

**Statement to the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Culture, Heritage and the
Gaeltacht in relation to the Arts in Education Charter
14 February 2018**

My name is Dr Katie Sweeney. I am a member of the Arts in Education Charter Implementation Group since November 2013. I represent the Department of Education and Skills on the group. I am accompanied today by Leona De Khors, Assistant Principal Officer in the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Unit in the Department of Education and Skills.

I would like to thank the Committee for inviting us here today to discuss the implementation of the objectives of the Arts in Education Charter. The Charter, launched in 2013, is an initiative of the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht (underpinned by a signed Memorandum of Understanding), working in association with the Arts Council. It has been a landmark development in relation to integration of the arts in education. Professor John Coolahan was jointly appointed by both Ministers as Chair of the Charter High Level Implementation Group (HLIG) until he retired in March 2017.

A key feature of the work of the Charter is the extent of co-operation, collaboration, networking and partnership of involved agencies which resulted. This co-operation is indicated by the voluntary engagement of expert personnel from a wide range of arts and education agencies on advisory committees for the promotion of Charter objectives. The Charter set out nineteen objectives and many of these are reflected in the Action Plan for Education 2016 -2019.

The Creative Ireland programme which was launched by the Government in December 2016, states that the Arts in Education Charter will be embraced, fast-tracked and resourced. The Department of Education and Skills is working closely with colleagues in the Department of Culture Heritage and the Gaeltacht, the Department of Children and Youth Affairs, the Arts Council and the Creative Ireland team on implementing a number of exciting measures in that Programme, several of which are contained in the Arts in Education Charter.

The Arts in Education Portal (www.artsineducation.ie): Ireland's Arts in Education Portal, the key national digital recourse for arts in education in Ireland, was launched in May 2015. Since its launch there have been over 125,000 visitors to the Portal with over 36,500 ongoing users (Artists/teachers/schools/stakeholder communities). There have been 4,236 video views and 742 Newsletter subscribers. The Portal allows for two-way involvement, as contributors and receivers, with a focus on quality.

Arts in Education National Day. A celebration and demonstration of the success of

the Arts in Education Portal has resulted in an annual celebration, the Arts in Education National Day. The 2018 National Day of celebration will take place in Froebel Institute of Education in NUI Maynooth on 21st April. It is anticipated over 200 participants will attend a range of presentations, workshops, demonstrations and discussion sessions at the 2018 National Day. After an open call, 61 submissions were received from national and international practitioners submitting presentations or workshops to be included in the 2018 event.

Exploring Teacher Artist Partnership as a Model of CPD for Supporting and Enhancing Arts Education: This initiative, which commenced in 2014 is a Department of Education and Skills led initiative in response to the Charter. It is led by the Association of Teacher Education Centres of Ireland (ATECI) in partnership with Encountering the Arts Ireland (ETAI) and the Association for Creativity in Arts Education (ACAE) representing individual teachers and support service personnel with a particular interest in the arts and arts education, and is now supported by the Creative Ireland Programme. Artists and teachers are trained to work in partnership in the domain of formal primary education. It consists of summer courses where Artists and Teachers participate together followed by in-school residencies. In 2017, 302 teachers and 80 artists were trained in 20 Education Centres. It is hoped to train 3,260 teachers and 652 Artists in Teacher Artist Partnership by 2022 across the 21 full-time Education Centre areas.

Research was integral to this Teacher-Artist Partnership initiative from its inception. Formal research was carried out by Dr Dorothy Morrissey and Dr Ailbhe Kenny of the University of Limerick and was officially launched by Minister for Education and Skills, Mr Richard Bruton, T.D. on 8th March 2017. The learning presented in the Research Report was intended to inform the design of future partnership initiatives and to contribute to the development and sustainability of each partnership in schools.

Arts in Junior Cycle: This initiative consists of a series of CPD experiences for teachers to enhance engagement with the arts and learning in Junior Cycle. The initiative embodies the principles and key skills which underpin the Framework for Junior Cycle and the Arts in Education Charter. It was first piloted in 2014 by Junior Cycle for Teachers, in conjunction with the Arts Council. It is hoped that 5,040 teachers across all subject areas will have participated in Arts in Junior Cycle by 2022 as part of Creative Ireland's Creative Youth programme.

National Digital Mapping Initiative: The National Digital Mapping of Arts in Education provision and activity throughout the country commenced in 2017 under funding from Dormant Accounts. The technical enhancements to enable the mapping on the Digital Map of the Arts in Education Portal have been completed. Some population of the Digital Map was completed by the end of 2017. The

remaining data population of the National Digital Map will be completed in 2018. This mapping of Arts in Education integration will be updated annually going forward.

National Arts in Education Research Repository: One of the objectives of the Arts in Education Charter was promoting Arts Education and Arts in Education Research and the establishment and development of a National Arts in Education Research Repository. A research repository is essential to provide visibility for the discipline area, and to provide for accessible and open access to data and for the preservation of research data in the field. This resource in Ireland is also essential to comply with and meet the needs of funders in this research area – from both a national and international perspective.

