

DÁIL ÉIREANN

AN COMHCHOISTE UM CHULTÚR, OIDHREACHT AGUS GAELTACHT

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CULTURE, HERITAGE AND THE GAELTACHT

Dé Céadaoin, 14 Feabhra 2018

Wednesday, 14 February 2018

Tháinig an Comhchoiste le chéile ag 1.30 p.m.

The Joint Committee met at 1.30 p.m.

Comhaltaí a bhí i láthair / Members present:

Teachtaí Dála / Deputies	Seanadóirí / Senators
Michael Collins,	Maura Hopkins,
Niamh Smyth.	Marie-Louise O'Donnell,
	Fintan Warfield.

Teachta / Deputy Peadar Tóibín sa Chathaoir / in the Chair.

Business of Joint Committee

Chairman: Is féidir linn an cruinniú a thosú. Níl leithscéal faighte agam ó éinne. An féidir le gach duine a ghuthán a mhúchadh, le bhur dtoil, mar go gcuireann sé isteach ar an gcrúinniú agus ar an gcóras fuaime freisin? Mar atá comhaontaithe ag an Coiste um Nós Imeachta maidir leis na coistí gan pháipéir, tá na páipéir go léir a bhaineann leis an gcrúinniú seo curtha ar bhunachar na gcaipéisí do na baill. An ealaíon agus an t-oideachas is iad na n-ábhair a bheidh á phlé ag an gcoiste inniu. We will discuss the arts and education. Cuirfimid an cruinniú ar fionraí anois.

Sitting suspended at 1.40 p.m. and resumed at 1.43 p.m.

Chairman: We will discuss the arts and education.

Senator Fintan Warfield: Is this the only meeting at which we will discuss the arts and education?

Chairman: In this series, yes. There will be a series of meetings on the arts.

Clerk to the Committee: We have a series of meetings planned. There will be one on the arts and the Irish language at the end of the month. We have a music segment lined up also and there will be a couple of others. There is a name in every slot between now and the summer. We also have to deal with the Estimates and the Heritage Bill.

Senator Fintan Warfield: In giving our feedback my office sent on a request that the National Youth Council be invited to address the joint committee. It might have gone to the Chairman's office rather than to the committee secretariat.

Chairman: I did not see it. We will look at providing another opportunity to bring it in, if that suits.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: It would be perfectly placed in the intergenerational session in Bealtaine.

Clerk to the Committee: We already have four delegates.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: That is a good point.

Arts and Education: Discussion

Chairman: Inniu is é an tabhar a bheith le phlé againn, ná ag an coiste, na healaíona agus an oideachais. Today we will discuss the arts and education. I welcome all of the delegates. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is represented by Mr. John Hammon, CEO, and Ms Arlene Forster. The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals is represented by Mr. Dermot Carney and Ms Kay O'Brien. From Creative Ireland, from the section which deals with the arts in education charter, I welcome Ms Sinead Copeland, Dr. Katie Sweeney and Ms Leona deKhors. Encountering the Arts Ireland is represented by Ms Helen O'Donoghue from the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Ms Lorraine Comer from the National Museum of Ireland. The Arts Council is represented by Ms Seona Ní Bhriain and Ms Liz Meaney. Fáilte roimh isteach inniu agus míle buíochas as teacht isteach.

By virtue of section 17(2)(l) of the Defamation Act 2009, witnesses are protected by absolute privilege in respect of their evidence to the joint committee. However, if they are directed by it to cease giving evidence on a particular matter and continue to do so, they are entitled thereafter only to qualified privilege in respect of their evidence. They are directed that only evidence connected with the subject matter of these proceedings is to be given and asked to respect the parliamentary practice to the effect that, where possible, they should not criticise or make charges against any person or an entity by name or in such a way as to make him, her or it identifiable. I also advise them that their opening statements and other documents they have submitted to the committee may be published on its website after the meeting.

Members are reminded of the long-standing parliamentary practice to the effect that they should not comment on, criticise or make charges against a person outside the Houses or an official, either by name or in such a way as to make him or her identifiable.

Chun tús a chur leis an comhrá, tógann muid an National Council for Curriculum and Assessment chun a cur lathair a dheanamh.

Mr. John Hammond: I thank the joint committee for inviting the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA, to meet it. My colleague and deputy CEO, Ms Arlene Forster, will say a little about the role of the council and proceed to outline developments in curriculum provision which may contribute to the discussion.

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment is a statutory body, the role of which is to advise the Minister for Education and Skills on the curriculum and assessment in early childhood in primary and post-primary education. As well as advising on the curriculum, the NCCA has a role in advising on and supporting its implementation, but it is important to note that it is not directly involved in the implementation of curriculum change in schools and other settings.

Education in the arts is critical to the education project. We know that one cannot separate the arts from the human journey and condition. We rely on them to bring out the fullness of our humanity. Knowing and practicing the arts are foundational to the full and healthy development of the minds and spirits of children and young people. That is why, ultimately, the arts are not separable from what it means to be educated in the first place. They have always been viewed by the NCCA as an essential curriculum area in early childhood in primary and post-primary education. For example, the newly introduced Framework for Junior Cycle includes “creativity and innovation” as one of the eight guiding principles of junior cycle programmes in all schools. Among the framework’s 24 statements on what learning at junior cycle must encompass are the following examples: the student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved; the student values local, national and international heritage; and the student brings an idea from conception to realisation. These are only some of the statements on learning at junior cycle. These are all aspects of learning that, among many others, are underscored by the arts in education. If anything, the relevance and importance of the arts have increased in recent years as curriculum developments internationally underscore the importance of generic key skills, alongside deeper subject knowledge, in 21st century learning. To which of the key skills at junior cycle – being literate, managing myself, staying well, being creative, working with others and communicating - does education about and in the practice of the arts not contribute? This view of the arts as fundamental to the educated young child and young person is reflected across our curriculum development activity at all levels.

My colleague will now discuss some of these developments.

Ms Arlene Forster: I will look, first, at curriculum provisions in early childhood. Aistear which was developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA, is the early childhood curriculum for children from birth to six years. The framework describes early learning and development using four interconnected themes - well-being, identity and belonging, communicating and exploring and thinking. Through these themes, children have an opportunity to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, to explore ways to represent ideas, feelings, thoughts, objects and actions through symbols and to develop positive attitudes towards learning and dispositions such as curiosity, playfulness, resourcefulness and risk-taking. Aistear provides practical examples of experiences and activities through which children's creative expression can happen such as through story, song, sculpture, rhyme, play, music, dance, drawing and painting.

In more recent years, funded by the Department of Children and Youth Affairs and supported by the Department of Education and Skills, the NCCA has developed the Aistear Siolta Practice Guide which includes a variety of practical resources such as videos and podcasts on supporting the arts within the early years curriculum. This year marks the 19th birthday of the primary school curriculum which aims to develop each child's potential to the full, including his or her creative and artistic ability. In supporting children's sense of wonder and natural curiosity the curriculum promotes guided discovery and active learning in all seven areas, including the arts. Comprising the visual arts, music and drama, the primary arts curriculum enables children to see and solve problems creatively through imaginative thinking and the development of their abilities. It strikes a balance between children having opportunities to explore and express ideas and experiences and having opportunities to experience and respond to music, drama and the visual arts. For example, the music curriculum focuses on listening and responding, performing and composing.

An interesting development in recent years in primary schools has been the further integration of education with the arts across the curriculum at infant level. Play and playful approaches to teaching and learning are now more prevalent, increasing children's opportunities to engage in the creative and artistic activity referred to in Aistear and in the primary school curriculum. For example, teachers use junk art, construction play and socio-dramatic play to support concepts that we find in the visual arts curriculum such as form, shape and texture or elements from the drama curriculum such as role, character, belief and tension.

In the post-primary curriculum education in the arts features across a wide range of subjects, including English, Irish, modern foreign languages, history and the new area of well-being. Creativity and problem solving also feature strongly in new short courses and subjects such as coding and computer science.

The arts also feature strongly in the transition year programme and the leaving certificate applied programme in many schools. For the purposes of this discussion we are looking, in particular, at the areas of art, music and the performing arts.

The arts have always been a subject included in the post-primary curriculum. Since September 2017, a new junior cycle visual arts specification has been introduced. A new leaving certificate programme specification for the arts will be ready by September this year. One of the interesting features of the new course is that it has been aligned with the common European framework of reference for visual literacy which has been of great benefit in designing and working on the specification.

Like art, music has also always been a subject included in the post-primary curriculum. A

new junior cycle music specification will be introduced in schools in September. The course has three elements: creating and exploring; participating and music-making; and appraising and responding.

An interesting development in recent years has been the provision of short courses at junior cycle. Schools can design their own short course. Organisations and bodies such as those in the arts sector can develop a short course for take-up in schools. The NCCA has developed a short course on artistic performance which has been available to schools since 2016. It also collaborates with a range of arts and culture bodies and agencies. We work with the IMMA and the RIAI to produce examples of student work.

On visual thinking strategies, we have collaborated with Dublin City Council's Arts Office and the organisation Visual Thinking Strategies, VTS, in the United States in researching and adopting the VTS methodology and curriculum. The NCCA is an associate partner with Dublin City Council for the Erasmus plus project entitled, Permission to Wonder.

Mr. John Hammond: The curriculum is constantly in the process of renewing itself and some aspects are always under review. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA, is conducting a review of the primary curriculum and a review of the senior cycle education programme will also commence this month.

Last year the NCCA oversaw an extensive consultation process on the structure of the primary curriculum and how time was used within it. Work this year involves a further teasing out of what a redeveloped curriculum might look like and what it might include and say about teaching and learning in the years to come. As part of this process, we will be exploring the purpose of a primary curriculum, its values and priorities, its underpinning philosophy and principles, its pedagogical approaches and the various curriculum themes, areas and subjects that should comprise the primary curriculum. The redevelopment of the curriculum also provides exciting opportunities to consider new aspects to children's learning, for example, computational thinking and coding and their potential to further promote and support education on the arts.

The review of the senior cycle education programme will be significant and exciting for the NCCA in 2018. It can build on existing developments at junior cycle. It is timely because the last significant changes to the structure of the senior cycle programme took place over 20 years ago. It will, among other things, raise questions for discussion in areas such as core experiences at senior cycle, key skills for senior cycle, flexible curriculum programmes and pathways for learning, the balance we should be trying to achieve between school autonomy and prescription in the curriculum at senior cycle, and the sites for learning at senior cycle. These are all areas in which those committed to the arts in education will have an interest. The review offers everybody an opportunity to generate a shared vision for the senior cycle programme and a strong base from which to shape a curriculum that will genuinely meet the needs of all learners for years to come.

