



Written Statement - Development of a National Plan for Creative Learning

John Griffiths, Minister for Natural Resources, Culture and Sport and Huw Lewis, Minister for Education and Skills

On 25 September 2013, Professor Dai Smith published his independent report for the Welsh Government on Arts in Education in the Schools of Wales. On 14 March 2014, we issued our interim response. This confirmed that the Welsh Government had welcomed the 12 recommendations in the report, and that we would develop a detailed implementation plan in the form of a 'National Plan for Creative Learning'. This statement gives a report on the progress made to date, the timetable for issuing this National Plan, and the funds that will be made available to support it.

The Arts Council of Wales (ACW) has agreed to provide £10 million from its Lottery funds, over the next 5 years, to support the implementation of the National Plan for Creative Learning. The Minister for Education and Skills has agreed that the Welsh Government will match this pledge. We will invest £10 million, over 5 years, starting in 2015-16, with £2 million allocated for each financial year. Where possible, we will seek to augment these monies from other sources, for example from European funds.

The detail of the plan, and the programme of actions to address all 12 recommendations, is still being developed, informed by continued consultation with the arts, cultural and education sectors. We have already taken a number of actions, in partnership with ACW, to promote the arts in relation to our three education priorities:

- We have commissioned an online toolkit to support teachers and arts practitioners to deliver improved literacy and numeracy outcomes.
- We have funded National Museum Wales to produce a toolkit for arts and heritage organisations on 'narrowing the gap', which is now available to support continuing professional development.
- We have commissioned case studies on the 3 priorities for Learning Wales.
- We have remitted Estyn to conduct a best practice review of the arts in schools at key stages 2, 3 and 4. The first part of this review, to be published in 2015, will look at good practice in the teaching and learning of the creative arts in primary schools and will include the impact of the arts on literacy and numeracy where appropriate, and at how schools use the arts to help reduce the impact of poverty on attainment.

Professor Smith's recommendation to include creativity as a core theme within the curriculum is being considered as part of the independent Review of Assessment and the National Curriculum being led by Professor Graham Donaldson. Professor Donaldson will be presenting his findings and recommendations to the Minister for Education and Skills at the turn of the year.

Prior to this, we will be working with ACW, the educational consortia, and other partners to refine our plans for a new arts and creative offer for schools. This offer will support creative professionals and cultural organisations to engage with schools and work alongside teachers in ways that address education priorities and are focussed on achieving outcomes for learners. As part of this preparatory work we are considering how arts interventions can be part of the 'offer' for Schools Challenge Cymru.

We will make a statement on further progress later in the year. The final Plan will include a full range of actions, together with timescales, outcome measures, and mechanisms for evaluating both specific interventions, and the impact of the programme as a whole. It will clarify how the budget will be apportioned, and what will be done to make the work it funds sustainable in the longer term.

This statement is being issued during recess in order to keep members informed. Should members wish me to make a



further statement or to answer questions on this when the Assembly returns I would be happy to do so.

