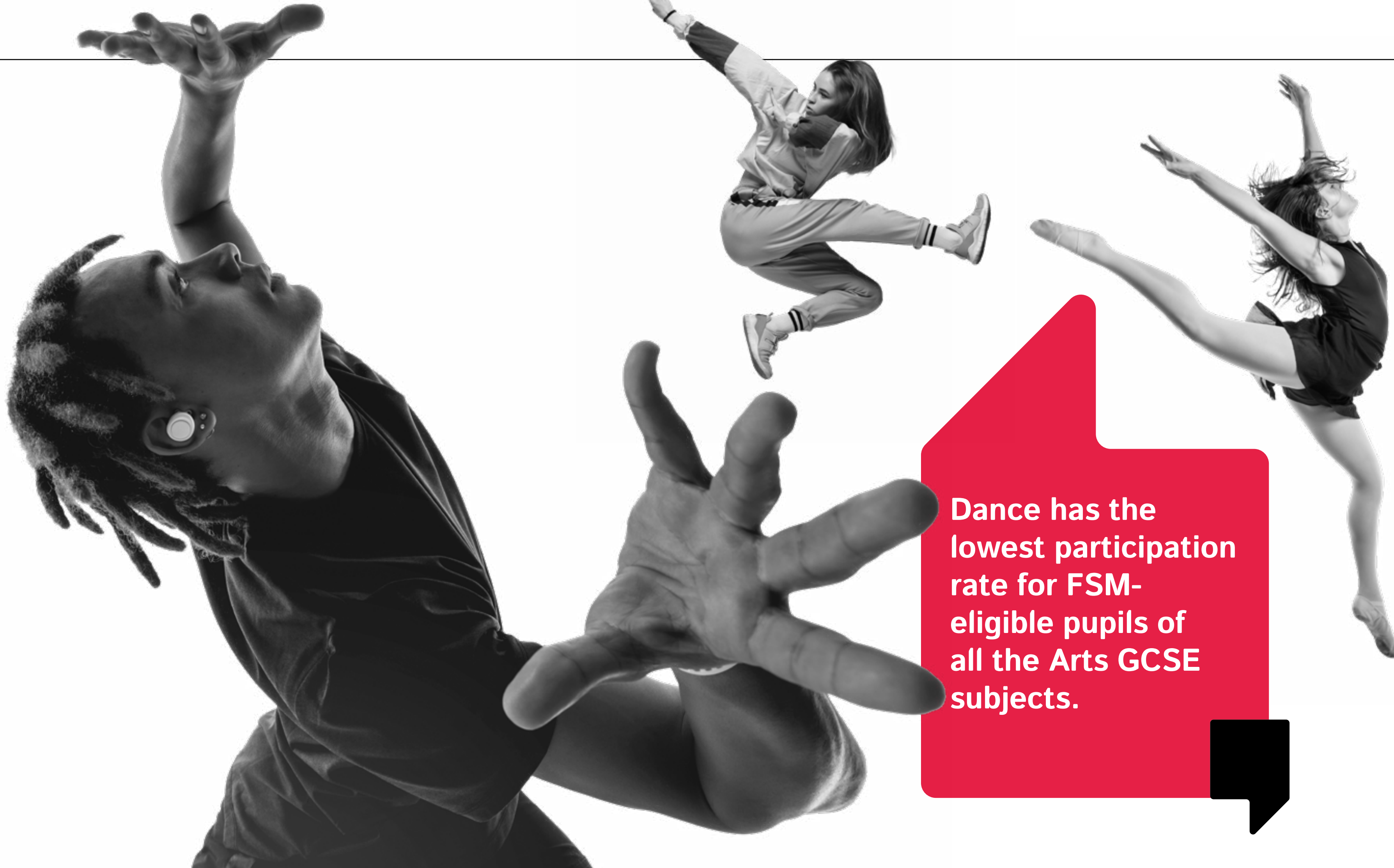
#### Unfilled vacancies

The number of unfilled Art & Design vacancies fell by 13% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. However, the number of vacancies was 3.8 times higher in 2024/25 than it was in 2010/11. The vacancy rate fell by 0.1 percentage points between 2023/24 and 2024/25 but increased from 0.2 to 0.7 between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

Art & Design ITT experienced the largest applicant increase between 2024 and 2025.