From an NCCA perspective, there is an ongoing commitment to the arts as a central area of education for the 21st century learner. Recent curriculum developments and collaborations provide evidence of that continuing commitment. Ongoing and future curriculum review offers everyone the opportunity to advocate for further innovation and improvement in provision for education in the arts. The NCCA encourages all involved to participate fully in the ongoing and forthcoming reviews.

Chairman: Míle buíochas as an gcur i láthair suimiúil sin. Leanfaimid ar aghaidh leis an National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals.

Mr. Dermot Carney: I am the arts officer of the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals. I am secretary to its arts, culture and heritage committee. I am accompanied by Ms Kay O'Brien, chairperson of the committee and a past president of the association.

Ms Kay O'Brien: I thank Mr. Carney. I thank the joint committee for inviting us to appear before it to outline the role of the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, NAPD, in the development of the arts in education programme during the past few years and offer our views on the arts programme in post-primary schools.

In 1987 there were six organisations in Ireland representing principals and deputy principals. In 1989 the idea of one organisation representing everybody took root very quickly and was received enthusiastically. In 1989 the NAPD was officially launched by the leader of the Fine Fáil Party, Deputy Micheál Martin. The organisation has gone from strength to strength. We have more than 1,000 members, principals and deputy principals, a 22-strong executive committee and a network of nine regional branches. The presidents represent all three sectors - voluntary secondary schools, ETBs and further education and comprehensive and secondary schools. We have an annual conference which is usually attended by more than 500 delegates who are school leaders. I am delighted to say this year we heard a fantastic and passionate presentation on the arts in education by Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell. We have a very cordial and constructive relationship with the Department of Education and Skills. We also have consultative status with the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and representation on a wide range of social and cultural organisations.

Since 2000 the NAPD has had an arts, culture and heritage sub-committee. It has worked towards the development of the arts and creativity in education ever since and helped to inform and support many arts initiatives in education. In the wake of the Benson report, *The Place of the Arts in Irish Education*, in 2000-01 the NAPD conducted a major survey of arts provision in second level schools. It was followed in 2001 by the publication of a policy paper, *The Arts in Our Schools*. The NAPD had a vision for a countrywide arts in education programme and in 2005 successfully lobbied the then Department of Education and Science and Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism to co-fund a programme entitled, *Creative Engagement*, in second level schools which was co-launched by the then Minister for Education and Science, Mary Hanafin, the then Minister for Arts, Sports and Tourism, Mr. John O Donoghue, and the then Arts Council chairperson, Ms Olive Braiden. It has since gone from strength to strength. We appreciate the continued support of both Departments and the Heritage Council in our ongoing project work.

NAPD continued its work on arts in schools by working on the development of the artists-schools guidelines 2006 which were published by the Arts Council. In 2008 NAPD participated in the preparation and publication of *Points of Alignment*, an important policy document published by the Arts Council, which paved the way for the 2013 arts in education charter. NAPD wholeheartedly welcomed the arts in education charter and participated in a number of initiatives overseen by the charter high level implementation group, with Professor John Coolahan as chairperson, including the arts-rich school scheme and the Arts in Education portal. NAPD contributed to the development and launch of the Arts in Education portal and is a participant on its editorial board. NAPD supported and joined the effort to create *Encountering the Arts Ireland Company Limited* and has taken part in the development of the new junior certificate including short courses.

NAPD envisions an education system in which schools are energised through the arts and which liberate and enthuse young people through arts and culture. It envisions an education system in which all students have access and engagement in the arts; in which creativity is a core activity in the post-primary curriculum; and in which the arts is a priority with principals and deputy principals as instructional leaders.

The aims and objectives of NAPD are to gain recognition of the centrality of the arts in education within the formal curriculum and as a co-curricular activity. NAPD aims to work towards the establishment of a national strategy for the arts in post-primary education and through the implementation of the arts in education charter; to seek full Government support for our continued leadership in the schools in efforts to promote the centrality of creativity in education; to ensure NAPD representation on all bodies charged with the development of the arts in education; and to continue the development of the creative engagement project as a flagship arts in education programme in our schools.

Through its own initiatives over the past 18 years and with the support of the NAPD director and national executive, the NAPD arts and culture committee continues to advocate for the greater inclusion of the arts in education. The NAPD sees as essential the following institutions for the promotion and development of the arts: the Department of Education and Skills; the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht; the Heritage Council; the Arts Council; the high level implementation group of the arts in education charter; arts officers of the local authorities; teacher training departments in universities and colleges; teacher education centres; and education training boards. Dialogue and co-operation with organisations that share the same or similar objectives are also essential for building partnerships and promoting culture in our schools. These include the Poetry Ireland writers in schools scheme; the Arts in Education Portal committee; Encountering the Arts Ireland; Young Social Innovators; and also the national cultural institutions, including IMMA, the National Museum of Ireland, the National Gallery of Ireland, the national theatre and Ballet Ireland.

Two of the main objectives of NAPD are to provide a united voice on issues of common concern for school leaders and to endeavour to ensure school leaders are consulted on all relevant matters and, in particular, on new initiatives that impact on their role.

Chairman: Míle buíochas as sin. Bhí sé sin an-shuimiúil ar fad. Leanfaimid ar aghaidh le Creative Ireland on arts in education.

Ms Kay O'Brien: I will pass on to Mr. Dermot Carney.

Chairman: Tá brón orm.

Mr. Dermot Carney: Creative engagement is the flagship programme of NAPD and a number of people in this room will know of it. It is now in its 13th year. It is the longest running multi-arts programme in second level education in Ireland. It is administered by the NAPD, the arts, cultural and heritage committee and me. The committee consists of the chairperson, Kay O'Brien, Anthony Condron, Mick Daly, Dr. Brendan Flynn of the Clifden Arts Festival, Mary Hanley, Patricia Hayden, Dave MacPherson, Paddy O'Connor and Michael Parsons, who is the chairperson of the Heritage Council. The key feature of the committee is that the members who are or have been in leadership roles do the work involved on a voluntary basis.

Creative engagement is an arts in education programme. Arts in education is different from just arts education. It describes a situation in which an artist or arts group comes into a school to

work with students. Students sometimes go to the artist's place of work or to a cultural institution. The interaction between the students and the artists is called a creative engagement. Work produced throughout the country includes projects in visual art, poetry, prose, music, dance, theatre, heritage and film. It is very broad. In the creative engagement scheme the work of students in the school is enhanced by the involvement of the local artists and arts practitioners who are often chosen because they have different specialties from the teacher in a subject area. Many of the arts practitioners are affiliated to the Arts Council. We have the involvement of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, which has a role in supporting professional artists and heritage professionals on the ground, working in tandem with the Department of Education and Skills.

Through the creative engagement programme NAPD wants to encourage creativity and well-being; complement curricular learning; encourage the building of sustainable partnerships between the school community, artists, arts organisations and cultural institutions; and to provide students with opportunities to express their experiences through varied arts practices including visual arts, drama, music, dance, film and literature. Through the creative engagement programme, NAPD hopes to create a body of work across a wide range of creative forms, including exhibitions, performances, videos, films, publications and so on, that can be widely shared and to showcase this work through NAPD and our other partners. We also hope to link with and build on existing arts provision at local level.

An application form for creative engagement funding of a proposed project is completed by interested schools before the end of October each year. It is signed by the principal of the school and sent to NAPD. The NAPD arts, culture and heritage committee then meets to consider applications for the project. For the 2017-18 school year, we received 95 applications and the year before we received 113 applications. That number has grown from 57 applications six years ago. The selection criteria for funding is a clear indication of student engagement in and ownership of the creative activity; evidence of a partnership between the student, teacher and artist; the originality of the proposal; a clear plan of action; the process of the project is emphasised as much as the final product; and there is a potential for collaboration with and replication in other schools.

The creative engagement project is based initially on grants from the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Heritage Council. It is administered through NAPD's head office. The amount of the grant given to an application is determined by the proposal and the availability of funds. We are always looking for more. Applicants provide detailed projected costings on application. Schools are encouraged to provide some form of additional funding at local level. Schools are visited by NAPD arts committee members, who do so voluntarily, during the year and encouragement and support is given to teachers, students and artists involved. Each is required to complete an evaluation form at the end of the school year.

Over the past 12 years, NAPD has been actively encouraging schools to develop their arts plan. This anticipated the ideas contained in the arts in education charter and placed an emphasis on the role of the arts within schools. All creative engagement schools have to initiate or produce an arts policy as part of their application for funding. The inspectorate has taken over that role in schools as part of a wider remit but it has been and continues to be an aspect of creative engagement that has added to the quality of the arts in second level schools. The National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, NAPD, will be working with the Charter High Level Implementation Group to support further support developments in school arts policies.

An annual Creative Engagement exhibition is held each year to celebrate and display the project work of the schools. During the last two years it has been held in the Irish Museum of Modern Art, IMMA, and allows schools to show their work and share their experiences with others. In the past we have worked with the National Museum in Collins Barracks. We are looking for a venue for this year and, hopefully, we will be back in IMMA at some point

Ms Kay O'Brien: Or in Collins Barracks.

Mr. Dermot Carney: Yes, or in Collins Barracks. The exhibition has gone from strength to strength and is attended by a wide number of schools, educators, artists and visitors. The accounts of the grant funding are audited annually and returns are made to the Departments involved. To date more than 600 arts in education projects have been completed since the programme began. The school leaders, teachers, artists and the students have made Creative Engagement what it is, an extremely popular programme which, given sufficient funding, could expand even further.

With respect to the new junior certificate, within the curriculum the NAPD continues to support positive change in the arts in schools. As part of the new art syllabus there is an opportunity for students to develop their abilities through the programmes being envisaged. The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment has mentioned some of these. There is even a wider significance in that all students can now have some contact with the arts through the 100-hour short courses. The NAPD was involved in creating and developing the short course on performance art among others. It welcomes the new junior cycle programme as this offers greater flexibility and autonomy to schools to design their own courses. Schools have a wonderful opportunity to develop ways of involving the whole school community with this new structured exposure of students to the arts.

The six key skills, which probably have been mentioned previously, are being creative, managing information and thinking, working with others, managing myself, staying well and communicating. These are all central elements to life in arts education and are reflected both in the new junior certificate curriculum and the extra curricular Creative Engagement programme.

