New Foundations for Cultural Education

Backgrounds and guidelines for the future

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Contents

Introduction and reading guide

Reason and purpose

In 2016, we published the first version of *Basis voor Cultuureducatie* (Basis for Cultural Education) as a guide for a future organization of cultural education during and after school hours for children and young people aged 0 to 18 (or 23). A redesign that not only requires a rethinking of cultural education, but also a rethinking of school, childcare and development opportunities in the domain outside school hours.

We are now eight years later and we note that both our thinking and social conditions have evolved. We are still moving in the direction we outlined in 2016: more integrality, a stronger connection between school, childcare and leisure, and more attention to the contribution that arts and culture make to the broad development of children and young people. We have started to focus on learning ecosystems, on integrated child centers and on continuous learning pathways. We have seen, unfortunately due to a pandemic, how important social-emotional development is for growing young people, and the cultural encounter that goes with it.

Despite these developments that are moving in the right direction, the challenges and threats are still great to anchor arts and culture in a high-quality way in the growing up of children and young people, before, at and after school. Unfortunately, the differences in The Netherlands, between cities and villages, neighborhoods and schools, are still large. Programs such as *Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit* (Cultural Education with Quality) and *School en Omgeving* (School and Environment) are far from reaching all schools, a social and ministerial focus on 'basic skills' in education threatens to impoverish children's development, and despite all the benefits scandals, the step to fully government-paid childcare has still not been taken.

By providing more knowledge about the importance of cultural education, we ensured that cultural education remained on the map with government and education. For example, by emphasizing in the *Nationaal Programma Onderwijs* (National Education Program) that cultural education can play an important role in social-emotional development. At the same time, we noticed that there is an increasing demand for evidence-based and evidence-informed work, and there is a need for an interpretation of the context and developments. That is why we felt it was time to update the Basis for Cultural Education, while sticking to the formulated vision and ambition, but linking it to the situation in 2024, and with a much more extensive description and substantiation of the context relevant to cultural education. An important addition is the description of the different developmental phases of the growing child and the role that arts and culture can play in this, substantiated by research.

The New Foundations for Cultural Education is a guide to achieving high-quality cultural education and equal access to cultural development for all children and young people. The guide serves as a foundation and guidance for professionals in governments, education, social institutions and culture at all levels in the design of cultural education and local cultural facilities. The ultimate goal is to achieve sustainable cultural education, cultural education of good quality which is embedded in the lives of children and young people at school, in childcare and in leisure time.

Reading guide

The first three chapters of this publication are intended for anyone who wants to get to know the complex context in which cultural education takes place, and who is looking for a substantiation of the importance of cultural education. You can start where you want in these chapters and/ or only read the parts relevant to you.

The last two chapters are relevant for the reader who is looking for vision, strategy and points of attention. They are intended to give direction to future steps and developments that we believe are desirable or necessary to improve the position of cultural education and to be able to make full use of its (social and personal) potential.

As indicated above, we start by describing the importance and context of cultural education, followed by a description of the more general context in which cultural education takes place. Basic education occupies a major position in this. We then focus on the development of children and young people and the role that cultural education can play within their broad development. From these three guiding frameworks (specific context, general context and role in development), we arrive at a curriculum design and vision of how cultural education could take shape in the future. Because of the integration of cultural education in education that we propose in it, we look beyond cultural education alone.

The publication consists of five chapters, divided into two parts:

Part 1

– Chapter 1 describes the importance and context.
– Chapter 2 describes the current situation and developments.
– Chapter 3 describes the (cultural) development of children.

Part 2

– Chapter 4 contains a different learning environment as a desired future situation.
– Chapter 5 describes the next steps for sustainable cultural education.

The concept of cultural education

We write about cultural education in a broad sense. By this we mean purposeful learning about and through arts, heritage and media through targeted instruction, both in and out of school. This concerns all forms of arts and culture, such as visual arts, dance, theatre, literature, heritage, spoken word, music, film, media, hip-hop and other mixed forms and forms of expression. But we also find cultural education in other places, such as history, citizenship, philosophy, or religion. Cultural education therefore includes education where culture is the subject.

Part 1
Descriptions

Context of cultural education

Culture stems from human behavior and is therefore not static but always changeable. The process of how we as humans continually give meaning and value to our experiences in the world around us is an important aspect of this human behavior. This ability is essential to reflect on ourselves and on our lives and to come to grips on an ever-changing world. It provides insight into ourselves and others, and plays an important role in the formation of our self-awareness, self-image and identity.

This meaningful culture can be observed and experienced in a set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional traits that characterize a society or social group, which includes not only arts and literatures, but also ways of life, fundamental human rights, value systems, traditions and beliefs. This culture is transmitted, expressed and experienced in many different ways in both time and space, such as through words (stories, oral traditions and language), sound (music, radio, media), images (visual arts, media), movement (dance, theatre), monuments and objects (architecture, design, crafts), digital media of all kinds and traditional knowledge (local and indigenous knowledge systems, living cultural heritage and expressions).

Cultural education plays a fundamental role in the healthy and balanced growth and development of children and young people. With cultural education, they gain knowledge, perspectives, skills and qualities that they can use for the rest of their lives, for the organization of their lives and their contribution to the current and future society. Some elements of this are unique to cultural education, others are more generic and are strengthened and further developed by cultural education.

1.1 Perspectives

In this chapter we highlight different aspects of cultural education because different approaches and emphases are possible. This is partly due to how narrowly or broadly you want to approach cultural education: in a broad context of everything that is developed by people and to which value is attributed, as in the case of *Cultuur in de Spiegel* (Culture in the Mirror (Van Heusden, 2010)), or more focused on arts education, where only the arts subjects are addressed. And whether you want to address even more specifically what we can recognize as the core of cultural education: the artistic-creative process.

The three different approaches discussed in this chapter largely overlap. The artistic-creative process forms the basis for the active practice of arts education, leading to new presentations, processes and experiences. These can be shared with an audience, who can take note of them at the same or a later time and form their own picture of what is offered. The formation of this image is also an active process, affecting the artistic-creative process in the viewer. When a product or process is experienced at a later time, it can also be (much) later in time, and count as part of our heritage. Or it can find its way into society in a derivative form, as we see in fashion: from extravagant design to everyday clothing. And with that, the product or process finds its way into the broad concept of culture.

In addition to the above perspectives on cultural education, which are very much dominated by Western thinking, there are other perspectives. In our current cultural education hardly any use is made of expressions from countries and continents other than Europe and North America, and there is little room for the way in which traditions and customs are expressed, anchored and used in other cultures. Various theoretical perspectives that are complementary to what is discussed in this publication can be found in a special edition of *Cultuur+Educatie* from 2023 (De Baets et al., 2023).

In this chapter, we initially approach cultural education from the perspective of cognition, self-awareness and the effects of arts and culture on development, and then focus on the more societal impact, such as *Cultureel Vermogen* (Cultural Ability). Finally, we end up with a more overarching and policy-based perspective of the cultural ecosystem. By bringing these different perspectives together, we create a rich picture of the position of cultural education in personal development and environment, and in society.

1.2 Primary benefits of cultural education

Cultural education is about both making and giving meaning, as well as experiencing and giving meaning through the development of artistic creative ability. It is about teaching and learning about, with and through arts, heritage and culture, and all forms of cultural and artistic expression. Cultural education provides critical knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and freedom of choice that enables someone to identify and then challenge forms of instrumentalization of culture and harmful social norms, prejudices and stereotypes. At the same time, cultural education promotes the positive appreciation of cultural diversity as a constructive force to enable freedom of expression, freedom of creation and active democratic participation. In addition, it promotes meaning, social responsibility, creativity and innovation, and cohesion and cooperation.

Above all, cultural education ensures the development of knowledge, skills and attitudes towards arts and culture. Meanwhile, we must not lose sight of the fact that arts and culture are an essential part of everyone's daily life and that there is therefore an automatic interaction between what is discussed during cultural education and the surrounding reality of the participant in that cultural education. This is possible because inspiration is drawn from the surrounding reality, or because acquired skills can also be used directly in other areas and moments. We can distinguish between the primary effects of cultural education (that which is learned about and from arts and culture during education) and the secondary effects (that which is learned and has an impact elsewhere). The secondary effects include both the effects related to general cognitive, psychological and social-emotional developments and the effects in other learning areas, which are also called the transfer effects.

Harland has developed a model based on input from teachers, students, and others for the most important primary and secondary elements (Harland, 2008):

Primary and secondary effect domains of arts education	
Primary effects	*Secondary effects*
Knowledge of the arts discipline, techniques and skills	Pleasure and other emotional effects
Creative and thinking skills	Personal and social development
Explore, research, and be able to express the meaning in arts or through arts	Transfer effects (application of what has been learned in other contexts)

Harland elaborated on the primary effects as follows (pp. 19-20):

- Knowledge of the arts discipline, techniques and skills
  - Strengthening knowledge and understanding of the different arts disciplines and their context.
  - Developing the interpretive skills needed to be able to 'decipher' works of arts and arts processes.
  - An increasing appreciation of arts; growth in aesthetic judgment.
  - Developments in technical skills in one's own practical work.
  - Strengthening critical and active listening skills and perceptual skills.

- Creativity and thinking skills
  - Developing creativity and the ability to experiment and innovate.
  - Increase in imagination.
  - Acquiring thinking and problem-solving skills.

- Exploring and expressing meaning
  - An increase in the possibilities and skills of students needed to make claims about the (experienced) world and themselves, as well as developing confidence to express themselves through images, music, etc.
  - More cultural knowledge.
  - Greater awareness of the environment.
  - Growing understanding of social and moral issues.

Although Harland's classification is not universally clear and could be further elaborated (Vermeersch & Storme, 2021, pp. 7-19), it does provide a useful classification. The three primary effects provide a good insight into the reach of cultural education in one's own domain, regardless of whether this is gained within the context of family, leisure, childcare or school. It also immediately becomes clear that some of what is seen as primary effects has a broader context, such as critical perception or a better understanding of social and moral issues.

1.3 The broader importance of cultural education

Culture is the world around us, what we perceive, how we experience it and how we give meaning to it. Culture shapes society and is society. In a country like the Netherlands, everything around us has been shaped and given meaning by how our society views and deals with the world. Culture is how we approach the world around us, what we do in it and what we do with that reality. In this way we form and develop our knowledge and awareness about ourselves and our society. In that respect, Van Heusden (2010) speaks of people's capacity for cultural self-awareness: "It's about how we experience and perceive the world and each other, about what we do, how we give the world meaning and value things, how we consider ourselves" (p. 5). Cultural awareness shapes and shows identity, enables personal and mass communication, directs the perception and experience of the world and is also one of the driving forces for the future social and economic development of a nation. In the future, we will continue to have to deal with a broad, diverse and dynamic force field in our society with different forms of expression and identities. Language and visuals as carriers of culture are present everywhere and both are more than ever decisive for how we experience ourselves and the world and how we want to (re)present ourselves (digitally).

Understanding and being able to deal with culture and all its manifestations is therefore of great importance for everyone. This requires different forms of knowledge and skills: not only factual knowledge and knowledge about society, but also knowledge about yourself, how you can express yourself and how you can deal with other people's expressions. It also requires the development of creative and physical skills in order to be able to express your own emotions and ideas through cultural activities, and to develop your own preferences

and tastes. Unfortunately, the broad societal conception of the importance of arts and culture is often limited to a leisure time activity of choice, without a serious professional perspective or understanding of the broad impact of arts and culture in the development of children or people in general. This attitude is also reflected in the place that cultural education occupies in school practice.

Cultural education stimulates the development of children and young people into balanced and mature adults, who are able to live well in a changing society and to take their place in it. This applies not only to mental development, but also to the development of body and brain (Scherder, 2016). Many cultural forms involve a combination of mental and physical activities that stimulate general development and can also be used in other areas. Think of the gross and fine motor skills, or the stimulation of the insula in the brain where the sensory experiences are merged in the emotional framework or context, in other words where the emotions are experienced.

Existing studies in the field of cultural participation and cultural education with young children show that their development can be influenced and promoted in different areas, depending on the cultural disciplines (Vermeersch et al., 2018, pp. 83-85). Working with images at a young age, whether artistic or not, stimulates the development of aesthetic preferences, geometric and spatial reasoning and the conversational skills of the young child by talking about images. Performing arts also have a positive impact on later verbal skills. Being actively involved in listening to and making music has a positive effect on cognitive development, such as spatial-temporal reasoning and language skills, as well as on empathetic thinking and pro-social behavior. Early contact with a rich literacy environment and growing up in a sustainable reading culture ensure higher literacy scores later in life. Early cultural experience has a clear positive effect on the cognitive, social-emotional and motor development of the young child in many areas.

In addition, cultural education ensures that the rich cultural history and contemporary cultural expressions are unlocked and accessible to children and young people. Furthermore, cultural history should be broadly understood as global and diverse, in which children and young people are taught to use their cultural self-awareness. This also requires a critical attitude and a view of the way in which our history is described and shaped and how it fits into today's society, for example through the use of Emotion Networks (Dibbits, 2020). In the 21st century, the task of education is to prepare children and young people for lifelong learning in

an international context in which the encounter with the other will play an important role. This requires cultural ability. Cultural ability involves the possibility of facilitating and shaping that encounter. It is about being able to experience differences on the basis of cultural self-awareness, being able to play with them and shape them, in order to participate in (cultural) society oneself (Drion, 2018, p. 5).

Cultural education also has a physical component in which both gross and fine motor skills are addressed because skills and techniques need to be developed. This happens, for example, when making a drawing or a game, or when playing an instrument or a role. These physical skills are learned by working with materials or tools, for example in handicrafts and music, or by using the body as an instrument, such as in dance and theatre. For some of the skills it is best to start providing them at a young age, for example playing certain instruments or classical ballet, while for other activities it is better to wait until the child has already developed to a certain extent, as is the case with wind instruments.