# Dance



**Dance has the lowest participation rate for FSM-eligible pupils of all the Arts GCSE subjects.**

## Note

Dance is often not recorded at all for some of our indicators – for example in relation to the teacher workforce and taught hours (Indicator 3) and for teacher recruitment and retention (Indicator 4).

## Indicator Primary: Expressive Arts taught hours, staffing and enrichment at the primary phase

### Subject leadership

5% of primary school teachers reported that their school has a subject leader for Dance. This figure is slightly higher for schools with the lowest proportions of FSM-eligible pupils, sitting at 6%.

## Subject summaries: Dance

### Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

#### GCSE entrants

The number of entrants in Dance GCSE has fallen by 55.1% between 2009/10 and 2024/25 and by 21.8% between 2019/20 and 2024/25, but increased by 8.8% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

#### GCSEs, vocational qualifications and disadvantage

Nearly 83% of secondary schools in England have no entries in GCSE Dance, and 85% have no entries in Level 2 vocational Dance (in 2024/25). While 92% of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities have no entries in Dance, this is true of only 70% of schools in the least deprived fifth of local authorities. By contrast, for Level 2 vocational Dance, 79% of schools in the most deprived quintile of local authorities have no entries compared to 88% in the least deprived.

#### Free school meals

Dance has the lowest participation rate for FSM-eligible pupils out of all the EA subjects at GCSE, with only 15.5% of entrants being FSM-eligible in 2024/25. This figure is better for Level 2 vocational Dance, where 26.8% of entrants are FSM-eligible.

#### SEND

13.5% of all GCSE Dance entrants had an identified SEND in 2024/25, the lowest rate of SEND participation out of all the EA subjects. Dance is the only subject area where SEND pupils are under-represented in Level 2 vocational qualifications, with 14.2% of all entries from SEND pupils.

#### Ethnicity

4.6% of Dance entries were from Black students, a 0.7 percentage point increase from 2023/24. 5.8% of entries to vocational Dance were from Black pupils. This makes Black pupils under-represented across both qualification types. Entries from Asian pupils made up 3% of all GCSE Dance entries in 2024/25, a 0.5 percentage point fall from 2023/24.

### Indicator 2: Level 3 expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design subjects in Higher Education

#### A Levels

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of Dance A Level entries fell by 3.2%, having fallen by 50.5% between 2014/15 to 2024/25.

#### Free school meals and SEND

5.9% of all Dance A Level entries were from FSM-eligible students in 2024/25. 6.7% of all entries were from pupils with an identified SEND, making students with SEND over-represented at A Level Dance.

#### Higher Education

The number of HE Dance domestic undergraduates has fallen by 0.7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with Dance undergraduates making up 3% of all Creative, Arts & Design undergraduates in 2024/25. Despite the fall in numbers between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of HE undergraduate Dance students had previously increased by 9.5% between 2019/20 and 2023/24.



# Drama



## Indicator Primary: Expressive Arts taught hours, staffing and enrichment at the primary phase

### Subject leadership

Just 9% of primary school teachers reported working in a school with a subject lead for Drama.

**36% of secondary schools in 2024/25 had no entries into Drama GCSE.**

## Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

### GCSEs and vocational qualifications

The number of GCSE Drama entries fell by 1.6% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, 16.2% between 2019/20 and 2024/25, and 40.6% between 2009/10 and 2024/25. The number of entries for Level 2 vocational Drama has fallen by 6.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

### GCSEs, vocational qualifications and disadvantage

36% of secondary schools in 2024/25 had no entries into Drama GCSE, while this is the case for 73% of schools for vocational Drama entries. 59% of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities have no entries compared to just 17% of schools in the least deprived fifth of local authorities. The association is the opposite for vocational Drama, with 66% of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities having no entries in 2024/25, compared to 85% for the least deprived quintile of local authorities.

### Free school meals

FSM-eligible pupils are under-represented in GCSE Drama entries, making up 20.8% of entries in 2024/25 (26.6% of all Year 11 pupils were FSM-eligible). By contrast, they are over-represented on vocational routes, making up 31% of entries in 2024/25.

