

Cultural Education Challenge live event Wednesday 14th October 2015, 8.30 am

Good morning everybody and welcome to the Barbican Centre, home of world class arts and learning from Antigone to Beethoven, I'm Nick Kenyon, and it's a privilege for us to host this event this morning, because we believe there is no greater issue in the arts today than embedding cultural and creative education for our young people. And we're working with 20 organisations across East London to supply arts experiences to every single 8 to 16 year old by 2020.

So this is the beginning of an enormously exciting adventure and we have a very distinguished panel ready to engage with you on this subject, all I want to do is welcome you here and to hand over to Darren Henley, Chief Executive of Arts Council England. [APPLAUSE]

Thank you Nick, thank you for joining us today. Today we're going to talk about the Cultural Education Challenge. This is a national call to action for all of us with an interest in cultural education, government, local authorities, schools and arts and cultural organisations.

It will put the issue of cultural education back up the public agenda and help ensure the provision of coherent cultural education right across the country. So why are we doing this now? Because cultural education is too urgent a cause to be parked on one side of the road and left for future leaders to deal with. The future begins here. Decisions taken now will define outcomes for the present generation of children.

Right now the evidence is that too many of those children are being left behind. So what's so important about cultural education that it demands that we give it this focus during a time when all our resources are under such pressure? Well cultural education is integral to the happiness of our children and their families. For the strength of our communities and the economic progress and international standing of our country.

It turns STEM into STEAM, it fires the curriculum and creates individuals who are more inquisitive, persistent, imaginative, disciplined and collaborative. We believe that every child should be able to create, to compose, and to perform in their own musical and artistic work. They should be able to visit, to experience, and to participate in extraordinary work.

And be able to know more, to understand more, and to review the experiences they've had. Cultural education matters in and out of the classroom. In school and with the family. And it needs to be high quality, and available to those who currently have the least opportunity to enjoy it.

I understand the importance of cultural education, I have authored two major government reports on the subject that have helped shape provision and I have extensively argued for prominence. Earlier this year I talked about a vision for 25 year talent plan, cultural education is intrinsic to that.

We know there is a wide range of cultural education on offer across the country, within the education system, but also through valuable partnerships that bring together schools, nationally funded organisations, enlightened local authority support, charities and the voluntary sector. In some places that is excellent, but in others provision remains patchy.

While I can reiterate that we need a strong and visible national commitment to cultural education, the counter point is that we must have coordination and leadership at a local level. It's through local leadership

and co-operation that we can identify and address local needs and the key challenges of equity, inclusion and quality.

We know that there's startling evidence that those from the most educationally deprived backgrounds are least likely to engage with cultural activities perpetuating the cycle of exclusion, there's a need for clearer pathways for children to gain the maximum benefit from cultural education or talented individuals will sadly fail to achieve their potential.

We are a creative nation, a nation of ideas that champions originality. That is a historic advantage that we enjoy. And while the moral argument for the way that a cultural education enriches children and young people is widely understood, we must also consider the situation with the eye of a business leader, looking at how we're using our greatest national asset, our talent. And as it stands, no business in its right mind would make such incomplete use of its main asset.

The Cultural Education Challenge is about changing this in a meaningful, lasting way. By bringing all our resources to bear and working together, clearing pathways to education and progress for children and young people where ever they are. In a moment we'll hear from my colleague Althea Efunshile deputy Chief Executive of the Arts Council, she is our executive board member with responsibility for all of our work with children and young people. She will share more detail about the challenge and how it can change the way we all work together.

But first I'm pleased we're going to hear from the Minister for state for schools and the Minister for state for culture and digital economy, I'm grateful for both of them for joining us this morning. Nick?

I think we're instructed to stand down here is that right? I'll stand in my own way! I'm getting married in this very room in five weeks time, so if I'm distracted by measuring the size of the room, you'll have to forgive me (laughter)

But first can I say thank you to the Arts Council for allowing myself and Ed to contribute to this discussion and to be here for the launch of the Cultural Education Challenge. Nobody here needs to be reminded that Britain is a world leader in culture and the arts.

The new book by the historian Dominic Sandbrook is a history of British popular culture during the 20th century, the great British theme factory and his thesis is startling in that it's so true yet so rarely made, and following Britain's post imperial decline as a political power, Britain's popular culture rose to become an extraordinary global success story, matched only by the US.

Whilst some nations offer up a globe trotting pop star or a great children's author, a world conquering television series or noble winning play write, Britain offers them all and more. It's hard to imagine many other nations devising an Olympic opening ceremony which focuses on their contribution to pop culture as the London ceremony did in 2012, Mary Poppins, James Bond, Harry Potter, Rolling Stones and Dizzy Rascal. The creative industries play an important role, employing 1.7 million people and adding 77 billion pounds to the UK economy in 2013. Out pacing growth and job creation in many other industries.