Equal access for all children and young people to cultural education and thus to culture, arts and heritage is essential for their future, especially in view of current social developments. Socio-cultural contrasts seem to be increasing in the Netherlands, threatening to create separate worlds (Bovens et al., 2014). This division is visible, among other things, at the socio-demographic level, with education (intellectually educated versus practically educated), living environment (city versus province, regional differences) (Raad voor de leefomgeving en infrastructuur et al., 2023), and certainly also the contrast in income (poor versus rich) as important factors. Cultural education can play a role in bridging this gap, because it works on the attitude and understanding for the other and offers space for meeting and playing together.

Learning to deal with culture, arts and heritage means being able to deal with the different facets involved: with the professional skills that belong to the various arts disciplines, with the artistic-creative process, with the reflection and analysis that go with it, the appreciation of the intrinsic value of arts and culture, and the meaning one can give to it. This is always a combination of more general, social values and insights, with personal experience and own creative interpretation and expression, in which a child or young person (under the guidance of a professional and with the help of others) has to find his or her own way. The artistic-creative process forms the core or basis from which this is made possible.

Of course, the extent to which the above effects can occur depends on the context and the way in which cultural education is provided. Cultural education can be used to help children grow into critical and self-aware adults, but it can just as well be used to become indoctrinated and docile by propaganda culture and the imposition of a certain worldview. That is precisely why a good embedding of cultural education at school, in childcare and in leisure time is so important (Hoogeveen & Waaijer, 2022).

1.4   The artistic-creative process

The creative process in a general sense is described by various researchers, with Graham Wallas generally being seen as the founder of the phase model (Wallas, 1926). He distinguishes four phases:

1. preparation;
2. incubation;
3. illumination;
4. verification.

In the first phase (preparation), the problem is identified and examined from all sides, after which there is a phase of apparent calm (incubation), in which mainly thought processes take place. In the third phase (illumination) the solution becomes visible, which is finally extensively examined for suitability in the last phase (verification) (Hoogeveen & Bos, 2013).

For application in education, the artistic-creative process has also been described. The artistic-creative process starts with an aesthetic experience, a personal question, an assignment or a problem, after which four phases are gone through to arrive at an outcome: orientation, research, execution and evaluation (SLO, 2019a). Reflecting is part of every phase in this process, on the one hand to gain more awareness of the choices that are made and on the other hand to increase one's own expressiveness. Sometimes defining the question or problem is added to this model as a fifth phase. The different phases are not sharply distinguished, but flow into each other, sometimes intertwined, and can be gone through several times before they lead to a final outcome.

The artistic-creative process is unique because of the artistic interpretation of an issue and because of the personal way of shaping and expressing the answer. Imagination, wonder, curiosity and divergent thinking, coupled with a personal sense of meaning, are important characteristics of the artistic-creative process. The purpose and outcome of the process provide a reflection on one's own position, ideas and beliefs as a creator, and on the other hand communication with the other person by conveying a feeling, idea, meaning or experience. Countless personal elaborations are possible on a question. Because different phases can be completed several times, processes can sometimes require great stamina and perseverance, or require a great deal of creative skills.

Especially the divergent attitude in the different phases is unique to the artistic-creative process. In the first instance, several possibilities and directions are examined, working from the original question or problem, before choosing convergence, a certain direction. In addition, there are no restrictions within the creative-artistic domain other than the restrictions imposed by the creator. In the creative world, people can fly without tools, or nonexistent creatures can be present.

Besides an open attitude and perseverance, knowledge about, and mastery of technique or material to express something is also important. A poet must be able to work with language, a musician with his or her voice or an instrument, a dancer with his or her body, a visual artist with material such as paint, stone or paper and (increasingly) digital means.

1.5   Artistic-creative ability

In the *Voorstel voor de basis van de herziening van de kerndoelen en eindtermen van de leraren en schoolleiders uit het ontwikkelteam Kunst & Cultuur* (Proposal for the basis of the revision of the core objectives and attainment targets of the teachers and school leaders from the Art & Culture development team (Art & Culture Development Team Curriculum.nu, 2019)), which was drawn up as part of the curriculum revision process Curriculum.nu, artistic-creative ability is central. This ability enables the student to use imagination to (re)produce artistic work and thus give meaning to what he or she makes and experiences alone or with others. This involves using (moving) image, sound, word and movement in relation to the space or environment, whether or not in different combinations, with the help of techniques and artistic skills. Artistic ability focuses on the imagination or sound of experiences, feelings, thoughts and ideas in an artistic expression. Creative ability is about the

iterative process in which students learn to apply creative making and thinking strategies such as diverging and converging, fantasizing, playing, dreaming, empathizing, researching and experimenting.

Cultural education is characterized by a coherent whole in which learning to make art, learning to experience art and learning to give meaning to the making and experiencing of art are interrelated. Giving meaning and reflection focus on the process and on the product, whereby this must be seen both in relation to one's own artistic expressions and to the (professional) artistic expressions that are experienced. Giving meaning should also be seen more broadly as the research, (philosophical) questioning and analysis of global expressions of art and culture in the past and present, viewed from different perspectives, such as individual, collective, social, cultural, philosophical or historical.

In this context, the concept of making should be seen as the artistic-creative process of researching, experimenting, shaping and (re) producing in which experiences, feelings, thoughts and ideas are expressed, individually or together with others. The various elements of art and culture are used for this: (moving) image, sound, word and with movement in relation to the space or environment, in all kinds of combinations and variations. Based on the character of the various (art) disciplines, meaning is given to one's own artistic expression and this is shared with each other, whether in between or not. Experiencing is aimed at getting acquainted with professional forms of expression of art and culture, in which professional art is experienced in a real-life context, inside and outside school. In this context, meaning is given to the experiences by means of sensory and theoretical research and experience.

1.6   Cultural self-awareness and Cultural Ability

In addition to the artistic-creative capacity, there are also the notions of the cultural ability and cultural self-awareness. These are two different perspectives to provide structure for cultural understanding and to better interpret the relationship of culture to development and society. These two perspectives show a large overlap with the artistic-creative ability, but have a different approach.

Cultural self-awareness

In *Cultuur in de Spiegel* (Culture in the Mirror (2010)), Barend van Heusden provides a theoretical basis and elaboration of what this approach can mean for cultural education. He defines culture as a process of thinking and doing, based on the way in which information is processed. People use the perception and experience of the moment as well as perceptions and the world in their memory, whereby the memory can also be colored or supplemented. This gives rise to the ability to think, fantasize, and have a sense of time. Culture is seen as a process of thinking and doing; the way in which people process information about their environment. People are able to distinguish between the world of experience and the world in their memory. It follows that we can think, fantasize and have a sense of time. Culture is understood as a process by which people use their personal and collective memory to make sense of an ever-changing experience. Four basic cognitive or cultural skills are used to shape this process: observing, imagining, conceptualizing and analyzing.

Through our senses we perceive similarities and differences and gather new information. Through sensory perception the information is also experienced in a certain way: the perception is linked to previous perceptions. As a result, things are recognized or seen as a new experience, and we expand our memory. Based on the observation, something can then be done with it, and new possibilities, forms or ideas can be conceived and imagined.

Imagining is the ability to create something new, which can express itself in different forms. This can be done by using one's own body, developing a (physical) product, or mentally in the form of a plan or idea. Imagining is very much in line with the concept of creativity. That which is imagined can then be categorized, conceptualized, as it is interpreted. The imagination is thus placed and named in a broader and more abstract context. This naming can be done in many different ways, such as in language, images, sounds or more abstract concepts. Placing them in context creates connections and structures that can be analyzed. Humans are naturally inclined to look for and see patterns, and to place them in structures and systems. Making the connections and checking whether the imagination fits within the pattern or the system is part of analysis.

Various 'culture carriers' or 'media' ensure that we can shape this: the body, objects, language, graphic signs. To be able to deploy the culture bearers, skills are needed in the field of perception, imagination, analysis and conceptualization. As a result, cultural awareness is further

developed. For Van Heusden, cultural education includes not only the art subjects, but also history, language, philosophy and social studies, or the learning areas related to them for primary education. Cultural education stimulates and develops cultural self-awareness because children learn to reflect on their own and the collective memory, and therefore on culture.

Cultural Ability
The concept of *Cultureel Vermogen* (Cultural Ability (Drion, 2018)) is based on the vision that young people need cultural abilities for full participation in society, but that they do not develop these abilities as a matter of course. There are various obstacles that can play a role in this, economically, practically, socially and culturally. Based on the work of Van Heusden, Van Maanen, Gielen, Nussbaum and Biesta, four different cultural capacities are distinguished that are necessary to enable full participation in society. The first is knowledge of culture, or cultural awareness and self-awareness, and the second is the ability to experience cultural differences and patterns, in combination with being able to deal with them in a playful way. The third ability is the ability to master formal languages and to be able to play with conventions and expectations. The last ability that is distinguished concerns the ability to participate in cultural life. In order to acquire these abilities properly, it is necessary to offer them integrally and in conjunction.

Cultural abilities must be accessible to all, so that everyone can participate fully in the pluralistic cultural democracy. On the other hand, society as a whole must be able to continue to develop artistic formal languages as meaningful dynamics. This makes the question of what culture does much more central than the question of what culture is. Cultural capacity develops in people and between people, in a continuous process based on cultural encounter. The Cultural Capacity reflection framework identifies four ingredients that can be used in a cultural encounter: the cultural self, the cultural other, the cultural form, and the cultural environment. Between these four elements arises the dynamics that lead to cultural ability.

the opportunities to engage in art and culture at home and in the environment outside school hours. Every child is given a cultural baggage from home, but the content and scope of it is different. In the Netherlands, we are dealing with persistent differences in cultural development that are determined by intergenerational transmission (Notten, 2022). One child grows up in a family that has a broad affinity with culture, art and heritage, is naturally surrounded by it and is given opportunities to further develop culturally outside the family. Another child grows up in a family with less attention to culture in the broadest sense, therefore comes into less contact with different cultural facilities and opportunities, and thus has fewer opportunities to develop broadly in the cultural field and to participate in the cultural social system in multiple ways. The environment of children and young people therefore has a major influence on their development, and the interplay of family, school and environment largely determines opportunities and possibilities.

In this context, we also speak of a learning ecosystem (Benning et al., 2022), based on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory in which different levels of systems are distinguished that influence the development of young people (Nji, w.d.-b). In the immediate environment, for example, parents, teachers, friends, clubs, the religious organization, the music school or arts center play a role. Young people should not only be actively involved in culture themselves, but also come into contact with different performances and presentations of culture. Meetings with makers and artists or visits to performances, concerts, presentations and exhibitions serve as an example and inspiration. Such a rich (learning) environment is only possible if, in addition to a home base that is open to a broad approach to culture, there is also an adequate local and regional cultural infrastructure. Governments are needed for creating the preconditions for this environment, as well as the willingness of the (cultural) environment to commit and open up to it. In order to gain a good insight into the quality and composition of the available learning ecosystem, system analyses can be carried out at different levels, such as national, regional or local.

<div style="background:orange">**1.7   Cultural learning ecosystems**</div>

The cultural development of children and young people is not only dependent on school, but is determined to a greater extent by

1.8 Important components of cultural education in education

In addition to a vision of what cultural education should focus on in primary education, the aforementioned proposal by the Arts & Culture development team in the context of the revision process Curriculum.nu (Ontwikkelteam Kunst & Cultuur Curriculum.nu, 2019) also includes a description of the most important components of cultural education. In the context of the revision process, these key components are called the Major Assignments. Together, these Major Assignments form the basis for a curriculum for art and culture. This does not mean that all Major Assignments must always be dealt with at the same time, but it does mean that they must be sufficiently elaborated in education in a continuous learning line.

The core of the cultural curriculum is formed by the artistic-creative ability. Some of the topics focus on actively getting involved (making), while another part focuses more on experiencing activities and results of others (experiencing). In both cases, reflecting (giving meaning) is part of this. The last Major Assignment focuses on presenting one's own work and entering into a dialogue with others about it. This can be about an end product as well as about sharing a step in an artistic-creative process.

The nine Major Assignments are:

1. artistic-creative ability: making strategies;
2. artistic-creative ability: thinking strategies;
3. artistic expression;
4. artistic techniques and skills;
5. artistic innovation;
6. arts and cultural-historical contexts;
7. functions of arts;
8. experiencing arts;
9. showing and sharing one's own work.

Making strategies
In making strategies, the students learn to research, experiment, create and imitate, and they gain insight into their own abilities. Practicing creative strategies ensures the development of the student's artistic-creative ability. The process of diverging and converging is an important part of the artistic creative process, and therefore it is practiced to think outside existing frameworks and to use imagination. By using different creative strategies, one is able to consciously use them.

Thinking strategies
Thinking strategies are about learning to investigate and question artistic expressions and thus also to discover and better understand the (arts) world. Practicing with different thinking strategies also ensures the development of artistic-creative ability. Thinking strategies are about questioning artistic expressions, examining them, giving them meaning and valuing them. Thinking strategies are used in the analysis and creation of artistic expressions.

Artistic expression
Artistic expression is about expressing ideas, experiences and feelings in an artistic form in one's own way. For the development of artistic expression, the specificity of the arts must be explored in order to be able to communicate in the different forms of expression and their corresponding means of expression. It is important that people know how to express themselves in an artistic form in their own way and are able to use the specifics of the arts in a focused way and thus increase the expressiveness of their own work.

Artistic techniques and skills
Artistic techniques and skills are needed to be able to create something in moving or still image, sound, word and movement in relation to the space or the environment. These techniques form an important foundation and are gradually improved and refined through practice and through the broadening of the repertoire of artistic skills and techniques. Better mastery and a broader repertoire allow for conscious choices about which techniques and skills to use both in reproducing the work of others and in developing one's own work.