Establishment of Ireland’s National Arts in Education Research Repository is being hosted by Digital Repository of Ireland (DRI) on behalf of the Arts in Education Charter and the Department of Education and Skills. Representatives from every third level Institution in Ireland involved in Arts in Education Research have met twice in 2017 and have formed a Steering Committee to progress this initiative to completion. Other organisations such as ATECI, ETAI and NAPD are also involved in this national initiative.

Music Generation: Music Generation is Ireland’s national non-mainstream infrastructure for performance music education; initiated by Music Network, philanthropically seed funded, and currently co-funded by U2 and The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) and Local Music Education Partnerships (MEPs). Music Generation is co-ordinated and managed by Music Generation DAC. Government committed to continue to support existing MEPs with exchequer funding from July 1, 2014 under Phase 1. It was subsequently agreed that the rollout of Phase 2 of the Music Generation Programme would also be supported by the DES following initial funding from philanthropic sources. The DES has agreed to begin funding Phase 2 of the Music Generation Programme from 2020 with funding increasing in 2021 as philanthropic funding ceases. In December 2017, An Taoiseach announced the extension of Music Generation countrywide by 2022.

ARIS – Arts Rich Schools: Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools: The Arts in Education Charter makes provision for a programme called Arts Rich Schools (ARÍS) to incentivise both primary and post-primary schools to foster and develop the arts in wider elements of school life. This concept has now become Scoileanna Ildánacha/Creative Schools which is now a Creative Ireland Creative Youth Pillar 1 funded initiative. Creative Schools will be led by the Arts Council, in partnership with the DES and DCHG. An open call to all schools will be made in early 2018, and 150 schools (primary and post-primary) will be chosen to participate on a two year pilot basis. Schools will have access to Creative Associates, who are a mixture of

artists and teachers, to help them develop individual plans to help understand and reinforce the impact of arts and creativity on learning. Seed funding will also be made available to schools taking part in the programme.

Local Arts Education Partnerships (LAEPs): An objective of the Arts in Education Charter was the establishment of Local Arts Education Partnerships (LAEPs). Cavan – Monaghan LAEP has been a very successful pioneer in this arena, but other ETB's, local authorities and other partners are planning initiatives along these lines. The impact of co-operative efforts by the statutory agencies, the local authorities and the ETBs, in conjunction with the regional Education Centers and other agencies, have potential to re-shape the landscape of arts in education provision in Ireland to the great benefit of young people throughout the country.

Creative Ireland's Creative Youth plan has committed to the establishment of three Local Creative Youth Partnerships (LCYPs) on a pilot basis in 2018. These LCYPs will draw on the experiences learned from the existing LAEP.

School Policies: The Charter envisages that schools, in their school policies and plans, shall incorporate arts in education opportunities as an important aspect of enriching the curriculum and the wider life of the school. The Implementation Group has got the agreement of the school inspectorate to assist schools in this aspect of their school planning and self-evaluation. The Group has also obtained the support of the authorities in the Department of Education and Skills that provision for arts in education practice will be reflected in the design and equipping of school buildings. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has established reciprocal partnership with the Arts Council in the promotion of the arts in schools, as set out in the Charter.

Creative Ireland: On 8th December 2016, the Creative Ireland Programme was launched as the Government's Legacy Programme arising out of the Ireland 2016 Centenary Programme and as the main implementation vehicle for the priorities identified in Culture 2025/Éire Ildánach. The Creative Ireland Programme is a high-level, high-ambition, 5-year initiative, from 2017 to 2022, which aims to place creativity at the centre of public policy. It is designed to mainstream creativity in the life of the nation so that individually and collectively, Irish people can realise their full creative potential. The Creative Ireland programme is based on five core pillars.

Pillar 1: Enabling the creative potential of every child.

A plan for the implementation of this pillar over the period 2018 to 2022 – Creative Youth - A Plan to Enable the Creative Potential of Every Child and Young Person was launched on 7 December 2017. The plan contains seventeen actions, some of which I have mentioned above.

Concluding Note: As I stated earlier, the Creative Ireland Plan states explicitly that The Arts in Education Charter will be embraced, fast-tracked and resourced. The Creative Ireland Plan aims to work in parallel with, and build upon, many of the existing initiatives and programmes that support creativity both inside and outside the formal education system. This is welcomed.

It is an exciting and challenging time to be involved in the promotion of arts in education in Ireland today. What is afoot in the last few of years is the forging of a culture change, whereby a new era is opening up for integration of the arts as a core dimension of young Irish people's holistic education. To sustain the momentum requires the collaborative, mutual respect and co-operation of all agencies involved. The Arts in Education Charter implementation is a work in progress.

I would like to thank the Committee for providing us with the opportunity to outline the progress to date on the implementation of the objectives of the Arts in Education Charter.