In 2012 almost 9 percent of Britain's service exports were from the creative industries and according to the consultancy firm Portland communications, the UK ranks number 1 in the world for foreign diplomacy through cultural influence, known as soft power. Film studios, advertising firms, video game developers are industrial heavy weights in today's Britain, becoming the 21st century equivalent of Sheffield steel or Manchester cotton.

This is a national strength that this government has every intention of protecting and replicating. Art and design and music are compulsory subjects for all children from the age of 5 to 14 in our schools. And in addition, all pupils have to study dance as part of PE, and drama as part of their English lessons. At key stage 4 all pupils have an entitlement to study arts subjects and design and technology subject if they wish to.

Now there is a concern that the English or EBacc will drive pupils away from creative subjects at GCSE, this has been made vocally by some in the media, but it's proven to be unfounded, the EBacc (phone rings) thank you very much! The EBacc covers a core set of five subject blocks, but this allows most pupils to choose a number of additional GCSE options and since the EBacc measure was introduced in 2010 total entries for arts GCSEs have actually increased over that period, despite a small decline in the year group population in that period.

And the percentage of pupils entered for at least one arts GCSE has also increased. Let's not forget in any good school the arts will also be provided for outside of curriculum time, many children may decide not to study arts subjects formally at GCSE, but they continue to take part in practical arts activities such as singing in a school choir, playing in an orchestra or band or acting or helping back stage in the school play.

From 2012 to 2016 the DFE will have spent over £460 million in arts and education programmes, designed to improve access to the arts for children of all backgrounds. This includes funding to ensure that every child has the chance to learn a musical instrument during their school career, through a network of music education hubs across the country, recommended by your first report into music education.

I'm delighted that the Arts Council England is contributing to this drive for more cultural education in our schools, through the Cultural Education Challenge. Throughout England there is the most extraordinary potential for cultural education, concerts galleries, exhibitions, and an enormous supply of creative young people willing to work with children.

Harnessing such potential can be a challenge, which is why I'm delighted that the Arts Council is taking on this task, and by coordinating with organisations such as London youth, creative futures and the Barbican centre where we are today, it has the opportunity to bring a quality cultural education to children all over our country.

I do understand why some in the arts community are concerned about government accountability measures such as the EBacc that I mentioned, but in my view they needn't be. There's no reason why an academic core curriculum should in anyway imperil a cultural education or indeed visa versa, in fact an academic curriculum, and a cultural education can only compliment each other, whether it's reading a wide range of literature, whether it's broadening your understanding of Shakespeare or giving you the historical knowledge to contextualise Picasso's paintings or allowing you to read Racine in the original language, both aspects of the education can and should exist in every school in England.

This point was explicitly made by Nick Morgan, education secretary in a speech in July, we want to challenge every school to make this their aim. Not only does cultural education build the cultural literacy of our pupils, it also has the ability to build positive character traits amongst pupils such as confidence, perseverance, and the ability to cooperate with one's peers. In government we are driven by a belief in social justice. And are absolutely of the view that a rich arts education should not be the preserve of the wealthy.

Some of our nations current cultural pioneers such as the opera director Tony Pappano, singer Adele and Idris Elba were from backgrounds far from being described as well heeled, we want to see much, much more of this in Britain's cultural life. The dominance of the independent school sector on stage and screen, with actors such as Eddie Redmayne, Benedict Cumberbatch and Tom Hiddleston, great actors though they are, in fact every day there are queues of people waiting for return tickets -- it's something I would be delighted to see is the reduction in the dominance of independent sector, their dominance of the stage and screen. And delivering strong cultural education and strong academic education in all our state schools is key to delivering that ambition.

Arts Council England's intention to improve the cultural engagement of young people across the country, our emphasis on a rich cultural education for all in our schools are a shared objective that I'm confident that this country can deliver. Thank you very much.

>> Thanks very much, I'm Ed Vaizey Minister of culture, very good of you all to be here, particularly so early in the morning, it's fantastic and thanks also to Nick Kenyon from the Barbican for hosting us, they do a huge amount of cultural education work in East London, that's why it's such an appropriate venue to talk about the importance of cultural education.

I loved listening to what Nick had to say, I hope everyone appreciated the miracle that you are witnessing this morning, which is two government Ministers from two different departments working in harmony together! It's a very, very rare thing indeed (laughter) I don't really know of any other parallel working relationship in government.