### SEND

18.1% of GCSE Drama entries in 2024/25 were from pupils with an identified SEND, showing a slight over-representation and a 1.9 percentage point increase in participation from 2023/24. Representation of pupils with SEND is even better for Level 2 vocational Drama routes, where 21.6% of entries were from pupils with SEND in 2024/25.

### Ethnicity

7.6% of all GCSE Drama entries and 7.2% of Level 2 vocational Drama entries were from Black pupils in 2024/25. This would make Black pupils well represented in Drama entries at Level 2. By contrast, Asian pupils are under-represented at Level 2 Drama, with 7% of GCSE entries and 5.1% of vocational entries being from this demographic group.

## Subject summaries:

### Drama

## Indicator 2: Level 3 expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design subjects in Higher Education

### A Levels and vocational qualifications

Drama A Level entries fell by 6.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of larger falls of 14.9% from 2019/20 to 2024/25 and 49.5% from 2010/11 to 2024/25. Level 3 Performing Arts vocational entries also fell by 11.7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

### Free school meals

9.3% of all A Level students were FSM-eligible in 2024/25. 7.1% of A Level Drama entries in 2024/25 were from FSM-eligible students, while entries from this group for vocational Performing Arts routes fell from 13.1% in 2023/24 to 12.5% in 2024/25. This leaves FSM-eligible students under-represented in both A Level and Level 3 Performing Arts.

### SEND

4.8% of all A Level students had an identified SEND in 2024/25. 7.6% of A Level Drama entries were from students with an identified SEND, an over-representation of this demographic group. 10.1% of entries to Level 3 Performing Arts vocational entries were from students with SEND, a similar over-representation.

### Ethnicity

Black and Asian students are under-represented in A Level Drama. 2.4% of A Level Drama were from Black students (as against 5.8% of all entries) and 2% of entries were from Asian students in 2024/25 (as against 15% of all entries).

### Higher Education

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25 the number of domestic undergraduates on Drama courses increased by 1.6%. This reverses a pattern of the number of Drama undergraduates falling by 9.5% between 2019/20 and 2023/24. In 2024/25, 11% of Creative, Arts & Design undergraduates were studying Drama.



## Subject summaries:

### Drama

#### Indicator 3: Number of expressive Arts teachers and hours taught in Arts subjects

##### Number of qualified/unqualified teachers

The number of Drama teachers has increased by 1.3% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. However, between 2010/11 and 2024/25, the number of Drama teachers fell by 12%. Over this same period, the number of non-qualified Drama teachers fell by 28.4%. However, between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of non-qualified Drama teachers has increased by 17.2%, with 3.7% of the Drama secondary workforce now being unqualified.

##### Relevant post-A Level Drama qualifications

The number of Drama teachers without a relevant post-A Level qualification has fallen by 2.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This is part of a wider historical trend, with the proportion of Drama teachers without a relevant post-A Level qualification falling from 29.7% in 2010/11 to 18.8% in 2024/25.

##### Number of hours taught at KS3

The number of taught hours in Drama at KS3 has increased by 0.7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. More broadly, the number of Drama KS3 taught hours increased by 16.8% between 2010/11 and 2024/25, with Drama going from making up 14% of all EA KS3 taught hours in 2010/11 to 18% in 2024/25.

##### Number of hours taught at KS4

The number of taught hours in Drama at KS4 fell by 1.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with a more general fall of 27% between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

##### Number of hours taught at KS5

The number of taught hours at KS5 has also fallen by 3% for Drama between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with a wider 40% fall between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

#### Indicator 4: Expressive Arts teacher recruitment and retention

##### ITT applicant numbers

The number of applications for ITT Drama courses increased by 2.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the proportion applying to salaried routes increasing from 8.9% to 17% over the same period. However, the proportion of accepted applications fell from 41.8% to 37.9% (a 3.9 percentage point fall) between 2023/24 and 2024/25. It is also worth noting that Drama ITT has an acceptance rate of 17.5% for Black and Asian candidates.

##### ITT trainees

The overall number of ITT Drama trainees decreased by 7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. At the same time, the government's ITT recruitment target for Drama increased by 50% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. As a result of these falling ITT trainee numbers and an increased target, Drama has gone from meeting 79% of its recruitment target in 2023/24 to only meeting 49% of its target in 2024/25.