Artistic innovation
Artistic innovation is generally still a rare element in cultural education in primary education. Artistic innovation is to do with the ability to work from an artistic-creative perspective and working method

to solve smaller or larger issues from the immediate and wider environment. Creative makers use creative and design processes at the intersection of culture, arts and heritage with other subjects. From the making process, points of view and problems are explored and creative ideas and solutions are developed.

Arts and cultural-historical contexts

Arts and cultural-historical contexts focuses on questioning, researching and understanding arts and cultural-historical subjects and contexts. This is very clearly related to heritage, both tangible and intangible, and to the research and analysis of genres, styles and movements in and from the perspective of different art disciplines and perspectives.

Functions of arts

The functions of arts revolve around the different perspectives on looking and listening to arts, and how these can be investigated and questioned. This requires becoming familiar with different functions of arts and learning to appreciate them and being able to express informed opinions about them. Being able to articulate this also requires having the capacity to use the appropriate vocabulary, both in a general sense and in technical jargon.

Experiencing arts

An important part of cultural education is to come into contact with professional arts expressions and professional artists. Experiencing arts is therefore about participating in various cultural and artistic activities in and outside school, and about learning to share the experiences that are gained. In this way, experience is gained in discussing what one has experienced and the values and meanings that are given by oneself or by someone else, including the motivations of the creators. Through these experiences, both one's own and other people's preferences are discovered and developed.

Showing and sharing one's own work

Making and experiencing arts and culture also includes presenting, showing and sharing one's own work. This involves both presenting the product and the process, whether during the process or not, and reflecting on the work and learning process of oneself and others. Students learn to make choices about how to present and to share with others the insights gained as a result of a presentation.

Although the above components have been described and developed for the curriculum review of primary education, they can also be used effectively in non-formal cultural education, cultural developments and experiences in the family and home environment outside school hours. Accents may be different, depending on the choices made and the arts discipline(s) chosen.

Position of cultural education in The Netherlands

Cultural education takes place in certain contexts of family, school, (cultural) environment and government efforts and has a certain position within them. The development of and within these contexts therefore also influences the possibilities and opportunities for cultural education. The roles of these contexts are different and can be broadly distinguished as follows:

- *Parents and peers* encourage informal learning. This means that children learn by doing, without the preconceived goal of learning, because they come into contact with certain cultural expressions and possibly participate in them themselves. In addition to informal learning, parents also have an important role in non-formal learning, in facilitating or organizing their child's learning in their free time, through lessons, courses or training. In the current situation, children depend on the motivation and financial situation of their parents for non-formal learning and partly for informal learning.

- *Basic education* (primary and secondary education, including special education) provides the formal, legally regulated learning situation. The government is responsible for the funding and the legal framework for education, such as the core objectives, attainment targets and examination programs. The implementation and content of the education is determined and provided by the individual schools and teachers. School boards bear overall responsibility and provide frameworks.

- *Childcare* provides a professional pedagogical environment for the guidance and development of children, and encourages both non-formal and informal learning. For many children and their families, childcare is a part of their daily lives.

- The *cultural environment* provides opportunities for cultural education in leisure time, and active and passive cultural participation. These can be individual providers, informal groups, but also institutions and organizations, with or without financial support from the government. The various media are also included.

- The *central government, provinces and municipalities* support the local, regional and national infrastructure and create conditions for getting to know and participating in cultural education and cultural participation.

2.1   Authorities

In The Netherlands there is only limited legislation in the field of art and culture, and this hardly extends to cultural education or active cultural participation. In addition to legislation for monuments and heritage, there are only two relevant laws: the Specific Cultural Policy Act and the Public Library Facilities System Act.

- *Specific Cultural Policy Act (WSC)*: This act establishes the position of the Cultural Council and regulates the four-year policy cycle, subsidy opportunities for cultural institutions and projects, and the establishment of Cultural Funds. The subsidy for cultural institutions is determined through a scheme for the so-called Basic Cultural Infrastructure (BIS). The BIS focuses on cultural institutions that have a specific function in the national system or a core function in a regional and urban infrastructure. The national knowledge function for cultural education and participation also falls under the BIS.

- *Public Library Facilities System Act (WSOB)*: This law regulates the tasks and responsibilities of public libraries in The Netherlands, including financing and public services. Functions mentioned include offering opportunities for development and education, and introducing people to art and culture. This law also regulates free membership up to the age of eighteen.

In addition to the tasks assigned by law, provinces and municipalities have a so-called "open household" as laid down in the constitution. This means that they have the right to collect their own taxes and to pursue their own policy.

The statutory tasks of provinces are mainly in the field of spatial planning, roads and nature and the administrative supervision of municipalities and water boards. In this context, connections with art and culture are sometimes possible in the design of the public space. For art and culture, tasks arise from national laws such as the Public Library Facilities System Act or laws in the field of monuments and heritage. In addition, the provinces have agreed on a number of tasks together with the central government, which are interpreted and fulfilled differently by the provinces. In the field of art and culture, it has been agreed that provinces will take care of their cultural individuality, and that they will take on part of the management of cultural heritage and monument conservation. There is no legal obligation in the field of cultural education or active cultural participation (Ministerie van OCW et al., 2012).

The situation in the municipalities is similar to that in the provinces. Here too, there is a limited number of tasks that can be derived from the legislation in the field of libraries, monuments and heritage. Municipalities also have no legal obligation for cultural education or participation. In practice, this means that the cultural infrastructure for cultural education, in addition to what has been laid down for education, depends on the policy chosen and pursued at the national level as well as at the provinces and municipalities. This policy depends (in part) on the political composition of the people's representation and administration, and the importance attached to it in different policy periods. And so we see that provinces and municipalities differ in their approach and facilities, for example by whether or not to include the obligation of cultural education at subsidized institutions.

At the beginning of 2024, the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) came up with a proposition for more coordination between municipalities, provinces and central government to ensure a basis and structure for culture (VNG, 2024). As a starting point for the proposition, the VNG first arrives at ten observations that have been formulated by the municipalities themselves in relation to the safeguarding of culture in The Netherlands. An important starting point is that culture is named as the foundation for society with a broad social value. Culture is a public good, which means that there is also a public responsibility, and structural public investments are needed, as is the case with welfare, health and education. Coherence in cultural policy is crucial, both between the top and the bottom, and between continuity and innovation,

but also in view of regional coordination. It is noted that there is currently a tension between the need for a structural and sustainable safeguarding of culture on the one hand, and the autonomous role of municipalities in the field of cultural policy on the other. But also between the relationships in terms of attention to the top and the basis of culture, with the attention of the government mainly focused on the top.

The proposition has four pillars. 'Cultural value' is the first pillar, which describes the variety of values of culture for residents and society, values that require structural safeguarding. 'Cultural stimulation', pillar number two, describes how the cultural capacity in society can be stimulated. This requires, for example, a good connection with education and facilities such as low-threshold cultural centers in every municipality. The third pillar 'cultural dissemination' focuses on the balance that is needed in the cultural facilities in the various regions, villages and cities. This balance can be different each time, partly depending on the specificity of the region or area. The last pillar focuses on the method of financing culture, which should be set up more on the basis of cooperation. In the document, the VNG does not rule out the introduction of more legislation in the field of culture, but at least wishes to achieve better and more sustainable coordination of tasks and efforts between the various layers of government.

In its advisory report Meedoen is de kunst (Participation is the art), the Cultural Council concluded in 2014 that the opportunities for cultural development are no longer self-evident, and that the opportunities for active cultural participation have rapidly diminished due to budget cuts in municipalities and provinces. The Council therefore makes proposals for a future-proof system of facilities for active cultural participation. According to the Council, there are five basic conditions that must be part of municipal or provincial cultural policy for a good distribution, quality and diversity of the offer: location, program, promotion, findability and accessibility. In addition, the Council advises taking into account the different wishes and interests of various age groups. According to the Council, government policy should mainly focus on facilities for young people, because that is where the foundation is laid for a cultural career. These points provide a good basis on which governments can assess the cultural (learning) environment. In its advice, the Council also urges a systematic collection of participation data and activities that provide insight into the effectiveness of the facilities. The Council argues that artists, teachers, associations, centers for the arts and commercial parties should be given space for new forms of training, presentation and ensemble playing. Governments can create conditions for this.

At the beginning of 2024, the Cultural Council issued an advice for a revision of the cultural system from 2029 on (Raad voor Cultuur, 2024). The advisory report argues for more accessibility by paying more attention to art and culture in more diverse forms and from more different makers and organizations in all regions of the country. The system must become less complicated and result in less administrative burden. Cultural education and talent development must above all be given a stronger place in the system, with less distinction between professionals and amateurs.

The Council notes that young people have too little contact with different forms of culture and are not always given the space to develop their potential in this area. The opportunities for cultural education and talent development are unevenly distributed in The Netherlands, both financially and in terms of guidance. This also means that the distinction between professional and amateur is not always sharply drawn, while this is now the case in the financing and policy of the national government. There are makers who grow from the amateur field to professional practice, or who are forced to keep switching between professional work situations and voluntary commitment. In addition, new styles and forms are emerging from the amateur field and cultural participation that are finding their way into professional practice.

The Council wants to firmly anchor cultural education in and around the school, more financial opportunities for talent development and also a stronger relationship between the professional field and the amateur field. This requires better coordination of policy between the various authorities and preferably anchoring it in a law. This fits in well with the proposition of the VNG, which also advocates this. A longer period should also be chosen for cultural policy than the current four years, for example in the form of a ten-year vision.

At present, multi-annual agreements are already being made in various areas through covenants and administrative agreements, for example on the support of cultural institutions. Or there is joint financing of policy efforts, such as through the matching scheme of the *Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit* (Cultural Education with Quality) program.

- ***General framework for intergovernmental relations in culture OCW, IPO and VNG*** (Ministerie van OCW et al., 2012): In 2012, a new general framework was agreed between the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the Interprovincial Consultation (IPO) and

the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG) as a successor to the administrative framework from 2006. In addition to the joint coordination in support of cultural institutions in the cultural covenants and the distribution around heritage, only the coordination for cultural education has been laid down. Nothing is included in the framework for cultural participation.

In this document, the central government, provinces and municipalities acknowledge their joint responsibility for a system that is strongly intertwined at the various levels of responsibility. The government is responsible for education, including cultural education, a task in the field of cultural education for cultural institutions and for national support in the field of knowledge, innovation and networks. The provinces have a role in second-line support, in promoting quality through the advancement of expertise and with regard to regional distribution. Municipalities have a directing role in the interaction between schools and cultural providers and ensure (the mediation of) a broad and coherent offer for schools. They also ensure that cultural education is connected within the school and after school hours and, in the context of the Local Educational Agenda (LEA), make agreements with schools and childcare institutions about cultural education.

In the General Framework for Intergovernmental Relations in Culture it has been agreed that the framework is indefinite until new agreements are made. In 2022, the IPO concluded that it is necessary to update this framework (IPO, 2022). The provinces themselves came to the conclusion that there is need to arrive at common policy goals in a culture law and not just in administrative agreements. The advisory report *Op weg naar herpositionering, visie op de rol van de provincies in het cultuurbestel* (On the road to repositioning, vision on the role of the provinces in the cultural system (Wijn et al., 2022)), which was commissioned by IPO, only indirectly refers to policy in the field of cultural education and participation, which falls under a further elaboration of the general division of tasks that should take place in consultation between the various authorities.

- *Administrative framework for Culture and Education* (Ministerie van OCW, 2013): In 2013, this administrative framework was drawn up with various parties to make concrete agreements over a period of ten years. In addition to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), IPO and VNG, the signatory is also the PO council. The administrative framework has been drawn up building on the

Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit (Cultural Education with Quality) program and the General Framework for Intergovernmental Relations in Culture. In this administrative framework, it was agreed that the three layers of government will work together with the PO Council to achieve local cooperation between primary schools and cultural institutions and that professional development will be stimulated. In addition, it was agreed that there will be national monitoring and support from LKCA and FCP to achieve the formulated goals. Finally, this context contains a number of agreements for secondary education about the position of the school subject CKV and the CJP culture card. The Administrative Framework for Culture and Education formally expired in 2023, but the parties involved have expressed their intention to arrive at a new framework. Due to the desired involvement of more parties, such as the VO council and the MBO council, and the alignment with the reorientation on the BIS structure, it was initially decided to extend the administrative framework until the end of 2024. The intention is that a new framework will then be created, possibly in the form of an overarching framework for cultural education and cultural participation with partial agreements for various parties involved.

In 2023, research was conducted into cultural education policy at the national level in the period 2013-2022 (Van den Berg et al., 2023). The report concludes that the combination of statutory and non-statutory measures taken by the government in the field of cultural education has become broader and more complex during that period. In general, the aim was to improve the quality of cultural education and to promote participation in cultural activities. However, the coherence between the different measures was limited, and it is not always clear whether the desired results were achieved. The Administrative Framework for Culture and Education did provide a clear and widely supported course, but the response was that more results and coherence could be achieved here too, also with the other measures.

The report provides a number of recommendations for the future. Among them are to arrive at an integrated vision of cultural education, based on developments in education and the cultural sector, and to apply more guidance. Policy measures should also be more streamlined, coordinated and reduced, with fewer procedures and more focus on implementation. The cultural awareness of teachers could be increased, as well as the stronger positioning of art teachers in education. Finally, the evaluation of the various measures could be done more centrally based on a policy theory and associated target values (Van den Berg et al., 2023, pp. V-VI).

2.2 Education in general

To understand the opportunities for culture, arts and heritage in education, insight into the general structure and structure of education in The Netherlands is important. The Dutch education system, unlike many other countries, has a very large degree of freedom that is enshrined in law. The management at the national level is limited to finances, frameworks, guidelines, reference levels, core objectives and exam requirements for the various learning areas.