Much of the approach to the new junior cycle involves changing traditional teaching methods. The teacher prepares the classes, organises the materials, the media resources and is in control but the students are expected to make their own learning within the parameters set by the teacher. Students have to be creative. They have to visualise. They have to link research to their creations. They have to collaborate and they have to manage their time.

As an association representing the leaders of second level schools, the NAPD has a great deal to contribute to pillar 1 of the Creative Ireland programme. This is an exciting programme and is welcomed by the NAPD. It is a five-year programme beginning this year and ending in 2022 and one that involves the co-operation of two or more Departments for its funding. The NAPD not only has vast experience in arts in education programmes in schools but it has worked with both those Departments for many years. Creative Ireland is designed to bring creativity to a wider range of people in Ireland beginning with young people. The NAPD looks forward to making itself available to help and support Creative Ireland in achieving its aims.

The arts rich school as a concept was written into the 2013 Arts in Education Charter. The NAPD members have been leading on the arts rich school for many years. It welcomed the charter's recognition of the concept and the work that can be done in schools. The arts rich school is currently called "the creative school". The NAPD again supports efforts to enhance

the role of the arts in the school. School leaders are crucial, as Ms Kay O'Brien said, to the success of arts programmes in schools and the NAPD looks forward to offering its experience and its network to all efforts to embed the concept of the creative school.

Looking to the future, applications to Creative Engagement have doubled in the past six years. With increased financial support, the programme can continue to expand. The NAPD looks forward to the reform of the leaving certificate syllabus, which is happening. It looks forward to the reform of the assessment of the leaving certificate examination. It will continue to place creativity and the arts at the centre of their schools and, as such, add to the well-being of all of our students in post-primary schools. It will work with the high level implementation group to achieve the aims of the 2013 Arts in Education Charter. It will work and collaborate with Creative Ireland to achieve its aims.

The arts are at the heart of the nation. They unlock the imagination. They open up minds and hearts to new ideas. They help us understand ourselves. They enhance life. We in the NAPD thank the committee for the opportunity to address its members today and we wish them every good fortune in all their work.

Chairman: Go raibh míle maith agat. Apologies for cutting in on Mr. Carney while he was in mid-flow. I ask the representatives from Creative Ireland and the arts in education sector to make their presentation.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: I dtús báire, ba mhaith liom a rá go bhfuilimid iontach buíoch as an gcuireadh a thug an coiste dúinn a bheith anseo inniu. My statement is based on the progress on the implementation of the objectives of the Arts in Education Charter. I am a member of the Arts in Education Charter implementation group since November 2013. I represent the Department of Education and Skills on that group. I am accompanied today by Ms Leona De Khors, assistant principal officer in the curriculum and assessment policy unit in the Department of Education and Skills.

I thank the committee for inviting us here 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 and the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, underpinned by a signed memorandum of agreement and understanding between those two Departments working in association with the Arts Council. It has been a landmark development in the integration of the arts in education. Professor John Coolahan was jointly appointed by both Ministers in 2013 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. If I were to pick out the key characteristic, that was it. There was not a great deal of money available at the time but every organisation and entity involved in arts in education worked collaboratively together. 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 the charter objectives. The charter sets out 19 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 originated and are contained in the Arts in Education Charter.

I will highlight a number of the initiatives and the way in which they have developed. Ireland's Arts in Education Portal, the key national digital recourse for arts in education in Ireland, was built as a result of the Arts in Education Charter and was launched in May 2015. Since its launch there have been more than 125,000 visitors to the portal with more than 36,500 ongoing users comprising artists, teachers, schools, various stakeholders and communities. The charter was about building communities of practice and the portal supports that. There have been 4,236 video views today and 742 newsletter subscribers and participants in the newsletter. The portal allows for two-way involvement, as contributors and receivers, with a focus on quality. That has been a critical development.

As a result of that the arts in education national day has now developed into a celebration and demonstration of the success of the Arts in Education Portal and is now a feature of an annual celebration, the arts in education national day. The first one was held in the Irish Museum of Modern Art. Last year it was held in DCU at St. Patrick's Institute of Education and this year's event, the 2018 national day of celebration will take place in Froebel Institute of Education in NUI Maynooth on 21 April. It was always an objective of Professor Coolahan and the implementation group that everything would not be Dublin centred so we are moving out gradually. We are getting as far as Maynooth in 2018. It is anticipated that more than 200 participants will attend a range of presentations, workshops, demonstrations and discussion sessions at the 2018 national day. This year, for example, after an open call, 61 submissions were received from both national and international practitioners submitting presentations or workshops with the hope of being included in the 2018 event. We have come a long way since the launch in 2015.

Another initiative that was established in 2014 was exploring teacher-artist partnership as a model of CPD for supporting and enhancing arts education. Many artists have gone into schools and done great work through the years but one needs to empower teachers through continuing professional development where the artist and the teacher work in partnership and then have an opportunity to engage in a residency afterwards. That was a feature of the charter work. Exploring teacher-artist partnerships was one of the initiatives. The initiative is led by the Department of Education and Skills, via the Association of Teachers'/Education Centres in Ireland, ATECI, in partnership with Encountering the Arts Ireland, ETAI, which is represented here today, 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. That is an example of an initiative that had developed. In fact, teacher-artist partnership CPD was one of its first initiatives in pillar 1 in the first year of Creative Ireland 2017. It was delivered nationwide across the network of education centres. It works on the structure of the teacher summer course programme that always existed. Teachers and artists take part in those initiatives and work in partnership and then go back to a residency opportunity in a school.

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 21 education centres. With the funding and support of Creative Ireland the strategic plan outlines that 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. That is at primary level.

From the start of the development of the initiative in 2014 and aligned with it, we carried out evidence-based research. Research was integral to the 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, Deputy Bruton, on 8 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. The initiative is part of pillar 1, creative youth, under the Creative Ireland programme and that is very welcome. It shows that the initiative which started as a small one in 2014 has grown and it was delivered nationwide in 2017, and will continue to be delivered over the next four years under Creative Ireland.

Arts in junior cycle is another initiative but, as the name suggests, it is for post-primary level. 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. This is an initiative that is now funded under Creative Ireland. It is hoped that 5,040 teachers across all subject areas, not just the arts, will have participated in arts in junior cycle CPD by 2022 as part of Creative Ireland's creative youth programme. This year, the arts in junior cycle initiative will roll out arts in English, Irish, art and music. Over the period of the four years, every subject area will have an arts in junior cycle CPD dedicated to it. It is about the integration of the arts across the entire curriculum at post-primary level. Teachers usually teach two subjects in a school and they also teach junior and senior cycles so not alone are we having an impact at junior cycle but also at senior cycle as well.

Out of the portal came a plan to carry out a national digital mapping initiative. One of the things that was highlighted was the lack of awareness of people in communities of the resources that are available to them. Under the portal, the national digital mapping of arts in education provision and activity throughout the country commenced in 2017 under funding from the Dormant Accounts Fund. 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 digital map will be completed in 2018. The map will be updated annually going forward so no matter what crossroads one lives near, one will be able to zone in to the particular area and see all arts in education provision, be it schools, local authorities, arts centres or any of the initiatives the other speakers have spoken about. Information will be available on the types of initiatives in an area and how one can tie into them.

The other area of interest that was pushed, gently, by Professor Coolahan, was arts in education research. 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. I do not come originally from the arts and I have a science background, and if one wants information on scientific or engineering research in this country one can access a central resource that gives all the information available at the click of two buttons. That is not there for the arts. There is no central national digital access resource for research in arts and education or arts education. That was one of the objectives and it has developed and is moving at a pace. A research repository is essential to provide visibility for the discipline. There is a lot of great arts education and arts in education research taking place throughout the country but it does not have the same visibility as other disciplines. The intention is that the resource would 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.

If one wants to access Horizon 2020 funding one must guarantee that one has a research data management plan and that the publicly-funded research that is generated is available through open access. One could not do that without a national resource such as the research repository. We are at the stage now where we are working in partnership with the 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 came together as a committee in 2017 and we formed a steering committee to progress this initiative to completion. Other organisations such as the Association of Teachers'/Education Centres in Ireland, Encountering the Arts Ireland, ETAI, and the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, NAPD, are also involved in this national initiative. The rising tide should lift all boats and promote research. It should not alone provide it as an open access for the country. There are some fabulous people on the steering committee and it was opportune for the institutions involved. It is developing well.

Music Generation is the national non-mainstream infrastructure for performance music education, initiated by Music Network, philanthropically seed funded, and currently co-funded by U2, The Ireland Funds, the Department of Education and Skills and local music education partnerships, MEPs. Music Generation is co-ordinated and managed by Music Generation DAC. The Government committed to continue to support existing MEPs with Exchequer funding from 1 July 2014 under phase 1. It was subsequently agreed that the roll-out of phase 2 of the programme would also be supported by the Department of Education and Skills following initial funding from philanthropic sources. The Department has agreed to begin funding phase 2 of the programme from 2020 with funding increasing in 2021 as philanthropic funding ceases. In December 2017, the Taoiseach announced the extension of Music Generation countrywide by 2022. The first three MEPs were established in counties Mayo, Sligo and Louth in 2011. Why should every other county not have them?

The Arts in Education Charter makes provision for a programme called Arts Rich Schools, ARIS, 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, a Creative Ireland creative youth pillar 1 funded initiative. This will be led by the Arts Council, in partnership with the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

An objective of the Arts in Education Charter was the establishment of local arts education partnerships, LAEPs. Cavan-Monaghan LAEP has been a successful pioneer in this area. Other education and training boards, local authorities and other partners are planning initiatives along these lines. The co-operative efforts by the statutory agencies, the local authorities and the education and training boards, in conjunction with the regional education centres and other agencies, have potential to reshape the landscape of arts in education provision to the great benefit of young people across the country.

Creative Ireland's creative youth plan has committed to the establishment of three local creative youth partnerships on a pilot basis in 2018. These will draw on the experiences learned from the existing LAEP.

The charter envisages that schools will incorporate arts in education opportunities in their school policies and plans 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, NCCA, has established a reciprocal partnership with the Arts Council in the promotion of the arts in schools, as set out in the charter.

On 8 December 2016, the Creative Ireland programme was launched. It is a high-level, high-ambition 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. Pillar 1 aims at enabling the creative potential of every child and was launched on 7 December 2017. The plan contains 17 actions, some of which I referred to earlier and have originated from the charter.

The Creative Ireland plan states explicitly the Arts in Education Charter will be embraced, fast-tracked and resourced. The plan aims to work in parallel with and build on many of the existing initiatives and programmes which support creativity both inside and outside the formal education system. This is welcome.