##### Teaching vacancies

The number of unfilled Drama teaching vacancies fell by 32% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, but there are still 3.1 times more unfilled vacancies in 2024/25 than there were in 2010/11. The vacancy rate fell by 0.2 percentage points for Drama between 2023/24 and 2024/25, but we note that the most recent vacancy rate is four times higher than it was in 2010/11.

**The number of ITT Drama trainees fell by 7% 2024 to 2025.**



# Design & Technology



**52% of schools in the most deprived local authorities have no GCSE Design & Technology entries.**

**Indicator primary: Expressive Arts taught hours, staffing and enrichment at the primary phase**

**Subject leadership**

78% of primary school teachers reported having a Design & Technology subject lead in their setting. This increases to 86% for primary teachers in schools with the highest proportions of FSM-eligible pupils.

## Subject summaries: Design & Technology

### Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

#### GCSEs

The number of Design & Technology entries at GCSE fell by 2.9% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, aligning with a general fall of 12.8% between 2019/20 and 2024/25 and a staggering 71.3% fall between 2009/10 and 2024/25. In 2009/10, Design & Technology entries made up 5.5% of all GCSE entries – by 2024/25 this figure had fallen to 1.3%.

#### Link between GCSEs and deprivation

In 2024/25, 37% of secondary schools had no Design & Technology entries. This is an increase from 35% in 2023/24. More specifically, 52% of schools in the most deprived local authorities have no GCSE Design & Technology entries, compared to only 27% of schools in the least deprived local authorities.

#### Free school meals, SEND and ethnicity

21.3% of GCSE Design & Technology entries in 2024/25 were from FSM-eligible pupils, an under-representation of this demographic group. 16.4% of entries were from pupils with SEND in the same year, a smaller under-representation. By contrast, Asian pupils were slightly over-represented in 2024/25, with 12.7% of all GCSE Design & Technology entries from this group. However, Black pupils are under-represented, making up only 5.3% of all Design & Technology entries in 2024/25.

**Black pupils are under-represented, making up only 5.3% of D&T GCSE entries.**



## Subject summaries: Design & Technology

### Indicator 2: Level 3 expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design subjects in Higher Education

#### A Levels

Design & Technology has experienced a very slight 0.2% increase in the number of A Level entries between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This takes place in the context of a 35% decrease in entries between 2011/12 and 2024/25.

#### Free school meals, SEND and ethnicity

6.5% of all A Level Design & Technology entries in 2024/25 were from students who are FSM-eligible (making this group under-represented in the subject), while 6% of entries were from students with an identified SEND (making this group of students over-represented in the subject). Black students made up 3.7% of Design & Technology A Level entries, while Asian students made up 9.2% of entries. This gives Design & Technology the highest participation rate for Asian students out of any EA subject in 2024/25.

#### Higher Education

The number of Design Studies domestic undergraduate students fell by 1.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. As of 2024/25, Design Studies students make up 35% of all Creative, Arts & Design domestic undergraduates, making this group of courses the most populous in the category.

### Indicator 3: Number of expressive Arts teachers and hours taught in Arts subjects

#### Workforce size

The Design & Technology workforce increased in size by 2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, though this increase can be set against a 17% decrease between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

#### Non-qualified teachers

There are also 13.1% more non-qualified Design & Technology teachers in 2024/25 than there were in 2023/24, part of an 18.1% increase from 2010/11 to 2024/25. Non-qualified teachers now make up 5.4% of Design & Technology teachers.

#### Teachers with no relevant post-A Level qualification

There was a 6.6% increase in the number of Design & Technology teachers with no relevant post-A Level qualification between 2023/24 and 2024/25, though overall the proportion of teachers at this qualification level has fallen from 27.6% in 2010/11 to 23.2% in 2024/25.

#### Taught hours at KS3

In 2010/11, 45.6% of all KS3 EA taught hours were in Design & Technology, falling to 36% by 2024/25. Nevertheless, Design & Technology hours still make up the bulk of KS3 EA taught hours.

#### Taught hours at KS4

The number of KS4 Design & Technology taught hours fell by 0.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of a 37% fall between 2010/11 and 2024/25. At the same time, the number of KS5 taught hours increased by 1.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, despite an overall 40% fall between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

## Subject summaries: Design & Technology

### Indicator 4: Expressive Arts teacher recruitment and retention

#### ITT applications

There was a 21.5% increase in applications to Design & Technology ITT routes between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with an increase in applications to salaried routes from 15% to 23% over this period. The number of acceptances has fallen from 46.6% in 2023/24 to 42% in 2024/25 (a 4.6 percentage point decrease). Design & Technology had a 15.8% acceptance rate for Black and Asian applicants in 2024/25.