Qualification, socialization and personal development together form the three goal domains of good education (Ağirdağ et al., 2020):

- qualification: the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to act;
- socialization: the orientation towards cultures, practices and traditions, including the values and norms involved in them;
- personal development (or subjectification): growing towards independence to be responsible in the world.

Linked to the individual learning areas and exam subjects, since 2006 there have been core and final objectives for primary education in outline, to indicate what pupils should know and be able to do at the end of primary and secondary education. Only for language and arithmetic there are also reference levels that indicate more precisely what pupils should meet in the course of their development.

In order to exert some influence, the central government uses incentive programs such as the *Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit* (Cultural Education with Quality) program, the *Gelijke Kansen Alliantie* (Equal Opportunities Alliance), and the *School en Omgeving* (School and Environment) program. Administrative agreements are also made with other parties, such as VNG, IPO and the PO council, in the 2012 Administrative Framework for Culture and Education.

Schools are required to explicitly involve staff, parents and pupils (secondary education) in the content of education. The *Medezeggenschapsraad* (Participation Council) therefore has the right of consent at various times, such as when determining school policy and the budget, and can thus help determine educational practice at the school.

Relevant legislation

There are various laws that are relevant within primary education, which sometimes include both primary and secondary education and sometimes parts thereof. A brief overview:

- *Compulsory Education Act:* This law lays down the obligation for children aged 5 to 16 to attend education and be enrolled in a school. Adolescents between the ages of 16 and 18 are also required to qualify if they have not yet obtained a basic qualification. A basic qualification is at least a diploma of MBO 2, HAVO or VWO. Young people who have followed practical education are exempted from this.

- *Primary Education Act (WPO):* This law came into effect in 1998 and broadly determines how education in The Netherlands is regulated. In addition to the purpose, content and finances, the WPO contains regulations on student transport, the competence of teachers and the domestic violence reporting code. Together with the Expertise Centers Act (WEC), these laws are responsible for primary education, special needs primary education and education in special needs schools. Special needs primary education is intended for children who need more support than regular primary education can offer. Currently, secondary special needs education is still formally part of primary education, which means that they do not always work with subject teachers but with general teachers.

- *Secondary Education Act (WVO)*: This law focuses on secondary education in all its forms such as practical education, VMBO, HAVO and VWO. Here, too, the law sets requirements for, among other things, the curriculum, the teaching time, the quality of education, the examination subjects with associated requirements, the authority structure, the organization of schools and pupil transport.

- *Appropriate Education Act – Formal:* Act amending some education laws in connection with a review of the organization and financing of the support of pupils in primary education, special needs and secondary special needs education, secondary education and vocational education: This law came into force in 2013 and is aimed at ensuring that schools in primary education provide appropriate education as efficiently and effectively as possible when a child has additional special needs. Schools have a so-called duty of care

in this area, with the aim that in principle all children can be given a place that suits their qualities and abilities. Schools have set up partnerships in different regions for this purpose.

- **Expertise Centers Act (WEC):** This law regulates special needs education within both primary and secondary education. Special needs schools are also known as expertise centers because they focus on the education and guidance of seriously ill or disabled children based on their expertise. The expertise is divided into four clusters: Cluster 1 - visually impaired children; Cluster 2 – children with hearing impairments and children with severe speech difficulties; Cluster 3 – children with long-term illnesses, children with a physical disability and children with learning difficulties; Cluster 4 – children with long-term illnesses other than those with a physical disability, children with complex learning, behavioral or emotional problems, and children who are very difficult to educate. Children with multiple disabilities can go to one of the clusters, depending on their wishes or possibilities.

- **Participation in Schools Act (WMS):** As with all larger organizations, in addition to the formal structures of the board and management, input from those directly involved has also been ensured. This law regulates participation in schools, with the particularity that not only the employees have a say in this, but also the parents (primary and secondary) and pupils (secondary education). The parent section (primary) or the pupil and parent section (secondary) is the same size as the staff section. Schools are obliged to have a participation council and to submit certain decisions to them. One of the most important is to set policies and budget. This makes the participation council very important in the organization of education at a school.

Financing education

Schools in The Netherlands have a great deal of freedom in how they organize education, and this is also reflected in the way they are financed. In 2006, the Lump Sum Financing was introduced for this purpose, whereby schools received one total budget for staff and one budget for materials and (minor) maintenance instead of budgets per activity or component. This enables schools to better tailor their policy to the local situation and to provide customized services to their

students. The funding for the major maintenance and renovation of school buildings remained with the municipalities.

A number of calculation rules are used to determine the amount of the lump sum, which have been reduced from 130 more specific rules to about 30 more general rules as of 2023. The distinction between the personal and material lump sum has also been abolished. Schools receive a basic amount per school and an amount per number of pupils. The census date is based on February 1 of the previous year, previously it was October 1. There is also a limited number of additional calculation rules, based on the location and situation of the school and the specific backgrounds of certain students.

With the reduction of the number of calculation rules, the number of additional forms for financing from the government for education has also been reduced. In 2012, for example, the performance box funds were introduced. The government used this scheme to give more direction to education, including in the field of cultural education, because schools had to report separately in these areas. As of January 2023, this scheme has been abolished and the funds have largely been included in the lump sum. However, the control has disappeared.

Only the school plan, the budget and the annual accounts of individual schools can determine how much budget is used for specific subjects such as art and culture. In addition to the school board and the management, a school's participation council has influence on the amount of the budget and the extent to which it is made visible whether and how a budget has been spent. Therefore, making a clear plan for the organization of cultural education with the associated financing and timely involvement in the strategic planning of the school plan has become even more important.

School hours primary education

The amount of time spent on cultural education and the way in which that time is distributed over the week affect the quality of cultural education. On the one hand, cultural education often requires more time and longer time blocks, on the other hand, (short) repetition moments are also important to familiarize students with it. The position of art and culture in education partly depends on the way in which schools

organize their teaching time, whether or not in combination with after-school care.

Since 2006, schools have had the legal opportunity to adjust their school hours by choosing one of the possible school time models. In 2019, a study was conducted into which school models have since become commonplace in education (Willemsen & Van Grinsven, 2020). In just over a decade, the number of schools working with the traditional model has dropped from 77% in 2010 to 37% in 2019. In its place came the continuous schedule (26%) with only a short lunch break for the students, but still the Wednesday afternoon off, and the five-equal-day model (24%), a model in which students have the same school times every day with another short lunch break at school. In addition, there is the Hoorns model (8%) which is the same as the traditional model, but in which all students have Friday afternoons off.

There are other models such as the biorhythm model or the 7-to-7 model, which are very rare. Both models assume a longer presence of the child at school, and they are therefore more likely to be found in integrated child centers. In the biorhythm model, the periods in which learning takes place are alternated with periods of relaxation and rest, such as a longer lunch break. In the 7-to-7 model, pupils follow an integrated program with education and care provided by a multidisciplinary team of teachers and pedagogical staff.

Between 2011 and 2020, a group of 11 schools experimented with making teaching time fully flexible as part of the Flexibilization of Teaching Time experiment. In addition, these schools have offered a flexible schedule throughout the year by offering education for several weeks a year and/or during the week or day. They have shared their experiences in this area in the publication Customization in education (times) *(Maatwerk in onderwijs(tijden)* (Vereniging IKOOK, 2017)). The participating schools were allowed to deviate from the obligations in the field of the 5-day school week and the compulsory school holidays. In 2020, the then Minister Slob stopped the experiment (2019) because the Inspectorate found in 2018 that five schools had withdrawn from the experiment due to quality problems and two schools had had to take drastic measures due to quality problems. The conclusion was therefore that flexibilization requires a strong school organization and a well-thought-out approach, which is also reflected in the publication of the schools themselves. Making teaching hours more flexible means further flexibilization of the organization of education and schools and staff must be well prepared for this. At the time, the participating schools and the

parents indicated that they would like to continue the flexibilization, but the Minister did not agree.

The need and call for an adapted school week and adjusted school hours have only grown stronger since 2023, partly due to the teacher shortage. This concerns both the need for a four-day school week, and integrated child centers in which schools and childcare are increasingly working together and want to respond more flexibly to the demand for a better connection to working hours and holiday periods.

Integral Child Centers

More and more primary schools are entering into closer cooperation with childcare in order to achieve an integrated offer for children aged zero to twelve. Although the degree of integration tends to vary, in the ideal case there is an integration of management, vision and policy. Due to the different laws and regulations for education and childcare, it is not yet possible to achieve a combined financing and business operations, nor is a full integration of education and childcare during the day.

There are no legal frameworks or rules for an integral child center (IKC). In general, there is a continuous learning line from childcare to primary school in all kinds of areas and the facilities are in the same location. Various professionals such as teachers and pedagogical staff work together, and there is an enriching offer in a rich play and learning environment. Furthermore, it differs per IKC which facilities have been merged and how the collaboration is organized. The position that the child center occupies in the environment can also vary considerably. There are IKCs that regularly work together with other organizations or associations and, for example, also organize activities for the elderly, while other centers only focus on their own activities and target group. The Association Network of Child Centers (VNK) (netwerkkindcentra. nl) focuses on the development and promotion of (the quality) of an integrated offer of care and education for children aged 0-13 years in The Netherlands.

In 2019, 24% of the cooperating primary schools were found to profile themselves as an integral child center, together with 26% of the childcare organizations (Van der Grinten et al., 2019). When looking at the degree of cooperation, 42% of the schools and 38% of the childcare organizations are already in the consolidation phase, and 37% and 39% respectively

in the construction phase. Compared to 2016 this is a clear increase, which is also reflected in the large number of schools and childcare organizations that have a joint vision or a coordinated vision.

10-14 education

InIn 2012, the Teenager College in Gorinchem was the first to start education for pupils in groups 7 and 8 from primary education combined with pupils in classes 1 and 2 from secondary education. A primary school and a secondary school are jointly responsible, making this form of education possible within the existing regulations. The goal of the Teenager College was to make the transition from primary to secondary education smoother and to offer more personal education. When a student can handle more, they can opt for extra subjects or a higher level. All these goals and agreements are kept in a personal learning plan.

Primary school teachers, together with secondary school teachers, provide this continuous learning line from primary to secondary education. This gives primary school pupils who are already ready for a broadening of the educational content the opportunity to become acquainted with issues and subjects from secondary education, while 'late bloomers' are introduced to secondary school earlier and prepared for it. This also makes it possible to postpone selection for further education.

More '10-14 facilities' have since been added throughout the country. Between 2017 and 2020, twelve 10-14 schools were followed on behalf of the ministry (Bekkers et al, 2021). First of all, it was concluded that the various 10-14 initiatives agree on the main objectives, but have major differences in their elaboration. The monitoring showed that small scale, motivated and enthusiastic staff, good preparation and a joint board for primary and secondary education are important success factors. The independence of the students, which increases their sense of responsibility, is also an important factor for success. The monitoring also shows that quality assurance is a point of attention, especially when it comes to the transferability of working methods and products. In addition, it is not always clear how the pupils are doing once they have made the transition to regular secondary education (Bekkers et al., 2021, p. 7).

Profile schools

Schools in primary and secondary education have the opportunity to further profile themselves with a specific approach or offer in addition to regular education. This can lead to extra programs outside of teaching time or a specific emphasis during teaching time. Examples of this are a sports profile, technasia, bilingual education or cultural profile schools (cultuurprofielscholen.nl). Education in and about art and culture has an important place in the cultural profile schools. This is apparent, for example, from the fact that art and culture are more on the schedule and are more connected to other learning areas and that there is structural cooperation with the school's cultural environment. Multiple arts disciplines are offered at the school and there are also various cultural extracurricular activities. A cultural profile school is aimed at all students with an interest in arts and culture and is not specifically linked to an arts education or aimed at the transfer to it. In 2024, there are 53 cultural profile schools in secondary education and 24 in primary education that have united in the Association of Cultural Profile Schools (VCPS). The VCPS PO focuses on primary and special needs education, while the VCPS VO focuses on secondary and secondary special needs education.

DAMU Schools

There are twelve secondary schools in The Netherlands that, in collaboration with universities of the arts, intensively prepare young people for the possibility of moving on to a professional dance or music course. On the basis of the so-called DAMU regulation (Policy Rule DAMU License VO), these schools are allowed to adjust the curriculum of young talents by, for example, working with exemptions or staggered exams. DAMU schools may also include a subject 'preparatory training in dance education' or 'preparatory training in music education' as an examination subject. This adjustment of the secondary education curriculum is necessary to allow them to participate in an intensive preparatory process of one of the five affiliated universities of the arts at the same time. These adjustments only apply to pupils who participate in a preparatory program, other pupils at the school follow regular education.

Curriculum revision process

With the introduction of basic education in 1993, core objectives were also introduced as a minimum requirement that pupils should meet. The basic education was not a success because the program was too heavy for VMBO and too light for VWO. There was also too little room to respond to the differences between students and there was too little cohesion. The whole of the 280 associated core objectives was experienced as too extensive and sometimes too specific. That is why in 2006 a switch was made to more globally formulated core objectives. The starting point was that the government should only set the frameworks and leave it to the schools how they wanted to shape their educational programs. It soon became clear in educational practice that the core objectives gave teachers and school leaders little guidance. In 2008, therefore, reference frameworks for language and math were introduced as a common basis for language and arithmetic education, regardless of the level or the school. The reference levels provided more clarity about what pupils should know and be able to do in the field of language and math at different times in their school career.

In May 2014, the Education Council issued the advice (2014) to renew the educational curriculum more systematically in order to remain current. At that time, the Education Council already concluded that the curriculum was in danger of lagging behind social developments and was too fragmented and overloaded, with insufficient coherence between school types and subjects. In November 2014, the then state secretary Dekker therefore gave the go-ahead for the national discussion '#Onderwijs 2032' about what the curriculum in The Netherlands should look like. The idea behind the title was that children born in 2014 belonged to the first generation that would have completed a school trajectory in 2032 according to the completely renewed curriculum.