It is an exciting and challenging time to be involved in the promotion of arts in education. What is afoot over the past several years is the forging of a new 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 thank the committee for providing us with the opportunity to outline the progress to date on the implementation of the objectives of the charter.

Ms Lorraine Comer: Encountering the Arts Ireland, ETAI, is an alliance of organisations and individuals committed to arts and education with a focus on children and young people. Several ETAI board directors are in attendance as observers at the committee, Máire O'Higgins, assistant principal, Larkin Community College, Phil Kingston, community and education manager of the Abbey Theatre, and Arthur Lappin, independent arts consultant and film producer.

ETAI evolved and was shaped by several key developments which took place in Ireland over the past number of years. It began as an informal grouping in 2008 following the publication of the artists-schools guidelines in 2006 and the points of alignment in 2008. The former initiative brought together individuals from both sectors to articulate their shared understanding and values around what characterises arts in education practice. Points of alignment, which represented the findings of the then Oireachtas Joint Committee on Arts and Education, was set up in 2007 by the then Ministers, John O'Donoghue and Mary Hanafin. It called for greater joined-up thinking from all those involved in the arts and education sector. Several individuals involved in these initiatives identified the need for greater collaboration and the bringing together of the existing wealth of knowledge, skills and expertise across the arts and education sectors. This was for the purpose of providing young people with a rich engagement in the arts and culture, both in and out of school. ETAI was born out of this need.

ETAI started out as an informal grouping in 2008 and developed into a company limited by guarantee in 2015. ETAI was formally launched by both the then Minister for the Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Jimmy Deenihan, and the then Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairi Quinn, in 2013, following the publication of the Arts in Education Charter. ETAI is made up of an alliance of organisations and individuals committed to arts and education, focusing on children and young people in Ireland. As a company limited by guarantee, with an eight-member

board of directors, this grassroots organisation has up to 40 organisations and 100 individuals as members representing the educational, arts, heritage and cultural sectors from across Ireland.

The current board is chaired by Jane O'Hanlon, head of education at Poetry Ireland. As well as myself, Ms O'Donoghue and the observers, the remaining board member is Mary Manley, primary school principal and director of the Association of Creativity and Arts in Education. Advisers to the board include Mr. Aidan Clifford, former director of the City of Dublin Education and Training Board curriculum development unit, and Ms Mary Shine Thompson, Dublin City University trustee.

The purpose of the alliance is to broaden and deepen the access, creation, participation and engagement of children and young people in the arts and culture by using its combined strength, resources and expertise. Encountering the Arts Ireland is committed to fostering the greater strategic alignment of the arts, culture and education policies in Ireland, identifying new synergies for the sustained engagement of all children and young people in the arts and culture. The alliance provides platforms and opportunities for the voice of the child and young person to be heard.

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: ETAI acknowledges the invaluable work done in the field of arts and cultural education for children and young people in and out of school in Ireland. This work has been initiated and supported during the years by many organisations, including the Arts Council, the national cultural institutions, the Department of Education and Skills and the local authorities, through arts officers and librarians often working in collaboration with other agencies and individual practitioners. ETAI acknowledges the long-standing programmes in operation nationwide, many of which have been mentioned, including the artist in residence scheme, the Association for Creativity and Arts in Education creative schools award, Music Generation, National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals creative engagement and other programmes that support children and young people in an out-of-school context. ETAI welcomes key policy developments and associated programmes, including the Arts in Education Charter; the document for cultural institutions, *A Fresh View for the 21st Century: Education, Community, Outreach Policy Framework 2014*; the Arts Council's *Making Great Art Work*; and *Creative Ireland* and the forthcoming *Culture 2025* policy. Cumulatively, they provide the sector with a policy framework to enable greater coherence and alignment between education and the arts and culture sectors.

Since the early days of ETAI, the alliance has successfully mobilised action across the field of arts and cultural education from individual practitioners to arts organisations and education centres, regional arts officers, national cultural institutions and third level colleges, among others. Our impetus for action was the successful collaborative process that produced the Arts Council artists-schools guidelines. Another influential factor was the disappointing response to the Points of Alignment framework and the shared belief the recommendations in these policy initiatives should take root in practice. ETAI informed the debate through three symposia held during 2009 and 2010. Members of the alliance were contributors and lead programmers, including at the final international conference entitled, *Encountering the Arts Ireland*.

We remain involved in advocacy that draws on the combined expertise of our membership. ETAI has been well placed to act as a network organisation in support of and as an adviser on some of the key initiatives, including the Arts in Education Charter mentioned by Dr. Sweeney, *Creative Ireland* and *Culture 2025*. We often produce submissions and position papers on behalf of our members.

ETAI members are part of the design team of the teacher-artist partnership continuous professional development programme referenced my colleague, Dr. Sweeney. We are part of the design team alongside the Department of Education and Skills, the Association of Teachers Education Centres in Ireland and the Association for Creativity and Arts in Education.

ETAI is a member of the Arts in Education portal oversight group and more recently has become a member of the national repository for arts education research working group. We have been actively supportive of the design and contributed to the delivery of the national arts education day in the past three years. The role of the alliance in these initiatives includes advisory and programming work. In addition, ETAI has attended a number of consultative meetings with the Arts Council on the ARIS arts rich schools initiative, currently known as Creative Schools. We have met the Creative Ireland team in the context of the development of the overall programme.

ETAI has prepared a detailed research proposal that focuses on formal, informal and non-formal learning arts and cultural learning in schools and youth work settings. This research aims to identify approaches to assessing sustainable quality arts and cultural engagement by children and young people. It builds on existing research in this field, including the informative works recently produced in the Arts Council in association with the ERSI study by Dr. Emer Smyth on arts and cultural participation among children and young people. It was drawn from insights from the Growing Up in Ireland study and, as outlined by Dr. Sweeney, on exploring the teacher artist partnership as a model of continuous professional development for Supporting and Enhancing Arts Education in Ireland: A Research Project, undertaken by Dr. Ailbhe Kenny and Dr. Dorothy Morrissey.

We have several recommendations for the committee on the Arts in Education Charter. We are keen to see the post of chair of the Arts in Education Charter higher implementation group filled. We support the review and revision of the Arts in Education Charter in an ongoing way in the light of current developments. We support the development of the charter, working in tandem with developments in Creative Ireland. We support research to identify approaches to assessing sustainable quality arts and cultural engagement by children and young people in and out of school. We support continuous professional development at all levels of leadership and delivery to enhance the progress of a coherent infrastructure that will mutually support and aligns energies and resources. In turn, this will ensure effective and efficient quality arts and cultural engagement by all children and young people in formal and non-formal settings.

Ms Lorraine Comer: We are keen to ensure sufficient representation by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in arts, culture and heritage, as well as education advisory bodies, in the light of the important role local authority arts officers, librarians and other officials play in the area of the arts, culture and education. We are keen to ensure a specific reference to engagement with young people and children and education as part of the remit of local authority arts officers from the perspective of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government. We recommend the establishment of national fora that would include the voices of children and young people. Such fora should initiate debate and discussion on the importance of creativity in citizens' lives. We believe the value of the arts in society needs to be championed and that arts education and culture offer possibilities for creative expression. These are fundamental to human rights. Opportunities for all children and young people to find their voices are essential.

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: I thank the joint committee for providing the opportunity to outline the role and work of this organisation in complementing existing provision and providing a

collective voice for the many organisations and individuals engaged in education and the arts, culture, heritage and creative fields.

Ms Liz Meaney: I am the arts director for the performing arts at the Arts Council. I am joined by Ms Seóna Ní Bhriain, head of young people and children in education. I am also joined by Mr. Ross Curran and Ms Laura Keogh who have been kindly seconded to the Arts Council by the Department of Education and Skills. They are working with us on our Creative Schools programme, placing educational expertise at the heart of the work of the Arts Council in this important area.

The Arts Council welcomes the joint committee's consideration of this issue. We take the opportunity to expand on our presentation committee members have received. We welcome the opportunity to discuss with the committee the insights and perspectives of members on arts and education.

The Arts Council is Ireland's development agency for the arts. The arts are for us and citizens throughout the country a central feature of our shared civic life. They require and merit continuous support nationally, internationally and locally. The support of the State, to the tune of €68 million in 2018, enables the Arts Council to provide funding for a range of artists and arts organisations throughout the country. Our support encompasses individual artists, musicians, writers, dancers and arts organisations, including Druid, the Cork Midsummer Festival and the Irish Writers Centre. It provides opportunities for people to encounter and engage with the arts. This could be in a building such as the Ark children's cultural centre or one of the 155 small festivals we will fund in 2018. They range from the Skibbereen Arts Festival to Rosses Point Shanty Festival. As has been mentioned, we also support local government. We work with young people and children. That is a key focus of our partnership with local government. We have recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the County and City Management Association and we will proceed to do so now with every local authority throughout the country. That local support and infrastructure of expertise is a key connection point to support and build expertise in arts and education but also in many other areas of practice.

Our work includes research, policy development and the measurement of impacts, as has been mentioned and about which Ms Ní Bhriain will speak further. Research is a critical part of informing our work into the future and measuring our work in the past. We are a learning organisation with specialist arts expertise. We welcome moments such as this where public conversation allows us to bring forward a critical policy area.

Ireland is a country in which creativity abounds and we welcome working across Government as a partner in the Creative Ireland programme. We must continue to expand and enrich our support for artists and arts organisations, those who make art. It is upon their work that we rightly base our confidence that our children and young people are growing up in a country which has culture and the arts at its heart. Ms Ní Bhriain will now talk in more detail about her work in the area of arts and education. However, it is critical we see this work as part of a larger project and as ongoing work to ensure we as a country support and develop the arts.

Ms Seóna Ní Bhriain: Míle buíochas as ucht an deis a thug an coiste dúinn go léir an comhrá seo a bheith againn inniu. Táimid lánsásta a bheith in ann éisteacht le gach duine agus a bheith mar chuid den chomhrá seo.

I am head of young people, children and education at the Arts Council. The committee has received our submission. It gives an overview of the Arts Council's policy and initiatives in this

area. The Arts Council has a long history of working to develop, support, and promote the arts and education and to advocate for arts education. A number of my colleagues have mentioned initiatives in which the Arts Council has played a central role. However, we always work in partnership with others such as the Points of Alignment report of the Special Committee on the Arts and Education, and the Place of the Arts in Irish Education or Benson report, going back even further, as well as various initiatives through the years.