#### ITT trainees

The overall number of Design & Technology ITT trainees increased by 42% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, though more broadly the number of trainees is 52.3% lower in 2024/25 than it was in 2010/11.

#### Government ITT targets

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the government's ITT recruitment target for Design & Technology fell by 26%, supporting the subject to increase the proportion by which it met its recruitment target from 27% to 39% between years. More broadly, there has been a 40.3% increase in the ITT recruitment target for Design & Technology between 2010/11 and 2024/25. However, the government was exceeding its target by 16% in 2010/11 and is now falling short of it by 61%.

#### Unfilled vacancies

Design & Technology unfilled vacancies fell by 45% between 2023/24 and 2024/25. The vacancy rate halved over the same period. The number of unfilled Design & Technology vacancies almost doubled between 2010/11 and 2024/25, while the vacancy rate has quadrupled over same period.



Design & Technology had a 15.8% acceptance rate for Black and Asian applicants in 2024/25.



# Media/Film/TV Studies



## Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

### GCSEs

From 2023/24 to 2024/25, the number of Media/Film/TV Studies entries at GCSE fell by 2.8%, part of a 23.5% fall in entries between 2019/20 and 2024/25 and a 58.4% fall between 2009/10 and 2024/25. In 2024/25, 76% of secondary schools had no entries in Media/Film/TV Studies at GCSE.

**Between 2024  
and 2025 the  
number of Media/  
Film/TV Studies  
A Level entries fell  
by 33.7%.**

Subject summaries:  
Media/Film/TV Studies

**Indicator 2:  
Level 3 expressive Arts  
entries, apprenticeships  
and Creative, Arts & Design  
subjects in Higher Education**

**A Levels and Level 3 vocational  
qualifications**

Between 2023/24 to 2024/25, the number of Media/Film/TV Studies A Level entries fell by 33.7%, with similar falls of 27.8% between 2019/20 to 2024/25, and a wider 41.8% fall from 2010/11 to 2024/25. Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, there was a 3.1% increase in the number of Level 3 vocational Media & Communications entries.

**Free school meals**

10.1% of all Media/Film/TV Studies A Level entries were from FSM-eligible students in 2024/25, while the proportion of entries from FSM-eligible students into vocational Media & Communications increased from 14.4% in 2023/24 to 15.2% in 2024/25.

**SEND and ethnicity**

7.5% of Media/Film/TV Studies and 10.7% of Media & Communications entries were from students with a SEND in 2024/25. 5.4% of Media/Film/TV Studies entries were from Black students in 2024/25, giving the subject the best participation rate of the EA subjects for this ethnic group. 7.2% of Media/Film/TV Studies entries were from Asian students in 2024/25.



**Indicator 3:  
Number of expressive  
Arts teachers and hours  
taught in Arts subjects**

**Workforce**

The Media Studies teaching workforce has fallen by 40% between 2010/11 and 2024/25, the largest fall of any EA subject. Over the same period, there has been a 49% fall in the number of non-qualified teachers in the subject, though there was an 8.7% increase between 2023/24 and 2024/25. This means that in 2024/25, 2.7% of all Media Studies teachers were non-qualified.

**Post-A Level qualifications**

Among EA subjects, Media Studies currently has the highest proportion of teachers with no subject-relevant post-A Level qualification, with this being the case for 58% of teachers. This is nevertheless a welcome fall from 73% of teachers in 2010/11.

**Hours taught at KS3**

Between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the number of KS3 taught hours in Media Studies fell by 0.7%. More broadly, in 2010/11, Media Studies taught hours made up 0.8% of all EA taught hours at KS3, falling to 0.4% in 2024/25.

**Hours taught at KS4**

The number of taught hours at KS4 for Media/Film/TV Studies increased by 0.3% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, but the figure has fallen by 36% overall between 2010/11 and 2024/25. The number of KS5 taught hours fell by 0.5% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of a 37% fall between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

# Music



In 2024/25, 36% of schools had no entries into GCSE Music, a decrease from 37% in 2023/24.