But this is going on despite some of the critique that Nick alluded to in his speech about the DFE and cultural education, it is worth reminding people that DC MS and DFE have been working very well together in this area for several years, it did indeed as Darren said, start with the Department for Education and DC MS jointly commissioning Darren to do a report into music education, there was a realisation in both departments about how important music education is, not just for its own sake, but also for the massive impact it can have on kids academic achievements, wider academic achievements in school. Out of that came direct action, music education hubs which I think have been a huge success, really encouraged partnership working between local councils and music organisations, and whose budget again in times of great pressure Nick Gibb actually increased their budget last year.

Also sustaining embryonic programmes that were success and integrating them into wider education format. That was so successful we asked Darren to do another one, anyone who arranges a press conference at 8 o'clock in the morning has a huge work ethic behind him! And the cultural education report again we've taken forward a lot of recommendations that Darren made in that report. Actually for small sums of money you can make a big impact, one of the programmes that I'm most proud of is the heritage schools programme, which has got local schools engaged with local heritage. When there was a survey done of teachers before the programme start about local knowledge of local heritage opportunities for the kids they taught, it was pretty low. After a year or two another survey taken, that knowledge had increased exponentially.

We've looked at film education as well, crunching together a number of different charities to provide a coherent opportunity for film education from primary school through to the end of school. The Sorrell Saturday clubs, John Sorrell is in the audience as well, we've also supported, so there were lots of different programmes.

So what's exciting today about the Cultural Education Challenge is taking that to the next level to provide a further level of coherence and commitment to the kind of cultural education programmes which we hope will give kids from every background the chance to participate and back passionate about culture and heritage.

We're going to carry on this journey because as you know we're hoping very much to publish a white paper on culture and heritage in the new year, it will be the first white paper for more than half a century, I deliberately wanted to do a white paper in homage to Jenny Lee the first arts Minister appointed in 1964, we published her white paper in 1965, obviously because I'm so efficient we're going to publish it in 2016 on the 51st anniversary. We'll look at things like place making, which is so important, the role culture and heritage play in creating an identity for a town or city, or a rural area. And very much education has to be part of that place making agenda.

But we are also going to look at access and how we give young people really meaningful access to the arts and heritage. So I'm very excited to be here, thrilled that all of you could come. I look forward to hearing what Althea has to say about some of the detail, thank you. [APPLAUSE]

Good morning everyone, I'm Althea Efunshile I'm the deputy chief exec of Arts Council England and I echo everyone's thanks for you to be here at such an early point in the morning.

What I want to do is tell you a bit more about the Cultural Education Challenge, about what it is, why we're launching it and how it can change the way that we work together for the benefit of all our children and young people.

As we've heard already this morning, the Cultural Education Challenge is a response to the disparities of opportunity that exist for many children and young people. Disparities that prevent them from benefiting from the pleasures, happiness and life changing skills that art and culture can bring. We know this is a problem, it was highlighted in Darren's review of cultural education in 2012. Authored by Darren of course for the government of the

The findings of that report have been echoed by our subsequent research. Children and young people often face significant barriers to participation in art and culture, barriers of income, class, geography, race and ethnicity, faith and disability. We're not reaching all children early enough when life-long habits are formed.

We know that there are no easy answers to this problem, there are more than 24,000 schools more than 8 million pupils, and this at a time when public finances are stretched, both nationally and in local government. But we can not accept this situation.

As a country we shouldn't be just leaving it up to those parent who have the financial wherewithal to purchase the advantages of a proper cultural education for their children. All of our children deserve all the chances we can give them in life, irrespective of where they begin their journey. And that's why we're launching the Cultural Education Challenge today.

The challenge recognises that there is no single magic bullet, instead at the heart of the challenge is a call for arts and cultural organisations, educational institutions and local authorities to come together to share resources and create locally targeted, coherent and visible cultural education partnerships.

Through the partnerships, not only can we get more out of our local partners but we can also challenge ourselves to do more. So for example arts organisations can make their thinking more responsive to the needs of children and young people and schools. Through these partnerships we can ensure real, meaningful work and outcomes for children.

Let me give you some context for the cultural education partnerships. Henley Review identified key areas through which overall cultural education provision should be improved, these included a more rigorous quality framework, better training for those delivering cultural education, a unifying strategy for public funding, stronger partnerships between providers, and clearer sign posting for children and young people and for their teachers, parents and carers about what is available.

In summary, the recommendations were for an improved national cultural infrastructure and a more developed local delivery. Over the past three years I think there's been real progress towards developing that national infrastructure and at the Arts Council we've worked with many others across the cultural and educational sectors. We've supported the development of quality principles for cultural education, advocated for high quality arts and culture in the curriculum and championed Artsmark.