The committee may have questions around our submission and current policy initiatives and developments. We would be happy to discuss those but I thought we might take this opportunity to say why we do what we do and why we are. The Arts Council is the agency for developing the arts in Ireland. We wish to build a central place for the arts in Irish life. We believe the arts are fundamental to human experience and expression. The arts, whether music, dance, stories or visual arts or, as the Arts Act 2003 puts it, “any creative or interpretative expression... [in] any medium” are part of what make us human and what make us alive. They are our voice in the world and give us insights into other people’s voices, perspectives and experiences. It is through the arts that we reflect on where and who we are and are also inspired to imagine new possibilities.

We are cheered up by the arts and sometimes challenged. Sometimes they bring us into dark and depressing places. Overall, however, they make us feel better and they make us feel more present and alive. That is why we are here. My role in particular focuses on young people’s experience of and engagement with the arts. In all of our policy initiatives in this area, whether in school or out of school, we are interested in the child or young person’s experience and their engagement with the arts. We are interested in their experience and their engagement if they are learners, an audience member with their family, an audience member with their school or a young person developing their own interests as a teenager.

We have a working definition of artistic quality that we use in the Arts Council. As part of developing the arts we also fund the arts and we have to make assessments of different proposals, ideas and suggestions that come in. The definition that we use is that we look for work, engagements or experiences that are ambitious, original, technically competent and connect with people in a lasting way. That last item, the personal response, is critical. It is not that high-quality arts are here and then there, but that we have the people who are engaging with it. For a high-quality arts experience to take place, the people who are experiencing it make it high quality.

With respect to children and young people, that is why we focus on whether it is transforming their experience. Are they being inspired by this? Are they being transported? How are they engaging with it? That makes the arts better because we believe the more diverse voices that shape the arts and the more children and young people contribute to making meaning through the arts, the more the arts become exciting, interesting and reflective of who we are.

That is why we are here. There are clear points of alignment with the high-level goals of other public bodies and why they do what they do. The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is not here today. However, it is interesting because it is very involved in what will develop as part of the Creative Ireland initiatives. However, we work in partnership with the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in a number of areas such as early childhood settings, early childhood arts, where it plays a key role, and also in youth strategy and young people’s experience out of school.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs is interested in young people’s voices and

their participation. I refer to young people's right to participate fully in society and their right to communicate in the medium of their choice to reach their full potential. The Department wants children and young people to be active and healthy. It cares for their well-being and that is where it put the arts in its policy framework. There is nothing that contradicts anything where we are coming from and why we want children and young people to engage with the arts. There is clear alignment. We are coming at planning and provision from different angles and different roles, but essentially we share many of the same goals.

The Department of Education and Skills is here today, as is the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA. They have a job to ensure children have an education that enables them to reach their full potential and develop the skills and competencies to help them to flourish in order that they will learn and develop as they grow. Increasingly, as we have heard from our colleagues in the NCCA, the education system has begun to focus on competencies such as being creative. There is a focus on play, inquiry, exploration and imagination as well as collaboration, resilience and communication. They are all things at the heart of a quality arts experience.

There is also recognition within the education system that young people do better overall when they are happy in school. The research that has been mentioned, the Arts and Cultural Participation among Children and Young People - Insights from the Growing up in Ireland Study, was commissioned by the Arts Council from the Economic and Social Research Institute, ESRI. It explains the connections between when young people participate in the arts and other related child outcomes such as their socio-emotional well-being, their academic achievement and their attitudes toward school. There are clearly many reasons for all of us to come together around the table.

Even if we are all coming from these different angles, we are all talking about children reaching their potential and developing the skills and experiences that will serve them now and in life. With the Department of Education and Skills in mind, it may be interested in those creative skills for young people not just to become artists or work in the creative industries but to be engineers or to work in whatever field. Those are skills developed through engaging in the stuff we are about.

What is most rewarding but also challenging about working in this area is that it is necessary to work in partnership. All of a person's creative skills have to be used because children and young people do not reside in any one sector. They do not belong to any one place in public policy. They are impacted by all the different decisions we make. We owe it to them to work together and in partnership to achieve the best outcomes for them. I think there is a real possibility for us to do that. Greater collaboration has developed over recent years. It will take all of us to make the experience for them really high quality.

Chairman: Gabhaim buíochas leis an bhfinné as sin. Bhí sé an-shuimiúil ar fad. The elected representatives have been chomping at the bit to get in. I know Senator Warfield has to be in the Seanad shortly, so if it were possible, we might let him go first.

Senator Fintan Warfield: I thank the Chair for indulging me and I thank the witnesses for their time. All of us equally understand and appreciate the role of arts for young people, be it from personal experience in the system, the informal education system or otherwise. I will get straight down to questions.

This question is for Dr. Sweeney. The commitments in the Arts in Education Charter state

that the implementation group would meet regularly and report to Ministers twice yearly. Does the implementation group report to the Department twice yearly? How often does it meet?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: I highlighted earlier that Professor Coolahan, chairman of the high-level implementation group, retired from his post in March 2017. He has not been replaced. Since that time, we have not met as a group with the Ministers. We have met under the auspices of Creative Ireland and at the various launches. Some of the initiatives have become embodied in the Creative Youth plan. Therefore, there are various interactions with both Ministers. A dedicated report from the charter implementation group has not been produced since Professor Coolahan stepped down.

Senator Fintan Warfield: Which Minister has the responsibility for filling the vacancy?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: It is a joint responsibility.

Senator Fintan Warfield: The charter makes a number of commitments. Dr. Sweeney touched on some of them. A number of them have yet to be honoured in a meaningful way. Included are commitments on guaranteed student visits to cultural institutions, reduced ticket prices, artists' residencies, and arts policies for all second level schools. Is there a reason we had to wait four years for the Creative Ireland initiative and for the charter to be embraced, fast-tracked and resourced? Can an update be provided on some of the initiatives?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: When the charter was launched in 2013, the country as a whole was not in a great financial position. Much of the initial period was devoted to building relationships, collaboration and planning to deliver on a number of the initiatives. The funding that was available initially was limited. We were successful in receiving dormant account funding for some of the initiatives. It would have been welcome had huge amounts of funding being available over the past four years but we are where we are here. The funding we have received and the embracing of the initiatives that now feature as part of Creative Children are welcome.

Senator Fintan Warfield: On Music Generation, will the existing funding be matched when the Government takes over?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: Once the philanthropic funding is phased out, the Department of Education and Skills will be involved. Locally, the music education partnerships raise 50%. For the first three years of the initiative, in phases 1 and 2, that is, until the musical education partnership becomes established, the philanthropy funding and The Ireland Funds match the other 50%. After three years, the philanthropy funding will cease and the Department of Education and Skills will fund the other 50%. To date, that has been the model for phase 1. We are moving into phase 2. Phase 3, because it involves an announcement under pillar 1 of Creative Ireland's Creative Youth plan, will not have the philanthropy element in the first three years. It will involve local music education partnerships, the Department of Education and Skills and Creative Ireland. Creative Ireland and local music education partnerships will match 50% of the funding from day one.

There are three phases. Phase 1 involves the ceasing of philanthropy. With regard to phase 2, as philanthropy phases out, the Department of Education and Skills phases in as 50% with the music education partnership. Under the final phase, involving the nationwide rolling out under Creative Ireland, there will not be a philanthropy element. It will involve the Government and the local element coming together from day one.

Senator Fintan Warfield: When Dr. Sweeney mentioned her background in science, I

thought about the national campaign for the arts. Others have been calling for the narrative around science, technology, engineering and mathematics, STEM, to embrace the arts and for the acronym to become STEAM. Does Dr. Sweeney have an opinion on that narrative of the Government based on her background in science? Does she have a view on the positive outcomes that could emerge from the inclusion of arts in the Government narrative?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: I would like to believe scientists are creative too. Everyone has inbuilt creativity and it needs to be nurtured and developed. To be a scientist, one has to be creative and resilient, and findings have to be proven. In a science background, it is said one must fail and fail better in the pursuit of knowledge in a specific area. The resilience that comes from being involved in creativity as part of a community of practitioners in the arts and education, in addition to creativity in its broadest form, involving digital and coding aspects, augurs well for the future of any of the disciplines. Ms Comer and Ms Ní Bhriain said the arts is not just about producing artists in the future but also about developing young people and children in an holistic manner so creativity can lead them into any discipline or field. I believe, however, scientists are creative also.

Senator Fintan Warfield: I apologise again as I have to leave. I have 800 questions.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: I thank the delegates very much for their presentations today. I welcome the visitors in the Gallery and also Professor Gary Granville. I have had the pleasure of working closely with most of the delegates in my previous career as an arts educator before I was elected to the Dáil. It is wonderful. Perhaps I know the work of some of the delegates better than that of others. I have a couple of questions. My first is an observation on which one of the delegates might comment. It is heartening that there are so many organisations that are so passionate about arts education. I did not hear the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland mentioned by anybody. Do any of the organisations represented today have someone from that association sitting on its committee or working with it directly?

With regard to Dr. Sweeney's comments on Music Generation, the nationwide roll-out involves quite an ambitious plan. Is the programme to be rolled out nationally by 2022, which is in four years? By then, it is to have no philanthropic support at all, just Government support. How many more partnerships have to be established if we are to reach the target?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: There were 11 in what we referred to as phase 1. There are nine in phase 2 and there may be up to nine additional music education partnerships developed by 2022. That amounts to 29. The Donegal model was a pilot project long before Music Generation.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: The target is to develop nine over the next four years.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: We have nine in transition from phase 2. Phases 1 and 2 receive Music Generation funding by virtue of the fact that they came through a competitive process. It came in phases of three over a period. There was a lot of work to get everything up and running. There were 11 in the first phase. Over three years, they were put in place. There were nine in the second phase, and these are still developing. They were approved only last year. In tandem with those nine, there will be nine in the national roll-out under Creative Ireland.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: What will it cost to reach the target by 2022?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: The Department of Education and Skills believes there will be an annual budget requirement of approximately €7.5 million. A music education partnership can be

for a two-county area. It can cover one county area or a local authority area.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: They are not necessarily led by the education and training boards in that case.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: No, but in practice the majority are led by the education and training boards. That appears to be what will happen in the last phase also.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: I will put my questions together as I do not wish to lose my train of thought. Mr. Carney gave a passionate presentation to the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland this year on the topic of turning STEM into STEAM. Perhaps he will talk a little about bringing the arts into that group. He said one of his goals is to assist and support the development of a national strategy for arts in post-primary education. What is the position with a national strategy? Do we have one yet?

Ms Comer and Ms O'Donoghue gave an interesting presentation. I attended a few of their meetings as well. Will they comment further on their disappointment with the response to the Points of Alignment framework? I thank them for being specific about the steps this Parliament can take to help the cause they are working on as well.