## Indicator Primary: Expressive Arts taught hours, staffing and enrichment at the primary phase

### Subject leadership

84% of primary school teachers reported having a subject lead for Music in their school. For schools with the highest proportion of FSM-eligible pupils, this increases to 90%, while it is 87% for schools with the lowest proportion of FSM-eligible pupils.

### Music Hubs

33% of primary teachers reported that their school works with a Music Hub. This was higher for schools serving the highest proportion of FSM-eligible pupils, at 40%.

## Subject summaries: Music

### Indicator 1: Expressive Arts GCSE and other Level 2 vocational qualifications entries

#### GCSEs and vocational qualifications

The number of GCSE Music entries increased by 5.7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, having also fallen by 1.2% between 2019/20 and 2024/25 and 25.6% between 2009/10 and 2024/25. The number of entries to vocational Music qualifications fell by 3.7% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.

#### GCSEs, vocational qualifications and disadvantage

In 2024/25, 36% of schools had no entries into GCSE Music, a decrease from 42% in 2024. 73% of schools had no Level 2 vocational Music entries. In 2024/25, 54% of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities had no GCSE Music entries compared to 21% of schools in the least deprived fifth of local authorities. By contrast, 66% of schools in the most deprived fifth of local authorities had no vocational Music entries compared to 78% in the least deprived fifth of local authorities.

#### Free school meals

18% of GCSE Music entries were from FSM-eligible pupils in 2024/25. By contrast, 32.6% of all entries into vocational Music were from FSM-eligible pupils, the highest participation rate of any EA subject in 2024/25.

#### SEND

15.3% of GCSE Music entries in 2024/25 were from pupils with an identified SEND, a 1.4 percentage point increase on 2023/24. 22.2% of vocational Music entries in 2024/25 were from pupils with SEND, the highest participation rate of any EA subject.

#### Ethnicity

6.5% of GCSE Music entries in 2024/25 were from Black pupils, making this group slightly over-represented (6.3% of the overall cohort was Black), while this was the case for 7.7% of entries to vocational Music. 9.5% of entries to GCSE Music in 2024/25 were from Asian pupils, making this group under-represented (12.1% of the overall cohort was Asian), while this was the case for 5.7% of entries to vocational Music.

### Indicator 2: Level 3 expressive Arts entries, apprenticeships and Creative, Arts & Design subjects in Higher Education

#### A Levels

The number of A Level Music entries fell by 2.9% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of 4.3% fall between 2019/20 and 2024/25 and a large 44.7% fall between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

#### Free school meals, SEND and ethnicity

3.8% of A Level Music students were FSM-eligible in 2024/25, much lower than the overall 9.3% rate for all A Level students. The picture is better for SEND, where 5.9% of all entries in 2024/25 were from students with a SEND (above the 4.8% across all A Level entries). Asian students are under-represented: 5% of entrants, compared to the cohort percentage of Asian students at 15%. 1.9% of Music entries were from Black students in 2024/25 (the overall cohort percentage of Black students is 5.8%).



## Subject summaries: Music



### Indicator 3: Number of expressive Arts teachers and hours taught in Arts subjects

#### Workforce

The number of secondary Music teachers increased by 2.6% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the largest increase of any EA subject. This is part of an overall increase in the number of Music teachers by 9% between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

#### Teacher qualifications

The number of non-qualified Music teachers increased between 2023/24 and 2024/25, having increased more broadly by 45.2% between 2010/11 and 2024/25. This puts the proportion of non-qualified teachers in the Music workforce at 5.1%, the largest of any EA subject. The number of secondary Music teachers without a subject-relevant post-A Level qualification increased by 10% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, the largest increase of any EA subject. This means that teachers at this qualification level make up 7.3% of all Music teachers in 2024/25, a fall from 9.7% in 2010/11.



The proportion of non-qualified teachers in the Music workforce is the largest of any Arts subject.

## Subject summaries: Music

### Taught hours at KS3

The number of KS3 taught hours in Music increased by 2.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of a 9.5% increase from 2010/11 to 2024/25. In 2010/11, Music made up 17.2% of all KS3 EA taught hours, increasing to 20.7% in 2024/25.