The aim of #Onderwijs2032 was to achieve a reassessment of the core objectives and attainment targets, with more coherence between disciplines and continuous learning pathways, reasoned from the broad mission of education. The new core objectives and attainment targets were also intended to provide teachers and schools with more guidance for the organization of education. Finally, the process was also intended to arrive at a system of periodic recalibration of the curriculum.

Through a 'National Brainstorm' on social media, input was initially made possible for everyone, from individual to institution, from young to old. In February 2015, the Onderwijs 2032 Platform was established to come up with advice on what knowledge and skills students need for their future. The platform consisted of experts from and outside education and used scientific insights and experiences in other countries for its advice. They also had to use the more than 15,000 responses from the national brainstorm.

Finally, in January 2016, the final advice (Platform Onderwijs2032, 2016) was delivered, the core of which was that future-oriented education must be meaningful and must have a balance between qualification, socialization and personal development 'skilled, dignified and kind'. According to the advice, education should be divided into eight areas: language, math, digital literacy, citizenship, people & society, nature & technology, language & culture, and cross-curricular skills. In the advisory report, cultural education was given a clear and recognizable place in the curriculum of primary education because of its important role in the formation and development of young children into adolescents in all facets of their identity and personality, and in preparation for their role in society and their working lives. Cultural education was to be given a place in the core curriculum through the domain of language and culture, but the advice also made connections with other domains such as citizenship, people and society, and digital literacy.

In 2016, the advice and the follow-up process were discussed in the House of Representatives and it was decided to use a different process: with more involvement of the education field in the further follow-up. The set-up and name changed, so that in 2017 the process of Curriculum. nu was started. In it, development teams worked on each learning area to come up with an elaboration. These teams consisted entirely of teachers and school leaders from primary and secondary education, with the support of employees of SLO, the PO council and the VO council. The existing eight learning areas were used as a starting point, supplemented by the learning area Digital Literacy. The assignment was to arrive at an overview of what should be addressed in education per learning area in primary education and the lower years of secondary education, with attention to the coherence and prevention of overload in education. Because of consistency, all learning areas had to go through the same process at the same time.

The recommendations were drawn up according to a fixed pattern of vision, 'major assignments' and 'building blocks'. The major assignments concerned the most important elements of the individual learning areas and the building blocks were a more detailed elaboration that could be used in the elaboration of the various learning pathways. In the process, a number of 'intermediate products' were used that could be responded to by the broad external field, such as cultural institutions. In October 2019, Minister Slob received the advice, including that of the Arts and Culture development team (Ontwikkelteam Kunst & Cultuur Curriculum.nu, 2019). The advice for art and culture yielded a consistent, easily readable and usable result, which could also be used directly as a conversation model for cultural institutions and schools.

This time, the House of Representatives indicated that too little use had been made of insights from science, and that coherence and overload still needed to be examined. Before the phase of elaboration into draft core objectives was initiated, a scientific curriculum committee had to look at the delivered documents. They were asked to advise on the content and technical usability, and also to make recommendations in the further process of curriculum development. This committee was formally launched in July 2020. At the beginning of 2021, it came to the conclusion that there was a good basis with the proposals from curriculum.nu's trajectory. But that tightening up was needed. Tightening up that could only be done with a clear framework with the various functions of education, such as qualification, socialization and personal development. This makes informed choices possible and makes it easier to work on coherence in the curriculum.

A further point of criticism from the scientific curriculum committee was the fragmented and compartmentalized approach to curriculum revision up to that point (Ağirdağ et al., 2021). As a result, the proposals for the different learning areas were difficult to compare with each other, and it was difficult to arrive at a coherent whole. According to the committee, coherence in the curriculum should arise from the educational objectives and not be sought afterwards between different learning areas and subjects. Therefore, more coherence must be made in the process of curriculum revision, and by using unambiguous substantive frameworks and concepts and arriving at some main types of skills. Also, the curriculum expertise of teachers and school leaders must be improved so that schools can actually achieve coherent education and prevent overload.

At the beginning of 2022, Minister Wiersma indicated in a letter to the House of Representatives that he had decided to put a definitive end to curriculum.nu's trajectory and to continue in a different way (2022a). The existing core objectives in education are used as a starting point and the learning areas are no longer further developed in conjunction. He chooses to start by developing new core objectives for four learning areas, namely Dutch, arithmetic/mathematics, citizenship and digital literacy. The other learning areas will follow later, with his aim of having education work with all the new core objectives by mid-2028. The draft core objectives for Dutch and arithmetic/mathematics were completed in September 2023 (Prenger et al., 2023). In the 2023-2024 school year, the draft core objectives were tested in practice and adjusted later. In March 2024, the core objectives for citizenship and digital literacy were delivered (Kampman et al., 2024) and tested in practice.

In 2022, a working group looked at the existing structure of the arts exam subjects and issued an advice in early 2023 (Werkgroep Vakkenstructuur kunstvakken, 2023). The working group found that the current structure of the exam subjects led to several bottlenecks: there was too little unity in the structure. The flow between the different school levels was hampered by the lack of coherence, there was little cohesion between the arts subjects, and the method of assessment and conclusion differed. In addition, different names were used for the same arts disciplines.

In order to bring more unity, the working group therefore recommended that CKV be a compulsory subject for all students and that the same elective exam subjects in arts should be offered at VMBO, HAVO and VWO, and under the same name. It was advised to add Film as a fifth discipline in addition to the existing disciplines of Visual Arts, Dance, Music and Theatre (formerly Drama).

The arts exam subjects should also be given a more uniform layout and structure, with each subject consisting of a part of practice and a part of theory in a balanced proportion, appropriate to the different types of school and learning pathways. The practical part then concerns the professional practice of the art discipline in which the exam is taken. The theory part consists of three components: a general part that consists of arts in context, an art analysis part and a professional theory part specifically appropriate to the chosen art discipline.

In September 2023, a start was also made on the development of the draft core objectives for the other learning areas, with the intention to have detailed core objectives in the autumn of 2024 that can be tested in the following school year. This will be followed by a process of adjustment and adoption of the new core objectives in the House of Representatives. This may lead to the introduction of new core objectives in the 2026-2027 school year, but that depends on further decision-making and developments. The new core objectives are more extensive than the existing core objectives and provide more direction and guidance for teachers and schools to work on cultural education.

Teacher shortage

The teacher shortage in fundamental education is a problem that has existed for some time, but has been felt more and more emphatically in recent years. The shortage is not the same everywhere: in certain areas, at certain schools and in certain subjects the shortage is more acute. Incidentally, this is not only a problem in The Netherlands, but a problem encountered in most countries in Europe (European Commission et al., 2018). With an ongoing aging population, insufficient new intake, outflow of teachers and teacher training dropouts, this will remain problematic for the foreseeable future.

In the report *Schaarste Schuurt* (Onderwijsraad, 2023), the Education Council notes that in 2022 there was a shortage of almost 10,000 FTEs in primary education and that almost two-thirds of vacancies in secondary education were difficult to fill. The biggest problems exist in schools in the five major cities, in schools with complex problems, in schools for special needs education and VMBO basis/kader and in specific subjects in secondary education. These problems are only expected to increase after 2030. In 2023, there will not yet be an immediate shortage for arts subjects in secondary education, but it will become increasingly difficult to find arts teachers for primary education.

In 2021, research was conducted into how many qualified teachers are working in education for an arts subject (Van Nuland & Kools, 2021). Only a third (visual) to a fifth (music and other directions) of the qualified arts teachers actually work in primary or secondary education. There are various reasons for this, but the uncertain labor

market position is certainly also related to this. In primary education, most arts teachers are deployed as self-employed or through an intermediary organization because schools generally do not include arts teachers permanently in the formation. It should be noted that almost half of the qualified that do not work in education have already graduated before the year 2000. The question is therefore to what extent they are actually immediately employable, and whether they are sufficiently motivated or can be motivated to take a step towards primary education.

In its report, the Education Council concludes that choices must inevitably be made because the compulsory education provision does not correspond to the available number of people, resources and the organization of education. They do not see the digital possibilities as a possible solution, this rather leads to an increase in the teaching task. Broadly speaking, they see only two options: limiting the educational offer, whether or not in combination with optimizing the organization of work in education. With the latter option in particular, the Council sees more room for other professionals in the school who are then employed in a more structural way. This may also lead to a different interpretation of the teaching days, especially in primary education. In order to guarantee the quality of education, a clear structure of competences will have to be established.

Accompanying programs

The high degree of freedom that schools have and the limited frameworks provided by the core objectives and the lump sum funding ensure a wide variety of education. The quality and skills of teachers in the field of art and culture also differ, and there is great reluctance among teachers to act with regard to the arts subjects (Bremmer et al., 2023). Since the introduction of the core objectives, various ministries have tried to influence educational practice through incentive schemes and projects in the field of traffic, nature, technology, sports and also arts and culture. More general programs are also being developed for education around certain themes, such as equal opportunities or in special situations, such as Covid-19, where a program has been developed to make up for the learning and development deficits that have accumulated.

In October 2016, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science launched the *Actieplan Gelijke Kansen in het Onderwijs* (Equal Opportunities in Education Action Plan). The action plan consisted of an interplay of financial investments, concrete measures and the establishment of the *Gelijke Kansen Alliantie* (Equal Opportunities Alliance). The alliance is a partnership of parents, teachers, school administrators, researchers, employers and social institutions, including cultural institutions. The coordination of this was entrusted to the ministry.

The *Nationaal Programma Onderwijs* (National Education Program) was established in 2021 to enable schools to make extra effort on the learning and development delays that pupils and students had incurred due to the Covid-19 measures. Schools received money directly for this without application or further arrangement, but were asked to report on their efforts. The original intention was to arrive at an approach based on analysis and planning in the first half of 2021 in two school years (2021-2022 and 2022-2023). For this purpose, a 'menu' was drawn up with possible interventions in various areas (NPOonderwijs.nl, w.d.). Cultural education was included as a possible intervention in the field of the social-emotional and physical development of pupils. In this context, the publication *De rol van cultuureducatie in het Nationaal Programma Onderwijs* (The role of cultural education in the National Education Program (Broekhof & Hoogeveen, 2021)) was also published as a guide to inspire schools. The guide discusses the interventions of the menu and which of them best suit cultural education, how and with whom this can be organized and what preconditions there are to apply it effectively.

In 2022, it was already decided that schools would be given two more years to use the funds from the National Education Program (NPO). At the planned end in the summer of 2023, only 35% of primary schools were found to have already used all NPO funds, compared to about 15% of secondary schools and 20% of special needs schools (Ministerie van OCW, 2023). The funds were generally used to finance additional programs and to deploy additional staff. Interventions in the field of pupils' well-being were always widely chosen, especially in secondary and secondary special needs schools (95% and 91% in 2023). In primary education, it was somewhat less, but almost three-quarters of schools still opted for interventions in the field of well-being. In all reports, schools indicated that they were concerned about the development of pupils in this area. Furthermore, they indicated that they were still experiencing the effects of Covid-19 in 2023 and that they were concerned about how to proceed in this area after the end of financing. The extent of the efforts in the field of cultural education has not been monitored, and therefore cannot be indicated.

The program *School en Omgeving* (School and Environment) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science is a program for primary and secondary education, which is part of the Equal Opportunities Alliance. The program got off to a flying start in 2022 with the aim of increasing equality of opportunity among children and young people who, due to their home situation or the place where they live, have less access to activities such as sports, culture, technology and nature. This is done by offering extra activities during the period that they visit school. These children or young people could also receive extra support with, for example, Dutch or arithmetic and mathematics. Only cooperating coalitions of schools, municipalities and other parties around a school or neighborhood with a program of activities that stimulate children and young people in their development could apply through the schools.

In 2022, a total of 128 coalitions were supported in this way from the School and Environment subsidy scheme. These coalitions consisted of forerunners (coalitions that already have activities and can intensify this), scale-ups (coalitions that still have a limited supply and reach) and starters (coalitions that intend to draw up a program together). Only coalitions of schools with pupils with the highest educational disadvantage scores could apply. The subsidy scheme was extended by two years (2023-2025), allowing coalitions to reapply in August/September 2023. In addition to schools that were already participating in the program, the extended scheme was also intended for new schools that have the highest disadvantage scores and (wanted to) work together in a coalition. A new application round took place in April 2024.

2.3   Cultuuronderwijs

The Primary Education Act (WPO) states which learning areas are part of the compulsory curriculum of the schools. The Secondary Education Act (WVO) also lists learning areas for the lower years that are compulsory for schools, as well as the exam subjects for the upper years. For each learning area, core objectives are included that must be achieved at the end of the primary school period (WPO) or at the end of the lower years

of secondary (WVO). Reference levels are also included for language and math. With regard to the examination subjects, it has been determined on the basis of which subjects and criteria the exams must be taken.

Learning area artistic orientation (primary education)

The core objectives are goals that schools should focus on when designing their education for the development of the students. Schools may decide for themselves how they organize their education in order to shape and achieve the core objectives. The core objectives are aimed at ensuring that children continue to develop during their school period and, on the one hand, provide a wide and varied range of education. But because the core objectives were deliberately formulated broadly at the time, they also cause differences in the quality and scope of education in the various learning objectives, such as in cultural education. Therefore, additional reference levels were developed later only for language and math, for more unambiguity. The core objectives and reference levels also serve as a framework for the accountability of the quality of education to the education inspectorate and society.