This important award has now been redesigned by schools for schools. It will be an excellent source of evidence for Ofsted supporting inspectors to better understand the quality of cultural education in a school. Artsmark compliments arts award which we run in partnership with Trinity College London and which recognises the outstanding achievements of individual young people.

Work with children and young people is now a part of our funding agreements with some 82 percent of our 663 national portfolio arts organisations and our 21 major partner museums. We're also fund holders for the

government's national network of music education hubs which emerged from the Henley Review of music education and which have been a crucial part of the government's commitment to cultural education.

And to help bring these structural elements together we invest £10 million a year in 10 Bridge Organisations, these Bridge Organisations play a vital role in building local cultural alliances, increasing provision for children and young people, and bringing in more revenue. They are now working with more than 7,000 schools and since 2013 they've levered in more than £11.5 million in additional funding.

All over the country we're seeing new platforms, new partnerships and new ways of working. Recent examples include the times education supplements online platform that will give teachers access to arts and cultural teaching resources from organisations such as the RSC, the V and A, BFI, R O H and with more to come. There's also the British mews Hmm, Arts Council and TES global's live streamed biggest history lesson which goes live today and will help develop skills in learning history using physical objects.

There's also the Royal Opera House's national nutcracker, inspiring teachers and students to engage with ballet using high quality and innovative resources and the RC S's live schools broadcasts. There's a long way to go yet, but there is certainly progress on creating that national infrastructure.

Now we need to get the other element in play, better local delivery through cultural education partnerships. In 2012 the Arts Council came together with the Heritage Lottery Fund, British Film Institute and English Heritage to form the cultural education partnership group. We've trialed pilot partnerships in Great Yarmouth, Bristol and Barking and Dagenham three very different areas, the priorities in Bristol which has a rich and diverse cultural offer and education sector are not the same as those in rural coastal areas such as Great Yarmouth where young people's cultural participation has tended to be low, or in Barking and Dagenham an East London borough in which most of the schools are maintained by a local authority that is a strong advocate for the community benefit of art and culture. We've learned from these pilots how adaptable cultural education partnerships can be, how responsive to local needs and circumstances, how to be effective they should comprise a wide range of arts, cultural and heritage providers, music education hubs, schools and higher education institutions, local authorities and employers.

We've seen how they can align cultural programmes to ensure greater effectiveness, using existing funding programmes as pegs for partnership development. And we've seen how Bridges our cultural education relationship brokers have been critical to shaping strategy, coordinating partnerships and providing intelligence. We're also pleased at the progress of emerging partnerships such as that in Blackpool, which has developed a schools cultural programme. We've identified 50 potential cultural education partnerships across the country. Our Bridge Organisations will lead on developing these, prioritising areas of most need. And our goal is to have these up and running by 2018.

We're publishing the details of these 50 target areas but we're looking at these as just the first 50, we're open to conversations with potential partners elsewhere. We have a list of more than 30 supporters already, including head teachers, partner national bodies such as Heritage Lottery Fund and BFI, arts and cultural organisations like the British Museum, RSC and many more across the country.

While Bridges will play a leading role in bringing partnerships together, we need other strong conveners, we need leadership in schools, arts organisations and in the partnerships themselves. Strong committed leadership at a local level, individually and collectively.

In particular, we need the participation and leadership of head teachers in shaping these cultural education partnerships, its simply impossible for us to deliver what pupils and schools need without the input of schools.

As you will have noticed I'm not announcing new funds for this initiative. We know in this era significant progress on this scale is possible only through partnership. But just suppose ... suppose there was new money? That investment would still have to be delivered effectively in ways that demonstrate impact and

value at a local level. So, whatever the circumstances now or in the future, we want these local mechanisms, we need cultural education partnerships.

None of us expect magic overnight, we know that this will be a journey and on the way we'll find and explore new ways of collaborative working that will change the lives of children and young people for the better. We're carrying full details of the Cultural Education Challenge, important information, contacts and first steps on our website. Your local Bridge Organisations are ready to speak to you. I know that those of you who work in education and in the arts share a passion to make a difference, we believe that there should be no barriers to talent, it's our job to ensure that children and young people should not be excluded from the advantages of a quality cultural education, through the accident of fate, or because of inequality, prejudice poverty or isolation. The arts should not be the privilege of the few but the right of the many.

Let's come together, get the cultural education partnerships off the ground and let's give all our children the opportunities that they deserve, thank you. [APPLAUSE]

Thank you and now we have a short film, and the panel, we're going to sit down there while it plays.

Video plays.

Conclusion.