### Taught hours at KS4

The number of KS4 taught hours in Music fell by 1.1% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of a 0.1% increase between 2010/11 and 2024/25. There was a 2.3% fall in the number of Music taught hours at KS5 between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of a wider 33% fall between 2010/11 and 2024/25.

## Indicator 4: Expressive Arts teacher recruitment and retention

### ITT applications

There was a 33.7% increase in the number of applications to Music ITT routes between 2023/24 and 2024/25, with the proportion of applicants to salaried routes increased from 24.6% to 29.6% between years.

### ITT acceptance rates and ethnicity

The acceptance rate for Music ITT increased from 44.8% to 51% (a roughly 6 percentage points increase). We also note that Music in 2024/25 had the highest acceptance rate of any EA subject for Black and Asian applicants at 30.3%. This is one of the highest acceptance rates for Black and Asian candidates for any subject.

### ITT trainees

Music has also benefitted from a 53% increase in the overall number of Music ITT trainees between 2023/24 and 2024/25. Nevertheless, the subject still suffers from having 51.3% fewer trainees in 2024/25 than it did in 2010/11.

### ITT government recruitment target

Music's ITT recruitment target increased by 4% between 2023/24 and 2024/25, part of a broader 43.8% increase in the subject's target between 2010/11 and 2024/25. 40% of this target was met in 2024/25, an increase from 27% in 2023/24. By contrast, Music was exceeding its recruitment target by 19% in 2010/11.



**Increase in  
applications to  
Music ITT routes  
2024 to 2025:  
33.7%**

# Explanatory Notes



# Explanatory Notes

Table 1  
**Education ages and stages**

Primary		
<b>Key Stage 1</b>	Ages 5-7	Years 1 & 2
<b>Key Stage 2</b>	Ages 7-11	Years 3, 4, 5, 6
Secondary		
<b>Key Stage 3</b>	Ages 11-14	Years 7, 8, 9
<b>Key Stage 4</b>	Ages 14-16	Years 10, 11
<b>Key Stage 5</b>	Ages 16-18	Years 12,13

## Level 2 and Level 3

Level 2 and Level 3 are key stages in England’s educational framework. Level 2 is equivalent to GCSEs and other vocational qualifications typically taken at age 16. Level 3 signifies advanced, specialised study such as A Levels and T Levels typically taken at 18 or above to prepare for Higher Education or skilled employment.

## A focus on England

As with previous Report Cards, the present report is focussed on the education system in England. This reflects the fact that education policy diverged from that of the other United Kingdom nations between 2010 and 2025 in many respects relevant to expressive Arts (EA). These policies include the English Baccalaureate (EBacc) and Progress 8 at GCSE; the introduction of new approaches to exam grading that put increased pressure on schools to demonstrate pupils’ academic progress; and significant falls in per-pupil funding between 2010 and 2019 (Freedman, 2024).

## A note on our numbers

Typically, we report figures to one or two decimal points, dependent on the accuracy required for capturing patterns in year-to-year change. Where there are numbers after decimal points in the data, we have generally rounded numbers up (if they fall in the 0.5-0.9 range) or down (if they fall in the 0.1-0.4 range).

## What do we mean by expressive Arts?

The Cultural Learning Alliance (CLA) has adopted expressive Arts (EA) as the collective term for Arts subjects in schools. In Wales, Expressive Arts is one of six equal ‘areas of learner experience’ mapped on to four core purposes of schooling. CLA’s definition, as with the Welsh definition, goes beyond the existing four discrete art forms currently embedded in England’s system (Art & Design, Dance, Drama and Music) to include Film & Digital Media (which spans TV, film, radio and games design). Given the existing structures within the education system in England, this Report Card has a focus on Art & Design, Dance, Drama and Music – with the addition of Media/Film/TV Studies, and Design & Technology, since Design is (confusingly) shared by two subjects within the curriculum.

**CLA has adopted expressive Arts (EA) as the collective term for Arts subjects in schools.**

## Explanatory Notes

### Data gaps

The government's recording of data on Drama and Dance for our five key indicators has varied from year to year – perhaps in relation to their status as non-foundation subjects (they sit within English and PE respectively). For example, in relation to GCSE entries (Indicator 1) and teacher recruitment (Indicator 4), Dance data is sometimes included as part of Physical Education but also sometimes as part of Drama (e.g., for ITT recruitment data for 2011/12). Drama is sometimes recorded as part of English. Equally, it is important to note that Dance is often not recorded at all for some of our indicators – for example in relation to the teacher workforce and taught hours (covered in Indicator 3) and for teacher recruitment and retention (covered under Indicator 4). It is hoped that ongoing curriculum reforms will also lead to better data collection in relation to both Dance and Drama.