A total of 58 core objectives were established for primary education in 2006 (SLO, 2020a). These core objectives also apply to special needs primary education. Special needs education has its own core objectives. With the exception of two amendments to target 52 (2010) and target 38 (2012), these targets have remained unchanged since then. The core objectives for the learning area of artistic orientation are formulated as follows (SLO, 2019b):

- 54. The students learn to use images, language, music, play and movement to express feelings and experiences and to communicate with them.
- 55. The students learn to reflect on their own work and that of others.
- 56. The students acquire some knowledge about and appreciation for aspects of cultural heritage.

The learning area of artistic orientation focuses on introducing children to artistic and cultural aspects in their world, from the past and present, and to gain some knowledge of contemporary artistic and cultural diversity. The starting point is that this is done actively with the (outside)

world both at school and on a regular basis, and that it includes all kinds of forms and disciplines of arts and culture. Through the introduction and the knowledge gained, children learn to appreciate cultural and artistic expressions in their environment, and how they relate to them. Of course, the learning area also focuses on learning skills and gaining experience in being actively involved in arts and culture, and thus expressing oneself.

Whenever possible, topics and goals from other learning areas are used and combined, so that education becomes more coherent and meaningful for students. The authentic contribution of artistic orientation to the development of children remains paramount.

The draft core objectives for the learning area of arts and culture were delivered by the end of 2024, just as was done earlier in 2023 for Dutch and arithmetic/mathematics, for example. The new core objectives are more concrete in design and contain not only supply goals, which are aimed at the schools, but also mastery and experience goals that are aimed at the pupil. The new core objectives are sufficiently concrete to be able to manage the quality of education, but not too detailed, so that there is still room for higher ambitions and choices from schools. For special needs education, parallel functioning core objectives are developed.

Learning area arts and culture (secondary education)

The first two years of VMBO and the first three years of HAVO and VWO form the substructure of secondary education. In the lower grades, we still have to work with learning areas, although secondary schools generally translate this into a subject structure in line with the subjects in the upper grades. But formally there is still a learning area of arts and culture, and not of separate subjects such as music or drawing. Just like primary education, the lower secondary education has 58 core objectives, established in 2006 (Besluit kerndoelen onderbouw VO). Little has changed for these core objectives since that time, only core objectives 37 (2010) and 43 (2012) have changed. Unlike primary education, there are not three but five core objectives for arts and culture (SLO, 2016):

- 48. Through the use of elementary skills, the student learns to investigate and apply the expressiveness of various artistic disciplines to express his own feelings, to record experiences, to shape imagination and to establish communication.
- 49. The student learns to present his own artistic work to third parties, alone or as a participant in a group.
- 50. The student learns to look at visual art, listen to music and watch and listen to theatre, dance or film performances on the basis of some background knowledge.
- 51. The student learns to report on participation in artistic activities by means of visual or auditory means, as a spectator and as a participant.
- 52. The student learns to reflect orally or in writing on his own work and the work of others, including that of artists.

These five core objectives focus on a broad orientation towards arts and culture, in which the various arts disciplines must be seen as equal. The similarities and commonality of the arts disciplines are emphasized by the five core objectives, and they can be seen as five different skills: producing, presenting, participating as an audience, communicating about own experiences, and reflecting.

Just as in primary education, schools make their own choices for the design of the educational program on the basis of the core objectives. Here too, there is great diversity, although most schools choose to offer the learning area in the form of discipline-oriented art subjects, in line with the exam subjects that are offered. Some schools give a more broadly oriented interpretation in the form of a multidisciplinary weekly art subject or multidisciplinary projects for one or more days. Sometimes these projects are combined with other learning areas or subjects.

In the lower grades of VMBO and HAVO/VWO, an average of three hours per week is spent on arts subjects. Most schools focus on various art disciplines, with music and visual arts (drawing and/or crafts) being the most common. The other disciplines, theatre, dance and audiovisual education, are much less covered.

The new draft core objectives for the lower years of secondary education from 2023 and 2024 are the same core objectives as for primary education, but with a difference in level. For each learning area, the core objectives have been developed at two levels (primary education and lower secondary education), with an additional specification for the 3rd year of HAVO and VWO where necessary. As for special needs education,

functional core objectives are also being developed in parallel for secondary special needs education.

Exam subjects arts and cultural artistic education (ckv)

In the upper years of secondary education, education is no longer based on learning areas but instead uses a subject structure, which is also laid down by law with regard to exams. The subject of cultural artistic education (culturele kunstzinnige vorming - ckv) is compulsory for all HAVO and VWO students and is concluded with a school exam. It is part of the so-called 'combination grade' for the final exam, in which the average of a number of (smaller) subjects is included in the result list of the exam. Only pupils who take Greek and/or Latin in pre-university education do not have to follow a ckv; for them cultural education is included in the classical languages and focused on antiquity.

The subject ckv focuses on arts and culture in the broad sense, both from a historical perspective and from contemporary and future expressions and developments. For this subject, HAVO and VWO students actively go out to experience arts and culture and to come into contact with makers and the creative process. They reflect on these experiences in order to develop new questions and conduct their own artistic research, in which they also become acquainted with elements that are less familiar to them. In VMBO, there is the subject 'arts subjects including ckv'. The structure of this subject focuses more on getting acquainted with cultural activities that the students report on. For the different school types, this has been translated into their own exam requirements.

In addition, most secondary schools offer one or two art exam subjects that students can choose. On average, just over 20% of students take exams in one of the arts subjects (Cito, 2022). There is a historically grown dichotomy in the arts subjects between 'old style' arts subjects and 'new style' arts subjects, each with its own examination program, objectives, subdomains and attainment targets. The names of the arts subjects also differ as a result. Schools can choose whether to offer the old-style or new-style arts subjects or in a combination of both.

In 2024, the process for the revision of the exam subjects started, based on the previously issued advice on this subject (Werkgroep Vakkenstructuur kunstvakken, 2023). This should also be in line with the

draft core objectives delivered in 2024 so that schools are able to achieve a continuous learning line in all basic education for each learning area.

Special needs education

For children with learning difficulties and children with a (severe) multiple disability, there are adapted core objectives. For other children in special education, the core objectives apply as formulated for children in regular education, supplemented by core objectives that describe the challenges that certain target groups may experience in certain areas of learning (Ministerie van OCW, 2010). In this way, the opportunities available to students in special needs education are addressed.

Thirteen core objectives for special needs education have been formulated for the learning area of artistic orientation (SLO, 2020b), and ten for children with learning difficulties and children with (severe) multiple disabilities (SLO, 2020c). The core objectives for both groups are divided into disciplines, such as drawing, crafts and music. For special needs education in general, this is supplemented with play and movement, for children with learning difficulties dramatic education. Dance can also be found in physical education.

Cultural education in secondary vocational education (MBO)

In secondary vocational education there is no general cultural subject that is part of the general education part of the curriculum as is the case in the upper years of secondary education. Although the Education and Vocational Education Act (1995) prescribes that MBO students qualify for the practice of a profession, for participation in society and for advancement to a higher level of education, artistic and cultural education is not part of this. In the vocational part of programs that focus on creative and artistic professions, there is of course a smaller or larger proportion of cultural education, but for other programs this is limited to a commitment to one of the other fields such as Dutch or citizenship.

Culture card CJP and MBO Card

For students and teachers in secondary (special needs) education there is the culture card, a specific form of the Cultural Youth Passport (CJP) that is available for all young people up to the age of 30. Schools can use the culture card to book cultural activities at institutions that have joined CJP. Classroom activities can be booked through the teachers, such as workshops or classroom visits to performances or exhibitions, while at the same time students can also use the card to go out individually, for example to a concert or the cinema.

On the one hand, the culture card is a discount card that entitles students and teachers to all discounts offered through CJP. At the same time, it is a way for secondary schools to pay for activities. When schools put € 10.50 per student on the card, € 5.25 is added from the government, so that a total of € 15.75 per student can be used. In 2022, a total of 911 schools participated in the culture card, allowing 713,198 students to participate in almost 1.2 million cultural activities, for a total of almost € 14 million (CJP, 2023).

In 2016, the MBO Card was introduced as a free card for MBO students so that they too can go to cultural activities at a discount. When it was introduced, then Minister Bussemaker decided not to put a budget on the card, as is the case on the culture card. This was partly due to the lack of sufficient offering for MBO students from cultural institutions. Since then, however, more and more offerings have been developed specifically for this target group. Since November 2022, culture budget on the MBO Card has also been possible as a pilot until the end of the 2023/2024 school year. If the MBO institution itself puts € 10.50 on the card, this amount will be doubled by the government to € 21 per student. The institution can then also use the card for cultural activities. If the institution does not place a budget on the card, € 5.25 will be made available through the government, which can only be used by the student for individual activities outside education.

Cultural Education with Quality (Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit – CmK)

In 2011, then State Secretary Zijlstra submitted an application to the Culture Council and the Education Council to come up with a

joint advice on 'Cultural Education with Quality' in the context of his new vision on cultural policy. In November 2011, he informed the House of Representatives about this application and also indicated three actions he had taken in the context of the Cultural Education with Quality Program (Zijlstra, 2011): earmarked funds for cultural education in primary education (performance box funds), a flanking Cultural Education with Quality program, and agreements with provinces and municipalities on this. The joint advice of the two councils, *Cultuureducatie: leren, creëren, inspireren!* (Cultural education: learning, creating, inspiring!), was completed in June 2012 and forms an important building block for the further program (Onderwijsraad & Raad voor Cultuur, 2012).

The councils recommend bringing cultural education back to the heart of education and allowing schools regain control of the education of arts and culture. Schools must get a better grip on the content on the basis of a continuous learning pathway, preferably in a frame of reference. In addition, the expertise in the school must be improved, which requires commitment from the training of teachers, but also support from the cultural field, expertise centers and the authorities. To this end, cultural institutions must cooperate more with each other and with education, whereby the cultural education offer is developed as much as possible in consultation with education. The national knowledge center LKCA is mentioned as the director for regional and local educational support and to identify important developments and disseminate knowledge.

This led to the start of the *Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit* (Cultural Education with Quality) program in 2012 as a successor to the *Cultuur en School* (Culture and School) policy program. The aim is to improve cultural education in all primary schools so that it has a permanent place in school. The program has a number of components: subsidy schemes, including a matching scheme in which the contribution from the municipality or province is doubled by the central government up to a certain amount per inhabitant; monitoring; knowledge sharing and professionalization. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, LKCA and the Cultural Participation Fund (FCP) together form a program team to monitor the progress of the program and to advise on further development.

The first period of the Cultural Education with Quality program runs from 2013 to 2016. During this period, the program focuses exclusively on primary and special education and there are four main lines of action: sustainable cooperation between schools and cultural institutions;

promotion of teachers' expertise; continuous learning pathways, and the development of tools to assess performance. Evaluation of this first period (Van den Bulk & Beemster, 2016) shows that the program leads to more mutual involvement between schools and cultural institutions, whereby it is crucial that schools have or develop a vision on cultural education. The program has also led to a clear cultural change in the cultural education sector: from supply-oriented to more demand-oriented work from the schools.

Professionalization and training were still difficult during this period, although it became clear that the internal culture coordinator plays an important role as a bridge between the school and the cultural field. Co-teaching and the use of subject teachers were seen as important means in the further development of teachers' expertise. The development of learning pathways and more cohesive cultural education within schools led to a wide variety of developed learning pathways, but their development was generally difficult and the learning pathways were difficult to exchange. This initial period also saw the development of a number of instruments, such as Evi in Drenthe and *De Cultuurloper* in Noord-Brabant.

In addition to the matching scheme that gave cultural institutions a coordinating role as *'penvoerders'* (coordinators) in their municipality (with more than 90,000 inhabitants) or province (for the other municipalities), there were other subsidy schemes, such as the music impulse. With the establishment of the foundation *Méér Muziek in de Klas* (More Music in the Classroom), more attention was paid specifically to music in primary education and through the music impulse schools could improve their music education for three years by investing in music methods and the use of music teachers. Schools were also required to work together with local music associations. This incentive scheme for music was flanked by the development of local partnerships in this area between schools, governments, cultural institutions and other companies and institutions, the so-called *'muziekakkoorden'* (music agreements). Later, an arrangement was also made to promote cooperation between music conservatories and pedagogical academies and to achieve a more structural coordination.

The line taken in the first period of the Cultural Education with Quality program was continued in a second period (2017-2020), although the general direction was adjusted in a number of respects. For example, the development of learning pathways was abandoned, as was the emphasis on the development of instruments. Strengthening the relationship

between education and the cultural sector, demand-oriented work, the promotion of expertise and knowledge sharing remained important points of attention. In addition to primary and special needs education, secondary education was added as a target group for the program.

The second period of Cultural Education with Quality shows that schools and the cultural field already know each other better and are coming to more cooperation. In the publication *Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit: Kijk eens wat er kan. Terugblik op 4 jaar CmK* (Cultural Education with Quality: Look at what is possible. Looking back on 4 years of CmK (Kox et al., 2020)), examples from all over the country have been brought together to compile the results of this period. Coordinators, schools and cultural institutions have mainly focused on cooperation and mutual reinforcement. A lot of knowledge was developed and shared in various areas, such as creating and maintaining support, what is needed for effective cooperation, which approach offers the best chance of success and which preconditions must be met. In the second period, there was also much attention for a more integral approach, both within the art subjects and combined with other subjects and learning areas. The relationship with cultural activities in the vicinity of the school was improved in many places and various instruments were used.

In the third period of the Cultural Education with Quality program (2021-2024), the line was continued and the main direction remained the same. However, during this period, more emphasis was placed on schools in primary and special needs education that did not yet participate in the program. And there was now also room to expand the program, in addition to secondary education, to childcare and secondary vocational education (MBO). It was also linked to the curriculum review and indicated that schools and cultural institutions had to link up with this in terms of content. The fourth period (2025-2028) will continue this line and will also focus on strengthening and consolidating the support structure developed for coordinators.