With regard to the NCCA, I am aware that wonderful work is taking place on the development of a new art course for the leaving certificate. Having been a student of the subject for the leaving certificate and then having taught it for the leaving certificate and seeing it never change, that is wonderful news. It will also be welcome news for the teachers who correct the subject for the State examinations every summer. Will Mr. Hammond comment on that?

I am also aware of the wonderful work of Seóna Ní Bhriain at the Arts Council, along with the work of Ms O'Donoghue and Ms Comer, but will the witnesses tell us how we can do arts in education better? All the witnesses have made wonderful cases for what they are doing, but what can the Parliament do to make arts in education better and more streamlined in our schools and outside the formal sector?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: The Creative Ireland initiative is an all-of-Government initiative. Ms Copeland can give a synopsis of how every Department is involved in the implementation of the Creative Ireland objectives. It requires the support of that and the continuation of support of the other initiatives working in parallel.

Ms Sinead Copeland: Many people have covered the Creative Ireland programme already and Creative Youth is a massive part of it. We are hoping Creative Youth will be the framework to bring us all together. Many people from the groups here have already contributed and there are 18 actions included in it. That is a start. There is much work to be done this year and next year, but it is a framework and we are hoping to work with all the groups here today to progress it. Dr. Sweeney in the Department of Education and Skills is a key partner. That is the space in which we can progress. There are many new initiatives along with the initiatives already in place under the Arts in Education Charter. We will be taking up some of the ones mentioned by Senator Warfield earlier and fast-tracking them. It provides the collaborative space. Many people have mentioned collaboration and shown that it is difficult. We are hoping that space will be where we work together on these things.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: That is pulling the entire thing together.

Ms Sinead Copeland: Yes, just like that.

Mr. Dermot Carney: We have had members of the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland on our committee. We have a gap at present and we will have one fairly soon again. As an ex-member, I am always in close touch with the association.

With regard to STEAM and STEM, I believe everybody in the room is on the same page on that. The House of Representatives in the US produced a policy in 2013 which stated that the arts had to be brought into STEM for the purpose of innovation in schools. Máire Geoghegan-Quinn said something similar to the European Parliament in 2012 or 2013. We can see on the ground that it is a must. There is a huge amount of work being done in this area and much is still to be done on the transfer from the arts to other areas within the school. To make a personal comment, people talk repeatedly about creativity. I was an art teacher for many years and it was not just about creativity. I wanted students to leave with a knowledge and love of the arts and to ensure they had visual literacy. They were not all creative, and to pick every policy by taking it out of creativity does not always work. However, that is not to take it from the science area. In the schools in which I was a principal, there was fantastic creativity in the woodwork department and all across the school.

The Deputy referred to the national strategy. People should be talking to the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, of approximately 730 schools, as part of the process for anything that is done in that area. Whatever way that goes, they should talk to the leaders of the schools. As I have said previously, the arts are part of the curriculum in primary schools. In second level schools, when one sits down to timetable - I have done it and so has Ms O'Brien - the arts are not everywhere and not everybody is going to be involved. One must get the leaders of the second level schools to work with one. Talk to them.

Chairman: Does the Deputy have another question?

Deputy Niamh Smyth: I have a question for Ms Copeland. Is the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland one of the groups she is bringing to the table to discuss the creative children?

Ms Sinead Copeland: I do not believe we have done so yet but it is something to which we would be open.

Mr. John Hammond: With regard to the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland, I mentioned earlier that the NCCA is a statutory body. One of the requirements of the NCCA is to include various stakeholders on all our committees. Those stakeholders usually include teachers, management bodies, business and social interests, representatives of the Department and representatives of the State Examinations Commission. They also usually include representatives of subject associations. For example, the group that developed the junior cycle visual art course would have included a representative of the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and the current work that is taking place on leaving certificate art would also include a representative of that association. The association's voice is fully heard and represented in those structures. Indeed, subject associations are within all the structures in the NCCA.

On the leaving certificate art curriculum, it is eagerly awaited among art teachers. A draft of the curriculum is due to go to our council at its March meeting. Once it is approved by the council, it goes for public consultation, so the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland and others will get an opportunity to comment on it and suggest adjustments to it. The specification will be completed by September and it will then issue to the Department. The Department ultimately decides on an implementation date for the specification within schools. An interesting feature of the work that has been done on the new leaving certificate art specification is we have worked

on aligning it with a new common European framework of reference for the visual arts. That has proved a useful tool in terms of aligning the arts education and experience the new leaving certificate course will provide with an objective standard that is in the process of discussion and agreement across Europe. It is an interesting development.

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: In terms of the subject area, the Irish Museum of Modern Art works very closely with the Art Teachers' Association of Ireland annually on many levels. It is a member of Encountering the Arts Ireland, ETAI. The National College of Art and Design, NCAD, which I know is not the only teacher formation for teacher provision in the country, is also a member. As mentioned, the relationship with the NCCA and the NAPD is interwoven in terms of our work. We would have been very supportive of the state-of-the-arts campaign, which they mounted very successfully and imaginatively to draw attention to the 50 year old curriculum, the revision of which we are looking forward to seeing. We cover as much as we can across those fields.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: Will Ms O'Donoghue elaborate further on her comment about being disappointed with the response?

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: I will ask Ms Comer to respond.

Ms Lorraine Comer: The Points of Alignment was an important piece of work that was initiated by the Arts Council. It was the two Ministers at that time who wanted to set up the joint committee. The committee produced some really interesting recommendations, taking into account the good practice within the fields of arts and education. It also undertook a look-back of the 1979 Benson report and called for a joined-up thinking approach at Government level. There was disappointment that the recommendations within Points of Alignment were not realised. Out of that process grew ETAI. We were a grassroots organisation that wanted to make sure that we would continue to advocate for the recommendations within Points of Alignment and also for a greater alignment of policies, which was the purpose of Points of Alignment as well. We want to see alignment of policies across arts and education in particular.

The crash and the recession occurred at that time in 2008 and so there were not resources available to fund the recommendations within Points of Alignment. At that time, creative engagement and other initiatives continued. They created the fertile ground for initiatives like Creative Ireland. There was a lot of really good work still happening on the ground. The Arts and Education Charter launched in 2013 took account of all of that work. Also, for the first time we had two Ministers from education and the arts coming together to develop policy.

Chairman: The next speaker is Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell who I should have brought in earlier as she has been one of the key drivers of this particular part of our research.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: I thank the witnesses for their presentations, which was like manna from heaven and music to my ears. Last week, all female politicians were invited to visit an artist who is doing a large and wonderful portrait in recognition of the 100 years of women getting the vote. Like other Members, I went to meet the artist. I was very taken aback by the fact that, as he did in regard to the portrait for the Northern Ireland Assembly, he is doing this portrait in visual art form. The manner in which he is going about doing this portrait is extraordinary. While I was talking to him he asked me why politics does not do more of this work. I had no answer for him. Politics tends to see itself outside of something as nebulous as the arts even though it so real in all of our lives, from a two year old to a 92 year old. As I said, the presentations today were manna from heaven. I enjoyed listening to them and learning

about the work the organisations are doing.

My background is in the arts. When I was an M.Ed student I wrote a thesis entitled “Drama and the Education of Feeling”, in respect of which I recall a tutor asking me, “what is that about?”. The arts are about feeling and who we are. I recall trying to battle my way through that tower at the time and I might have been on the right path. I am a great believer in the arts for themselves rather than as an alignment to something else. The arts are themselves a majesty. Dance, drama, music, mime, ballet, movement and literature do not need to be aligned to anything. The arts stands on its own, like physics or chemistry. I come at this from that power.

Has the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA, pushed for 25 extra points for music or art on the leaving certificate curriculum? We were happy to do that for mathematics, thus rolling over for the banks, as all the universities did. Why can young people not get 25 additional points for visual art or music, which are leaving certificate subjects? Perhaps in years to come dance and other arts will be leaving certificate subjects. If we did this, it would position arts as a serious subject rather than an activity one engages in because one is good at it and so on. I would welcome a comment from all of the witnesses on that proposal, which is very practical, although very political. Will they also comment on teacher training and the quality of teacher training in arts at primary and secondary level? There is a presumption that the arts is half entertainment. It is almost as though arts capitulates to the profit margin or the tourist margin and it does not stand on its own. The view is that arts is very good tourism and that it is great to have the arts in towns as they encourage tourists in and so on. Perhaps the witnesses would comment on whether we are coming at the arts from the wrong angle and on where they stand in regard to the level and quality of teacher training, the teacher training colleges and courses.

Do the witnesses believe we are only changing the language for something that already exists? In other words are we putting “ings” onto create, explore, participate, appraise and respond, such that it looks like we are doing something new but in fact we are already doing it? On the quality of the arts, who is to train the teachers in that regard? The artists cannot be asked to do it because they have enough to do. Do all of the organisations really work together? I have heard that there is collaboration and that all the organisations are coming at something from the same angle but does that actually happen? Do the organisations speak to each other? I note that Ms Comer said that the ETBs had held conferences on the arts. Are the organisations saying the same things with different titles? Are they all doing the same thing but differently?

What do the witnesses think the committee can do to help? I would like each of the witnesses to give me something real and practical in that regard. I suppose the main wish would be more funding. From where does the NAPD get its funding? Has the Arts Council ever contacted NAPD to congratulate it on the work it is doing and to offer it funding? Can it apply to Creative Ireland for funding? I was very interested in what was said about the portal. It seems to be a Willy Wonka factory, such that everything one ever wanted to know is on the portal. I am confused as to what it was. I should perhaps have looked into it more, and I will do but perhaps the witnesses would elaborate on that.

What is Dr. Sweeney’s understanding of research in the arts? I am pleased all of the witnesses are here today. So much of politics is about what is going wrong. I agree with the witnesses that in terms of the arts this is a really exciting time. Ms Comer made the brilliant point that the arts, culture and heritage are connected to local authority arts office librarians and others. So much of our world in terms of where we ask children to live and to play is ugly. I know this because I did a report on growing old in Ireland in which I referenced how elderly

people watched while pipes were erected on walls outside their windows yet did not even have access to a tree. There is a huge area of visualisation of environment within arts structures. I could go on for hours. I am so pleased to open up dialogue on how in any way we can help. The witnesses must tell us what we can do to move it on and to keep it alive in the Seanad and on the Dáil floor for them. That is why they are here and why people come in here. I am very interested in it and I know the Deputies, one of whom had to leave, are extremely interested in what the witnesses are doing and in moving it on. It is the first time that we have a real collaboration between education and arts. They can see each other as pivotal and on the same merry-go-round. Will the witnesses speak to that?