In relation to EA teaching in the primary phase, we note that there is no government recording of key data relevant to Indicators 3 and 4, such as the number of EA taught hours in primary or the number of specialist EA primary teachers. We believe that effective monitoring of EA teaching in primary – in the context of a new Arts entitlement in schools – will require the collection of this data. However, in lieu of such data being available, this year's Report Card includes findings from a Teacher Tapp survey of primary teachers on EA provision in their setting.



It is hoped that ongoing curriculum reforms will also lead to better Arts data collection.

### A note on the vocational and technical (VTQ) qualifications landscape

GCSEs and A Levels are not the only Arts qualifications available. There is a wide range of broad-based 'Applied Generals' (BTECs and Diplomas) which develop creative skills such as enquiry and problem-solving, as well as introducing a range of media. There are many other qualifications beyond BTECs which are in Arts subjects – and a number of Awarding Organisations. (The government's Post-16 White Paper published in October 2025 outlines a comprehensive reform of England's Further and Higher Education sectors, including new qualifications – V Levels.)

Despite this range of qualification types and awarding bodies, government data aggregates these different qualifications under general subject types such as 'Dance' or 'Music'. This is reflected in our reporting on vocational qualifications data (for Levels 2 and 3).



## Endnotes

- i. The English Baccalaureate (EBacc) was an accountability measure in England. It measured the proportion of children who secured a grade 5 or above in English, Maths, Science, a humanity and language GCSE. Arts subjects were not included.
- ii. 25.7% of pupils in England (up from 24.6% in 2024) are eligible for free school meals but this percentage increases significantly in areas of disadvantage: <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-their-characteristics/2024-25>
- iii. Curriculum and Assessment Review Final Report: government response. 5 November 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-and-assessment-review-final-report-government-response>
- iv. Blueprint for an Arts-rich Education. Cultural Learning Alliance, 2024. [https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CLA005\\_One-pager\\_AW\\_V3.pdf](https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CLA005_One-pager_AW_V3.pdf)
- v. Lit in Colour: Taking down barriers to a more representative English curriculum. 2021. Penguin Books UK and the Runnymede Trust. <https://litincolour.penguin.co.uk/>
- vi. Curriculum and Assessment Review Final Report: government response, p.14. 5 November 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-and-assessment-review-final-report-government-response>
- vii. Blueprint for an Arts-rich Education. Cultural Learning Alliance, 2024. [https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CLA005\\_One-pager\\_AW\\_V3.pdf](https://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/CLA005_One-pager_AW_V3.pdf)
- viii. Curriculum and Assessment Review: Building a world-class curriculum. Final report. November 2025. Page 53.
- ix. For GCSE and A Level entry data, London seems to challenge the pattern of a relationship between free school meals eligibility and expressive Arts entries. London has the lowest percentage of A Level entries in Arts subjects (4.0%) but has a relatively lower proportion of FSM-eligible pupils compared to other regions. This exception to the pattern may be explained by the fact that London has the highest percentage of A Level entries in STEM subjects (40%, compared to 35% at the national level), suggesting there might be specific demographic and structural reasons separate from poverty that lead to pupils in London pursuing STEM subjects over expressive Arts subjects. Although it is difficult to present a general picture across London, as there is such a diverse and moving picture between boroughs, London is the region in England with the highest proportion of young people from an ethnically diverse background, and there is evidence that these young people are more likely to study STEM subjects at A Level (FFT Datalab, 2023).

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## Detailed Analysis

This Report Card is a summary of the complete data for 2026 which is presented in a separate supporting document, the *CLA 2026 Report Card Detailed Analysis*: [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#annual](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#annual)

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Designed by Steers McGillan Eves

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Access our Arts Education Capabilities Framework here: [www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#capabilities](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/evidence/#capabilities)

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Let us know if you have suggestions for data collection points for our next annual Report Card or want to work with us on further research.

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