

Children's Arts - Children's Lives



A Manifesto for Children's Arts

Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts. Member governments shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

Article 31, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Action for Children's Arts believes that much more needs to be done to meet this country's obligations with respect to Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In particular, we believe that

all political parties should

- make detailed and specific reference to Article 31 in their own manifestos for the next general election

the government should

- adopt consistent, long-term policies with regard to Article 31 and make financial provision to support those policies

the Department for Children, Schools and Families should

- ensure that the testing of children's attainment does not limit the breadth and quality of their learning
- put creativity, play and the arts at the heart of the curriculum, especially for young children and children with special needs
- ensure that the arts have a full place in the training of primary school teachers
- ensure that the cost of transport does not limit children's access to cultural activities, especially in rural areas

the Department for Culture, Media and Sport should

- provide consistent, long-term funding and strategic support to ensure that all children have full and equal access to the arts
- take steps to ensure the provision of high quality programmes for children on television and radio
- commission a report into international models of support for children's arts and take steps to bring provision in the UK up to the standard of the best

schools and early years settings should

- give children time to play and take part in creative activities
- give children the widest possible range of cultural experiences
- encourage parents and carers to value their children's artistic achievements

the four UK Arts Councils should

- ensure that work for children and families has equal status with work for adult audiences
- develop specific policies for the arts for children across the 0-12 age range
- make children's arts a key focus of their partnerships with local authorities
- provide a higher level of funding for work aimed at children and families so that standards can be kept high and ticket prices low

arts organisations of all kinds should

- aim for the highest possible standards in their work for children
- make work for children and families a key strand in their programming
- ensure that the education department has high status within the organisation
- ensure that the interests of children and families are represented at board level
- make children and families welcome and provide the facilities they need to enjoy their visit and keep coming back

local authorities should

- recognise the value of the arts in achieving the outcomes of Every Child Matters
- provide the resources and facilities to enable all children and families to take part in the arts outside school
- encourage and support partnerships between schools and arts organisations

the media should

- increase the amount of critical attention given to children's arts in the national press
- ensure that children's programmes on radio and television are of the highest quality and reflect their own lives, language and culture
- recognise the special responsibility that public service broadcasters have for children and families.