2.4   Extracurricular facilities

Although in principle all children and young people come into contact with arts and culture through cultural education via school, the influence from home and the environment is still considerable for the eventual cultural participation. The extent to which students are involved in

arts, culture and heritage at school also differs in intensity and quality. For further development in this area, children and young people are therefore often dependent on extracurricular cultural education. Outside school hours, we are faced with different structures and opportunities to participate in cultural education and cultural participation. Part of this stems from more general structures, such as childcare, and part from the organization of cultural education itself, in which there are also major differences. Finally, it is also important to look at the connection between cultural education at school and the activities that are undertaken outside school and what possibilities exist to make this connection most effective.

Before and after school facilities

Until children enter primary school, parents are free to choose whether and how much their children go to any form of childcare. If they opt for childcare, it can take all kinds of forms, such as in their own private circle through family, friends or neighborhood, through private childcare such as childminders or through more regular childcare such as childcare or an integrated child center for 0-12 years. The Childcare Act lays down what standards paid childcare must meet. Childcare is inspected by the Joint Health Service (Gemeenschappelijke Gezondheidsdienst - GGD).

- *Childcare Act (WKO, 2023)*: This law regulates the quality requirements, financing, supervision and registration of childcare. The aim of the law is to guarantee the quality of childcare and to support parents in combining work and caring for growing children. Children must be offered a safe and stimulating environment, contributing to their development and well-being. Childcare centers, playgroups and childminder agencies are included in a register with the municipality if they meet all the requirements. When parents make use of a registered childcare facility, they are eligible for partial reimbursement of the costs.

Childcare centers for 0-4 years generally work with a pedagogical framework that was drawn up in the autumn of 2008 by the Landelijk Pedagogenplatform Kinderopvang (National Childcare Pedagogical Platform (Singer & Kleerekoper, 2016)). The framework addresses the

contribution that childcare institutions make to the development of young children, so that children feel safe and secure and can play and learn together with other children. Learning through play from a holistic approach is an important element in this. The childcare center is free to organize and fill in their days depending on their abilities and profiling.

Creative and visual arts competences are part of the personal competences in the pedagogical framework and are summarized in the competence 'Look, I can dance, sing and make something' (Singer & Kleerekoper, 2016, p. 64). Under this heading, dance, music, and visual arts skills are brought together, along with developing a sense of beauty. Some childcare institutions profile themselves with extra activities in the field of arts and culture. For example, by inviting artists or musicians into the group (memorabelemomenten.nl) or through a more thematic approach. *Muziek op Schoot* (Music on the Lap) is an example of a music learning trajectory for children up to the age of 4 that is used more often in childcare, but is also offered for individual parents with their child through a cultural provider.

In some cases, pre-school education is also offered, intended for toddlers aged 2.5 to 4 years who are insufficiently stimulated in their development from their home situation. A toddler then goes to childcare for 16 hours a week to follow a program that stimulates language development, along with motor skills and social-emotional development. Activities are also offered that are preparatory to math. In addition to the GGD, there is supervision of this program by the Education Inspectorate. Through the consultation office, young children receive a VVE indication (Preschool and Early Childhood Education - Voor- en Vroegschoolse Educatie), but the exact structure of the VVE is left to the municipality by the government. Early childhood education takes place at primary school and is aimed at preschoolers aged 4 to 6 years and falls under the responsibility of the school. Again, the approach can differ from school to school. A wide variety of VVE programs are available, most of which focus on language development with additional attention to broad cognitive development, social-emotional and motor development. Role play, coloring, learning to ride a bike or cutting and playing together are examples of what can be covered in that broad approach.

From the age of four, most children in The Netherlands go to school, although the compulsory education law (WPO) applies from the age of 5. The WPO states that primary schools are obliged to arrange out-of-school care between half past seven in the morning and half past six in the evening when parents ask for it. Because school hours often do not match the working hours of parents, schools must make a provision so that children are cared for longer. Schools can deal with this in different ways, for example by forming an integrated child center in collaboration with childcare. The school may also arrange the care itself or enter into a permanent partnership with a childcare provider. Parents must then register the children themselves at the out-of-school care (BSO), but the connection from school to the out-of-school care is arranged by these parties together. Parents are not obliged to work with the school's cooperation party for their out-of-school care and may also choose another provider. In that case, the school does not have to take responsibility for the connection to the out-of-school care. The costs for this are paid by the parents in all cases, although here too a contribution to the costs is possible from the childcare allowance. This is different from the voluntary parental contribution, which is intended for special activities during school hours. In various municipalities, additional arrangements are made to make out-of-school care (freely) accessible from the point of view of equal opportunities and prevention.

Unlike in Scandinavian countries, for example, parents rarely consider using childcare for educational reasons; it is seen as a necessity to be able to work. However, from an educational point of view, parents choose specific activities, such as sports or culture, insofar as they are offered in their environment. In countries such as Denmark, childcare is often considered a right, for both parents and children. It is considered part of a good upbringing that children make use of childcare. The realization of sufficient, appropriate and high-quality childcare is therefore seen as a public responsibility in Denmark. The childcare there consists of a combination of care, play and education.

Organized out-of-school care not only offers care before or after school, but also during holidays and days off from school. There are no substantive guidelines for out-of-school care, but there are guidelines for the safety of the children and the design of buildings. After-school care centers put together their own program that generally includes several activities that the supervisors carry out themselves or for which external parties are used. As of July 2024, differently qualified professionals will also be allowed in childcare as part of the permanent formation. This means that, for example, professional musicians or athletes can work in childcare (Kinderopvang-werkt.nl).

In the Pedagogisch kader kindercentra 4-13 jaar (Pedagogical framework for children's centers 4-13 years (Schreuder et al., 2011)), in the context of personal competence, seven personal competences are

discussed that should be stimulated and developed in childcare. One of these competencies is the creative-visual competence, which is briefly described as 'expressing yourself in movement, sound and material' (p. 103). Out-of-school care can be organized according to a certain vision or specific approach, for example from a sports or culture perspective (kinderstadtilburg.nl/cultuur-bso). In this type of 'out-of-school care', cultural or sports activities are already included in the total rate. At other out-of-school care centers, cultural and sporting activities are offered as separate workshops or a short series of workshops, for which the parents are asked to pay an extra contribution.

At the end of March 2023, the report Inventarisatie verrijkte schooldag (Inventory of Enriched School Day (Van der Grinten et al., 2023)) was published, which was commissioned by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and drawn up by a consortium of Oberon, KBA Nijmegen and the Kohnstamm Institute. The study, which was conducted from December 2022 to March 2023, shows that about half of the schools in the Netherlands already work with a more or less enriched offer after school. The activities cover a wide range of topics and areas, such as cognitive development, culture, orientation to yourself and the world, sports, exercise and health and social-emotional development. The activities offered were generally aimed at all students of the school. Activities that focused more on cognitive and/or social-emotional development were more likely to work with a specific target group. In general, schools worked together with other parties, such as other schools, cultural institutions, sports institutions, care and welfare organizations or more general educational support organizations.

Sports (85%) and culture (75%) were the most frequently offered by the schools, a picture found more often in leisure activities. However, when looking at the extent to which students of the school made use of the offer, a different picture emerged: Orientation to yourself and the world reached the most students (51.9%), followed by cultural activities (46.9%) and only then sports (41.2%).

The majority of activities took place at the own school, although in 37% of the schools cultural activities also took place at a cultural institution. To design the program of cultural activities, 82% of the schools cooperated with cultural institutions. These were mainly activities focused on theatre, music, dance, visual education, art or photography. Schools offered enriching activities for an average of more than half of the school year, for culture this was 25 weeks and an average of 2.6 hours per school week. For most schools, the timing of the enrichment

activities consisted of a combination of activities both outside and during school hours (46% for culture) or outside school hours (37% for culture). In 30% of the cases, the students were obliged to participate in the cultural activities.

2.5 Cultural education in leisure time

Cultural education in leisure time is not formally organized and participation depends on the choice of the student and parents. The activities can be offered by associations, organizations, collectives or individual providers. In order to be able to make use of facilities in the leisure domain, these facilities must not only be affordable but also available. There are major differences in quality, pricing and availability between different disciplines and activities, but also throughout the country.

The infrastructure for out-of-school cultural education has been seriously weakened in recent decades. Whereas in the 1970s and 1980s there was still a strong infrastructure with music and dance schools and centers for the arts with a separate extracurricular inspection, since the 1990s there has been a gradual decline in quantity and quality. There was a shift from the view that cultural education should be accessible to everyone, to market thinking and freedom of choice, with cultural education being one of the options in leisure time. As a result, the financial accessibility of art education deteriorated, it was increasingly seen as a luxury product, and it became less self-evident for every child to engage in sports and culture outside of school hours for their development. In 2002, the Inspectorate for Artistic Education & Amateur Arts was formally terminated, although the Inspectorate of Amateur Arts no longer had a legal basis. At the beginning of the 21st century, attempts were made to place this inspectorate under the (formal) Inspectorate of Education, but because there is no legal framework for extracurricular cultural education, this turned out to be legally impossible.

With the cutbacks from 2012 onwards, many music schools rapidly closed or merged with other centers. As a result, cultural education in leisure time is increasingly left to the market, often resulting in an impoverishment of the cultural offer in the vicinity of the school and in leisure time. Arts centers with permanent staff were faced with a government that no longer automatically subsidized salaries for teachers

and general business operations. Established structures eroded, course fees became increasingly dependent on the market and new forms emerged. As a result, the playing field expanded further, but at the same time became less recognizable. The accessibility, affordability and diversity of the offer came under pressure.

In 2021, the *Programma Cultuurparticipatie* (Cultural Participation Program) of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science was launched. This is the first time in a long time that the central government has increased focus on cultural participation. The goal of this four-year program is to create equal opportunities for everyone to participate in cultural life. The ambition of the program is to ensure that more children, young people and adults can actively participate in cultural activities. Special attention is paid to groups that experience barriers of different kinds. The program also connects care and social work with professional cultural institutions, amateur and heritage associations and artists' initiatives.

The teachers involved in the centers for the arts generally continued independently or in collectives after the closure of the music school or the center for the arts. This did not immediately change the quality of the individual teacher's offer, but it did change the space that teachers were given for training and organizing interaction with other students, instruments or disciplines. Quality control also came under pressure as a result of these developments, because it became unclear to both the professional and the student what quality standard had to be maintained and whether a teacher met it. These developments and a greater need to retain students ultimately put more pressure on the quality of the individual teacher. The independent teacher or artist with their own teaching practice is now the provider from whom most people take their classes, courses or workshops (Neele, 2023).

Framework curricula and guidelines are available for some directions or subjects (Bomhof et al., 2014; Bomhof et al., 2016a; Bomhof et al., 2016b; LKCA, 2023; Noyens, 2010), but this does not apply to all the cultural-educational offerings. The framework curricula are generally developed by the art sector itself and formulated and brought together by LKCA. These framework curricula offer a lot of room for daily practice because teachers in the field of leisure time have complete freedom to put together their offer, more than in regular education. In addition to the extensive curriculums, there is also a certification system for some activities, such as the HaFaBra (harmony, fanfare, brass band). For other activities and disciplines, there are only very general or even no

guidelines, so that teachers determine the lesson content, didactics and the level to be achieved at their own discretion.

In addition to these more substantive and qualitative aspects, the disappearance of the infrastructure also caused the disappearance of the visibility of cultural education in society: a center for the arts in a municipality has a visible presence, provides communication around activities and organizes meetings in the community. A commitment that exceeds the scope of many individual providers and even collectives.

Some of the cultural education activities have traditionally also been provided in consultation with or even by associations. However, the permanent place of an association in society has decreased in recent decades, which has also reduced this infrastructure. In 2022, approximately 11% of the Dutch population was active in an association, club or group for the practice of artistic, creative or musical activities *(Neele, 2023)*. Although the number of active participants in cultural participation has been stable for years, they are less and less likely to be members of an association or other organized association. In general, the associations have become smaller. For example, the number of permanent members decreased by 12% from 41 members in 2018 to 36 members in 2021. Participants want to be involved in activities for a shorter period of time and be active with art and culture in a more relaxed context in their free time. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic has also significantly reduced the number of members, with the number falling in 36% of the associations (Neele & Zernitz, 2021b). This other form of involvement has particularly affected the degree of organization of associations, as a result of which there are fewer associations and associations are less able to provide activities. Associations also struggle to attract and retain new and especially young members.

Besides the role that associations or informal associations can play in providing activities for sports or culture, they have another added value in the development of children. Traditionally, people of different ages and from different socio-economic situations come together in an association, connected by a common interest. In an association, children learn to deal with differences in age and background at an early age, and get to know each other in a more equal way.

Professional cultural institutions such as museums and producing institutions have also been involved in education and public guidance for a long time. They market an independent educational product as part of their own cultural offerings or as a main activity. Subsidized cultural

institutions are often given an educational assignment in the subsidy conditions, appropriate to the target groups they focus on. This concerns activities for schools as well as for regular visitors.

2.6   Connecting cultural education at school and in leisure time

The connection between cultural education at school and in leisure time does not develop by itself. There is no continuous learning line from in-school to out-of-school, although there are examples where extracurricular is connected to the in-school offer on a project basis. In general, it can be said that children can initially become acquainted with and be inspired by art and culture during school hours, but at most schools there is too little room for deepening or broadening. This usually takes place in leisure time or in an after-school offer. However, there is not always an offer available that matches their interests and needs. Financial thresholds can also be an obstacle, for example if a family cannot afford the costs for one or more children who want to attend art classes or other activities in their free time.

To enable cooperation between the school and the cultural environment, recognizable points of contact are needed in the school and beyond. Many schools in primary and special education therefore work with an internal culture coordinator, and in secondary education we also increasingly come across a culture coordinator, or contact goes via the art teacher. In the immediate vicinity of the school, there is often a combination officer for culture, also referred to as a 'culture coach'. For the coordination in the context of the Cultural Education with Quality program, the coordinator in the city or province (penvoerder) is the first point of contact.