Mr. Dermot Carney: I want to make one connected point which is that there are many changes to do with the leaving certificate at the moment but it is crucial that we get the assessment of the leaving certificate right. The points system for H1s is an absolute disgrace at the moment. One can get a certain amount of points for higher level maths-----

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Or fail pass maths and pass the exam.

Mr. Dermot Carney: I am coming at this not just from an art teacher's point of view but from a principal's point of view also. When we are timetabling, we do not see students from junior cycle taking up certain options at senior cycle. Who gets hit? The art teacher and the music teacher gets hit.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Correct.

Mr. Dermot Carney: Therefore, regardless of the changes to courses, the assessment of the courses has to be right. I was about to mention the daughter of a family but I will not. Where did the push for extra points for maths come from?

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: The banks.

Mr. Dermot Carney: Perhaps industry, the banks, whoever.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Yes, they influenced the universities.

Mr. Dermot Carney: We have to start calling for the same thing. Why should the arts be cut out?

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Exactly.

Mr. Dermot Carney: I know many top class, A grade art students. However, art teachers and music teachers know that these students will not do these subjects for the leaving certificate because they will not get the marks.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Disgraceful.

Mr. Dermot Carney: The art teacher or music teacher will encourage them and tell them they will motivate them and get them there but the students will tell us to take a look at the statistics. Therefore, the assessment is massively important.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: The equilibrium of the subjects is also important. There is no difference between maths and music.

Mr. Dermot Carney: Totally.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: There is none whatsoever in relation to intellectualisation and all of that. Many of the great businesses take people from the arts because they can think creatively - the very word we are all battering about here. This should be done. A student who wants to pick geography, languages or a subject about which they are passionate should be given extra points. I apologise to the Chairman for interrupting.

Chairman: Does Mr. Carney wish to continue?

Mr. Dermot Carney: I will not be long. The Senator also asked about funding creative engagement etc. We will take all the money we can get and we will produce really good work. We have stopped at around 100 applications. We have gone from 57 to 100 applications in the past six years. We cannot go any further because we do not have enough funding. It is as simple as that. Therefore, I would be delighted-----

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Representatives of the Arts Council are to Mr. Carney's left and in front of him are those from Creative Ireland.

Mr. Dermot Carney: We are very happy with the funding we get from the Department of Education and Skills, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and the Heritage Council. We have stopped, however, and we have to be able to move on if we are to expand. It is grant related.

Chairman: Ms O'Donoghue is looking to come in.

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: I concur with Mr. Carney on assessment for the arts. I would add that there will be many people in teacher training, particularly at primary school level, who will attend third level college without having had an experience of arts education because of the value system that unfortunately permeates society. It is not in our schools but in society. We have a recommendation about public conversations. The Senator mentioned issues around older people such as the understanding campaign around dementia. As a society, we need to understand how vital the arts are and they should not be assessed purely as part of a points system so that people can trust them. Parents would be able to trust that their children will have a fully engaged and participative role in society if and when they engage in the arts. It is particularly critical with the primary school sector.

The Senator asked if we really worked together. We do really work together and there is good evidence of it. As I said, primary school teachers can enter the classroom without having had a formative experience of the arts at second level. However, when we work in collaboration as was described here, we can provide support for those teachers through continuing professional development and alignments of the arts and educational organisations.

The portal is about accessing information. The Arts in Education Portal under the Arts in Education charter is a go-to space where people can have conversations about what is happening. People need to feel endorsed in what they believe in and the practice that they are practising. They also need to know where to go if they want to find peers and engage in continuing professional development.

Ms Seóna Ní Bhriain: In terms of what can be done, resourcing of the arts is really important. Resourcing all of these initiatives and ensuring that there are proper structures in place to implement them is really important. Ms Comer mentioned the Points of Alignment report and the disappointment in the years that followed. Two key issues hampered the report's implementation. Resourcing was one of them. Structures, that is, mechanisms in which to collaborate,

was the other. We do work together but it is difficult because we are all in different places with different agendas. The Arts Council policy mentions implementation of the arts in education charter within it. That allows us to engage collaboratively with other agencies and departments, but it is difficult to do.

I would love to see by the end of 2022, when Creative Ireland has gone through its period, that we have developed structures that work and are sustainable. One of the recommendations, which I mentioned in our overview paper that we circulated to the committee in advance, was that there would be a development unit for the arts in education. That was one of the recommendations of Points of Alignment. Most of the other recommendations would have been housed within that one. For example, the development of a portal site was first mentioned in Points of Alignment. At the moment Creative Ireland has begun that space, which is why it is a really positive place to be in now, and we are beginning to have proper discussion and collaboration at quite a high level.

There has always been collaboration and work on the ground. When we look back to the Points of Alignment report and earlier, there has always been a recognition of how amazing stuff happens anyway despite a lack of proper planning or provision. We somehow manage to get it all together but we would be doing ourselves a disservice not to say that it is not really sustainable in this way and that we need to have proper resourcing and structures to work together. It takes time to make these things actually align. Part of it is the structures and part of it is all of us being willing to engage and respect where everyone is coming from and the fact that we do have some common goals.

Ms Liz Meaney: The Arts Council absolutely understands that, while the arts are complementary, the arts are at the core of the function of our society and are of value in and of themselves. We strive continually not only to resource and support the arts in education but all of the arts. Our artists should have meaningful and working lives. The infrastructure which we support is critical. It is the infrastructure which these children and young people are growing up to engage with. Alternatively, they may be artists themselves. The committee's overall support to the arts, the Arts Council or many of the other agencies which resource and support the arts is critical. It is also critical to our civic life.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: I will touch on three things. First, do we work together? Any of the initiatives under the charter would not have been at the level of implementation and development without the involvement of Association of Teachers' Education Centres in Ireland, Encountering the Arts Ireland, the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, and the Arts Council. They could not have happened without it. Many of the committees that deliver these initiatives are voluntary, on which excellent people from various organisations come together because of their commitment to the development of the arts and also the integration of the arts and education.

The Senator mentioned the portal's Willy Wonka event. It is a great event. Without it, there would not have been 125,000 visitors to many sites since 2015, as well as 36,500 users. It represents the building of a community in practice.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: I will look at it.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: It is in the area of arts education where it is supported, developed and enhanced. It builds confidence and passion and is an advocating entity. It values the arts and establishment of the structure and is based on quality. There are a number of elements to the

Arts in Education Portal, including the digital map and the research repository. The big things are projects and partnerships. People submit items. The teachers, artists and students who are engaged in them work together. They might need coaching, mentoring or perhaps a bursary award to be able to develop their documentation, the photography or a video of what they are doing and the portal provides them. The projects and partnerships always have an artist, a teacher and students involved. They are the general criteria. There are videos on projects and partnerships that are exemplars of best practice of the highest quality. One can watch, listen and read about them. There are also guest bloggers.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: I will look at it.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: The Senator asked about research. The arts are encompassed by the humanities and social studies. Research in the arts can be associated with initial teacher education or someone can work purely on the arts for the arts' sake. It is broad and diverse, but there is no central location for anything to do with research in the arts and education for it to be visible and for anyone looking at it from a funding perspective to see that there is open access. This is related to the repository. The Digital Repository of Ireland was established to promote the humanities and the social sciences.

Deputy Michael Collins took the Chair.

Ms Kay O'Brien: The Senator asked what she could do. We all need to consult each other because we get lost in many ways. We also need to inform each other of what is happening. Again, we often seem to get lost in that respect.

I liked what Ms Comer said about the aesthetics of housing. I argue the same about schools and the enormous contribution the arts could make in improving school buildings, the way they look and the atmosphere and ethos within schools. Many of the projects in which people get involved in Creative Engagement are to improve the school atmosphere. I could give many wonderful examples of projects, but we do not need to reinvent the wheel. It has been accepted for a long time that the arts are important in schools. I would be worried, therefore, if we were to try to reinvent the wheel yet again. As a lot is happening, we need to inform ourselves and tie it all up. In Creative Engagement we would like more funding to extend our project. The committee is quite willing to voluntarily go into schools, with which we have good relationships because we are all principals and deputy principals. We could definitely extend the project. We are very happy to work with Creative Ireland to that end.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: Creative Ireland has a huge swag bag which is getting bigger by the minute. It has a new director, Ms Tania Banotti, who is a good girl.

Ms Arlene Forster: I will pick up again on the Senator's question about initial teacher education and Deputy Niamh Smyth's question about what could be done in the future to strengthen it. Building on the points mentioned, the arts are one of the seven areas that comprise the primary school curriculum. As such, they are a key part of initial teacher education. Notwithstanding the points made by Ms O'Donoghue about the fact that some come to teaching without formative artistic experiences, it is important to remember that initial teacher education is just the initial phase of a teacher's development of skill and professional knowledge. We have heard reference to the many opportunities to promote continuous professional development for teachers to build that experience and expertise.

There is another factor in considering the place of the arts in children's experiences in a pri-

mary school context on which we probably have not touched. It relates to the time given to the arts in the curriculum. In our opening statement Mr. Hammond referred to the ongoing review of the primary school curriculum. As part of the review, we held a consultation process last year on the structure of the primary school curriculum and the time allocations within it. That generated an interesting discussion. As we all know, when one talks about the time given to a particular subject or area, it is about the values that underpin the curriculum. Many points were made in the consultation process about the allocation of time, specifically for those subjects or areas of the curriculum which received less time than others. There was a real feeling that in the redevelopment of the primary school curriculum it was important to hold onto the principle of providing a broad and balanced experience for children and that areas such as the arts were essential.

There is another piece of the redevelopment work which is particularly interesting in the context of this discussion. It relates to how we conceptualise an aspect of children's learning such as the arts. A proposal we put out last year for consultation on the primary school curriculum was designed to encourage people to think about the curriculum in a much more integrated way. We asked if we should continue with 11 subjects. A key finding of our consultation process was that there had been a broad welcome for the suggestion that we should think in a more integrated way about the totality of children's experiences in primary school. That connects with many of the points made. Every experience has or could have an artistic dimension. Some really interesting discussions will happen in the next year or two which will connect with many of the points made today about the critical centrality and importance of the arts experience for children throughout their primary school years.

Mr. John Hammond: Returning to the point about the points system and allocation of points for particular subjects, it is, in the first place, a matter for the third level institutions which operate the points system. In real terms, something of which we have to be cognisant when looking at the question of allocating points for particular subjects is how we distinguish between the worth of one subject and another. The difficulty in embarking on the path towards awarding additional points for specific subjects is that one will end up with a competition between subjects, as to which of them should and should not attract additional points. One will also run into the difficulties that were recently encountered in the case of mathematics with unintended consequences in the allocation of points for a specific subject. In general, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, NCCA, has been cautious when looking at the question of awarding additional points for specific subjects. We tend to be more inclined towards and supportive of the allocation of additional points for congruent or related courses available at third level. There is certainly a case for looking at the allocation of additional points for the arts and other subjects. Generally, the points system has to operate on an equitable basis across subjects as much as possible.

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: What has the NCCA done to counteract what the universities have done? I have not heard its voice on this. My preference would obviously be for the arts. I have not heard the NCCA argue against that point. Equilibrium is all very well, but in this instance it is not all very well because what has gone on is appalling. Where is the voice and influence of the NCCA in regard to that?

Mr. John Hammond: In the initial discussions which took place around the allocation of points for mathematics, the NCCA adopted a position on it and issued that advice which was that it was probably not a good step to take in terms of-----

Senator Marie-Louise O'Donnell: That is not a definite voice. Rather, it involves words

like “probably”, “maybe” and “someday”. I am surprised that the voice of the NCCA was not louder on this. Maybe it should be and maybe it should take up that cudgel. I am not suggesting that the points go to subjects such as music, but I am surprised that if there is a belief around the equilibrium of subjects and around the conceptualisation that the voice of the NCCA is not better heard. The NCCA made very good points on the decrease in the number of subject areas and disciplines within the primary school curriculum. People are walking away having made a decision on the kind of mind which is needed within a university. If one fails honours maths one automatically passes and if one gets 29% in a pass paper one automatically passes. It is outrageous. I am not angry, but my pitch concerns the fact that I would like to hear the voices of the NCCA.

Mr. John Hammond: At the outset, and when the discussion was taking place, we made our position very clear. I am sure when it comes up for review we will also make our position clear. The other area raised was assessment at leaving certificate level, in particular in art. I do not think the issue is what is assessed or how it is assessed because there is a very good fit between the nature of the assessment components used in art and music and the nature of the course. There is a large emphasis on practicals, for example, in both subjects.

The point was probably being made on the introduction of changes to the grading system at leaving certificate level last year. The only important context to provide in regard to that is that it was intended to address some of the difficulties which have frequently been voiced in terms of the experience of the leaving certificate within schools. I am speaking in regard to predictability, teaching to the test, rote learning and the backwash effect which a highly calibrated 14-point grading system would have on teaching and learning within classrooms. The idea of reducing the number of grades and grading points was to try to address some of those issues. The system is in the first year of its introduction. The NCCA has commissioned research on the impact of the changes which have been made to the grading system and we will have more insight on that in September when the next round of examination results come through.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: I fundamentally disagree with Mr. Hammond about the art paper in terms of the components and the reasons students are not getting the A1 grades they deserve. I say that as somebody who has corrected exam papers. The history of art is a subject which I feel is outdated. If a student does not score close to an A grade in that paper, he or she will not get an A grade in the practical exam or the overall subject. That is where we are falling down. I do not think the components are working in terms of assessment.

Mr. John Hammond: The work which is being done on the new specification for leaving certificate art is aimed at addressing some of those issues and will give rise to a better situation in that context. That work is imminent.

Senator Maura Hopkins: I will be brief. I thank the witnesses for their presentations and the discussion. We have learned a lot. I was in Roscommon County Council on Friday for the presentation of a wonderful sculpture from pupils from a national school in Roscommon. It was fantastic to see the parents, brothers and sisters of the children involved. They all appreciate the importance of the arts. It brought much of the work of the NCCA to life. The term “collaboration” has been used a lot today, but the project was the result of collaboration between Roscommon County Council, Creative Ireland and the teachers and pupils of the school. If we see a lot more of that, we will be doing very well.

I have learned a lot about the primary and post-primary curriculum from the questions which have been asked. I would like to know more about arts in education with regard to lifelong

learning. The witnesses spoke about CPD with regard to art teachers and the portals. I have a certain level of experience. We had a pilot Erasmus programme which involved a number of artists in the widest sense of the word, including digital photographers, film-makers, dramatists and so on. I would like to know about the role of the NCCA with regard to the arts in education and lifelong learning beyond primary, post-primary and third level. What is happening? Does Creative Ireland fit into that?

I will not go into the specifics of the pilot project, but a lot of learning could be done. The sort of project to which I refer has a lot of potential. If I am honest, I do not feel it worked fully. What is being done on a continuous basis, outside of art teachers, in terms of society and people who have an interest in or want to continue their professional development without being restricted?

Dr. Katie Sweeney: I might start and then hand over to Creative Ireland. It is important to put the charter and pillar 1 of Creative Ireland in context. The charter was designed to deal with everyone up to the age of 18 years. Creative Ireland deals with creative youth, which covers those aged 0 to 22 or 23 years. From the perspective of those aged from 0 to 18 years, that involves early years and primary and post-primary level. If one was to talk about the next element, which involves third level or further education, that comes within the remit of the universities and would be under the auspices of SOLAS, for lifelong learning outside of formal education, and the Arts Council, from the perspective of the arts. That is not to say that all of that is not happening. Maybe a greater realignment at that level between SOLAS and what the universities are doing would bring us to where we are. There are five pillars to Creative Ireland and we have spoken only of pillar 1 in the context of arts and education. There is the community and so on. Perhaps Ms Copeland would like to speak about that.

Ms Sinead Copeland: I would like to add to that. Just building on what Dr. Sweeney said in regard to Creative Youth under pillar 1, we will probably focus this year and next year more on early years and primary and post-primary levels. However, under pillar 2, the community engagement piece, which is probably what was referenced earlier on, we have a great network of Creative Ireland co-ordinators who are working at local level, bringing all the different agencies together to bring that creativity forward as a lifelong objective. It is creativity for creativity's sake. For 2018, as part of the Creative Ireland programme, we will focus a lot on creativity and well-being and try to develop that space. It is not something on which we have done a huge amount of work yet, but it is something we will explore this year. We are taking on board the point that it does not stop when one is 18 years of age and we do need to develop that a bit further.

Ms Liz Meaney: The Arts Council does an awful lot of work in this area and it falls into two categories. One is what we call arts participation, where people engage directly in arts practice. It would be supported by many of our organisations. There is an organisation called Create, which facilitates a huge amount of work in this field of practice. There are also organisations such as Waterford Healing Arts, which looks at arts in health care contexts, and Arts & Disability Ireland, which works with artists with disabilities and with people with disabilities in a participative context. There is that element of the work we do and then there is also the work we do on the continuing professional development of artists, professional practicing artists in their work. There are groups such as resource organisations, including Visual Artists Ireland, Dance Ireland and the Irish Writers Centre. These all provide direct supports to support the development of artists. These can be short-term training courses. The Arts Council also has artists' bursaries where people can apply to us for money to develop their practice as artists. It

is about that continuum of support across all the arts throughout the country in many different ways.

Currently, we are looking at our whole funding framework. We are looking at the idea of rather than having one-year bursaries, having multi-annual bursaries for artists so that we give them long-term support. For a writer who is engaging on a new project, perhaps a year is not enough. We need to consider that and the way in which we support them. It is that continuous support.

Some of our major organisations, such as the Abbey Theatre, have their own specialist arts and education department which will engage with particular communities of interest, be they young people, people from a particular geographic location or a particular cohort of the population, in their work. It is about ensuring that all the support we provide works across that panoply, across the map of cultural provision within Ireland, whether one is a professional artist or one wishes to engage with the arts directly to have personal meaning.

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: In that matrix are the national cultural institutions, based in Mayo and Cork but with the majority in Dublin. We all run programmes at different levels and at different points of entry, all contingent on budget. The Council of National Cultural Institutions has a policy framework document which maps out the roadmap for the work.

Ms Lorraine Comer: To support what Ms O'Donoghue said, there is fantastic work going on among the cultural institutions in terms of providing programmes not just for young people and children but for adults as well. Can I deal with a question that was asked earlier about the local authorities and local authority arts officers? Our recommendation is that they would be more represented on advisory boards in regard to arts and education and young people and that the remit of the local authority arts officers would also include the work a number of them are doing around the whole area of arts and education. That is really important.

No more than the Arts Council would say that it is the national organisation to support the development of the arts in Ireland, the local authority arts officers and the local authorities are supporting the development of the arts at a local level, and that is really important.

Conversations are happening within the Arts Council between what the local authority arts officers are doing and what the Arts Council is providing as support to them. The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government also needs to endorse and formalise the role of the local authority arts officers in terms of that whole area of arts and education and young people.

Dr. Katie Sweeney: On that point, we also support what Ms Comer and Ms O'Donoghue have said about the legislative remit of the local authority arts officers. If one is looking at the critical infrastructure within many counties, it comprises the education centre for teacher continuing professional development, CPD, and linking with the classroom. One then has the local authority arts officers who work with us on teacher-artist partnership CPD. Many arts officers have relationships with schools and are involved in the arts in schools but it is not part of their legislative remit. In terms of that involvement and representation, the Department should give its imprimatur for them to have a bigger role in that area.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: I have a final questions for Ms O'Donoghue or Ms Comer. There was a recommendation to review and revise the Arts in Education Charter in light of current developments. Could they expand on that a little bit?

Ms Helen O'Donoghue: As everybody knows, the charter was drawn up in 2015 and we

are now in 2018, so it is five years later. The recommendations which have been implemented were successfully landed across the board, as outlined by Dr. Sweeney. When it was introduced, it was introduced as a living document so it should not sit as a document belonging to 2013. It should be revised in the light of what has been achieved by the actions outlined in it and of other things that have developed.

As we are a ground-up organisation, the aim of Encountering the Arts Ireland is to take into account the initiatives that are happening at ground level and to bring them closer to policy. That is the ideal scenario.

Mr. Dermot Carney: Could I just add one thing? The position of Professor John Coolahan has to be filled as a matter of urgency.

Deputy Niamh Smyth: All the points were made loud and clear. I thank everybody who made a presentation.

Vice Chairman: That concludes our consideration of this matter. I would like to thank the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, the National Association of Principals and Deputy Principals, Creative Ireland, the Arts in Education Charter, Encountering the Arts Ireland and the Arts Council for being with us today. I propose that we suspend the meeting for a few moments.

Sitting suspended at 4.08 p.m., resumed in private session at 4.12 p.m. and adjourned at 4.13 p.m. until 1.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 28 February 2018.