In the cooperation between schools and the cultural field, there is often an uneven playing field, in which the penvoerder can play an important role. The out-of-school professional is generally asked to adapt to the policy plan or vision of the school, even if this concerns a moderate vision or a low level of ambition. It is therefore important that both the in-school and the out-of-school professionals are involved in the design, development and implementation of the vision and policy (Kox et al., 2020).

Internal Culture Coordinator

In 2004, the Regeling Versterking Cultuureducatie (Scheme for Strengthening Cultural Education) was launched, as a result of which primary schools received € 10.90 per student for cultural education. The schools were also expected to develop a cultural policy. A group of experts then developed the internal culture coordinator course as in-service training for group teachers. The internal culture coordinator (Mols et al., 2024) is the connecting link between the school and the cultural environment and coordinates the cultural activities at school in collaboration with the team, management and possibly other stakeholders. The culture coordinator is usually a teacher or director who works at the school and is part of the school team. Increasingly, school boards are also working with extracurricular cultural coordinators.

The culture coordinator provides a culture plan within the school's policy plan that contains the school's vision on cultural education with a concrete plan of action to convert that vision into activities, lessons and projects and to guarantee quality and continuity of cultural education at the school. The culture coordinator also ensures support and involvement of the school team and maintains contact with the cultural partners and networks outside the school.

In 2005, the first certificates were awarded to the internal culture coordinators, in 2010 there were already 3,000 and in January 2022 there were more than 10,000 certified culture coordinators. Certification of cultural coordinators in secondary education also began in 2022. Because there are generally art teachers in secondary education who can take on this role, their training as a coordinator focuses more on their own work practice and investigating where they could make a difference in their school, for example in their own subject section or in the entire teaching team. Based on this, the training considers which approach is possible and what knowledge and skills it requires, such as in the field of coherence in the curriculum, cross-curricular work or more general characteristics of personal development and social-emotional development. Planning, financing and support are important components in this, just like with the internal culture coordinator in primary education.

As a follow-up to the internal culture coordinator course, the post-graduate training for cultural counsellor was developed in 2017. The

cultural supervisor is a teacher who, even more than the cultural coordinator, has further professionalized in cultural education in primary and special education, so that cultural education in that education is stimulated and promoted and embedded in the school's policy and practice. In order to participate in the additional training, the course for internal culture coordinator must be completed and the participant must be active in that area in the school. The training is offered by general teacher training colleges and carried out in collaboration with cultural institutions in the region concerned. In 2021, the scheme, which existed from 2017 to 2020 to encourage participation in this program, was evaluated (Hoogeveen et al., 2022). The number of culture coordinators who went on to follow this post-graduate program fell far short of the expectations and the possible potential of ICC staff for whom the program can contribute to further professionalization and give a quality boost to cultural education at their school. One of the reasons for the evaluation was that the program has to compete with other post-graduate programs of which the need is felt more in schools. This prioritization is in turn related to the status of cultural education in schools (p. 55).

In 2021, the secondary education culture coordinator training course was started in four places in the country, a training which focuses on the role of the coordinator in secondary education. Because this culture coordinator is often already a qualified art teacher, and the structure of the school is more complex than in primary education, this training is partly based on that of the internal culture coordinator and partly developed independently. At the beginning of the training, the participants therefore first look at their own work practice and where or with what they can make a difference at their school. Then the training looks at the possibilities that exist to influence the quality of cultural education and what knowledge and skills participants need to be able to do so. Think of conversations to increase the involvement of management and colleagues. The participants draw up plans and implement them to see what the effect is. The training is concluded with a review of the insights, knowledge and experiences gained, and what personal development participants have gone through, and a presentation of the product they have developed or of the process they have gone through.

Combination officer for culture

At the end of 2007, the *'Impuls brede scholen, sport en cultuur'* (Impulse for Community Schools, Sport and Culture) was signed by the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), the VNG, the NOC*NSF, the Verenigde Bijzondere Scholen (United Special Schools (VBS)) and the *Cultuurformatie* (Culture Formation) with the intention of creating more cohesion between education, sport and culture. Municipalities pay about 60% of the costs for the employment of combination officers and receive a contribution of about 40% of the costs from the government. In 2012, it also became possible for municipalities to make use of co-financing by others, such as schools and cultural institutions, to cover municipal funding, and the name was changed to *Brede Impuls Combinatiefuncties* (Broad Impulse Combination Functions). The participation of municipalities in the Impulse is voluntary, and when participating they can also determine the size.

The original objective for the Impulse was to expand the number of schools with a sports and cultural offer, to ensure that more children and young people up to the age of 18 came into contact with different forms of culture and to stimulate active cultural participation among young people. On the basis of these impulses, neighborhood sports coaches and culture coaches were appointed at or through the municipality, who worked partly in or for a school and/or partly in their spare time in the field of sports or culture. In this way, they themselves provide a link between school and leisure time, while they are also the point of contact for others in this area.

As of 2019, culture coaches can also be deployed more widely and the role of the combination officer will be fulfilled on the basis of local needs and objectives. This leads to different roles and names, such as culture coach, culture broker, culture booster or culture scout (Marinelli et al., 2020). In 2023, the Broad Combination Officer Scheme was extended again until 2026 and became part of the *Brede Specifieke Uitkering* (Broad Specific Allowance (SPUK)) for municipalities. This scheme has been made available to all municipalities for sport and exercise, health promotion, cultural participation and the social basis with the intention of achieving a more integrated approach. Three substantive main themes have been identified: sports, exercise and culture, health and social basis, and support components.

2.7   International perspective

Although both education policy and cultural policy are considered to be autonomous areas for countries in the European Union, there is a focus on aspects of lifelong learning from an economic and social perspective. Furthermore, The Netherlands is affiliated with UNESCO, the global organization that focuses on education and culture. Decisions and frameworks of UNESCO are generally ratified and adopted by The Netherlands and therefore also influence developments in The Netherlands.

Key Competence #8: Cultural awareness and expression

In 2006, eight European Key Competences (Charels, 2019) for lifelong learning were identified as a reference framework for the design of education in European countries. One of these competences focuses on cultural education in a broad sense with attention to awareness of and skills (expression) in art and culture. In 2016, an elaboration of this core competence was published (European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture, 2016) based on the input of a European working group.

Because of the European character of the key competence, the term 'awareness' can be seen as the fact that every inhabitant of Europe, now and in the future, must be able to learn about the importance of art and culture, and must be able to experience culture. The productive side is expressed in the term 'expression': everyone must be able to learn to express thoughts, feelings and ideas with others by artistic means.

Unesco Framework for Culture and Arts Education

From 2022, UNESCO has been working on a new framework for cultural education, which was finally adopted in Abu Dhabi in February 2024: the Framework for Culture and Arts Education (UNESCO, 2024). The framework builds on the previous World Conference on Cultural Education in Lisbon in 2006, in which the

Road Map for Arts Education (UNESCO, 2006) was established, and the Seoul conference in 2010 with the Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education (UNESCO, 2010). The framework focuses on all forms of cultural education, both in the formal education system and beyond.

The UNESCO framework emphasizes that art and culture are an integral part of the broad and inclusive development of both the individual and society, including the areas of ethics, sustainability and promoting positive change. Cultural education in a broad sense is important for the development of imagination, creativity and self-expression, the development of critical thinking and social-emotional skills, and enables children and young people to work in the cultural and creative industries if desired. The framework supports lifelong learning, with a focus on indigenous cultures, digital technologies, and the education and training of art teachers.

UNESCO also notes that current education is inadequate and that a bold educational transformation is needed to adapt the purpose, content and structure of education to promote equality and inclusion, quality and relevance. Education must not be limited to the traditional classroom forms, but must take other paths. Cultural education plays an important role in this, both through education about art and culture and by learning with and through art and culture. The importance of co-creation of education and the cultural field is also emphasized in the framework.

The document mentions five strategic goals that contribute to broad accessibility of cultural education, both in school and in leisure time, throughout life, and a connection of education with the broad cultural field:

1. access, inclusion, and equity in and through culture and arts education;

2. contextual, qualitative, lifelong and life-wide learning in and through cultural education;

3. appreciation of cultural diversity and the capacity for critical engagement;

4. skills to shape resilient, just and sustainable futures;

5 institutionalization and valorization of cultural education ecosystems.

The framework also calls for sufficient resources to support the cultural field appropriately and to adapt policy, curricula and pedagogy. The intention is that from 2025 onwards, the member states will report to UNESCO every four years on their progress in this area.

Cultural education in relation to the development from 0 to 18 years

The cultural development of children and young people is in line with their general development and the different developmental phases they go through. Especially at a young age, the brain and body develop very strongly, creating different possibilities and focus areas. We therefore also address this general development and we make a connection with art and culture and related research. This provides more insight into how art and culture contribute to the general development of a child on the one hand, and on the other hand which forms of cultural activities fit well with the possibilities of a child or young person at which stage of development.

Although there are different models for the development of children and young people, we use Piaget's classification (Tekstschrijvert, 2017), supplemented with the phases of Došen's social-emotional development for the age up to 12 years (Zaal et al., 2008). In his developmental approach to development, Došen has developed a guideline for estimating the social-emotional development of a child. We complemented this classification with the six different phases in the continuous development of young people as used by the Netherlands Youth Institute (Nederlands Jeugdinstituut – Nji) (w.d.-a). On this basis we arrive at the following classification

(▶ = Piaget, ▶ = Nji, ▶ = Došen):

- ▶ Sensorimotor phase (0-2 years)
    - ▶ Baby (0-2 years)
        - ▶ First adaptation phase (0-6 months)
        - ▶ First socialization phase (6-18 months)
- ▶ Pre-operational phase (2-7 years)
    - ▶ Toddler (2-4 years)
        - ▶ First individuation phase (18-36 months)
    - ▶ Preschooler (4-6 years)
        - ▶ First identification phase (3-7 years)
- ▶ Concrete operational phase (7-12 years)
    - ▶ Child (6-12 years)
        - ▶ Reality awareness (7-12 years)
- ▶ Formal operational phase (from 12 years)
    - ▶ Early and middle adolescence (10-16 years)
    - ▶ Late adolescence (16 years and older)

The classifications of Piaget, Došen and NJi do not fully align, but largely follow the same subdivision. In the description below it is therefore not always possible to make a sharp distinction, however the various developmental phases outlined should themselves not be regarded as absolute, but as model-based. Biological, social and cultural conditions influence development. In his dissertation Copini (2019) emphasizes that (metacognitive) development should be considered from an evolutionary, cultural and psychological point of view, and that these three perspectives mutually influence each other. Therefore, it is not always possible to make a clear distinction in the development of a child or young person in relation to cultural education, as we see, for example,

in the Flemish study *Jong Geleerd, Jong Gedaan* (Vermeersch et al., 2018) on the relationship between cultural activities and the development of young children aged up to 6 years. In this chapter, we make extensive use of this research.

3.1 The sensorimotor phase (0-2 years)

In their first years, young children not only develop their senses and bodies, they also develop motor skills and go through language development. In this process, they discover more and more about themselves and their environment, such as the difference between their parents and other people, and how to communicate. Most children say their first words when they are one to one and a half years old. They develop their memory and begin to understand others. They develop their own will and feelings in which they want to do more and more on their own. At the end of this phase, we see that children are aware that something exists even if it is not perceived, they can represent things in their minds and they can think symbolically.

First adaptation phase (0-6 months)

The first phase after birth is centred on the physical adjustment to the new life: getting used to, for example, environment, food, sounds, and touch. Physical care is central, and it is important for the very young child that this is done through clear structures and repetitive activity. This generally involves the use of movement and sound: such as rocking, mirroring movements, responding to each other's sounds and fixed changes in sound rhythms and intonation, for example with songs and rhymes. Soon after birth, babies respond to environmental stimuli such as sound and movement. Contact with the environment is primarily through touch, smell and taste, the senses that focus mainly on proximity. There is no sense of existence beyond what is seen or experienced: if something is not seen, it does not exist for the baby, and material in the environment is discovered at most by chance. Between three and five months, they already react strongly to striking images or sounds.

Right from birth, children can see very well: the eyes are then already well developed and the movement and coordination of the eyes develop rapidly in the first months, along with color and depth perception. As a result, very young children respond very well, for example, to large areas of color such as those found in museums of modern art. This rapid development of vision means that a two-year-old and a sixty-year-old see the world largely in the same way (Hochberg, 1978). The great importance of visual perception in a person's life is also demonstrated by the estimate that more than 90% of the information recorded is visual in nature, and that two-thirds of the electrical activity in the brain is related to looking when the eyes are open (Jensen, 2000). Different brain areas are activated by the visual system, depending on what is offered.

Already during pregnancy, from about twenty weeks, hearing develops and the unborn begins to respond to sound. In general, it can be said that the musical and linguistic development at a young age is comparable, for example in recognizing sounds, tone, pitch and rhythms. At birth, a child is able to distinguish patterns and from two to three months it starts making different sounds. From four months onwards, it consciously makes clearer sounds and starts cooing. At an early age, children are already able to recognize and use sound characteristics. Finally, several studies indicate a correlation between participation in music, phonological awareness and distinguishing sounds (Vermeersch et al., 2018, p. 29).

First socialization phase (6-18 months)

After the first six months, the child is not yet able to see itself as a separate individual, seeing itself as a kind of extension of the parent or caregiver. There is still no sense of existence beyond what is seen or experienced, but the child does begin to have an awareness that things and people exist, and therefore also experiences the absence of a trusted person and experiences this as unsafe. We are dealing with single-mindedness; a trusted adult offers safety and space for activities and development.

The shapes and sounds of materials are especially important at this stage, while at the same time the child also discovers his own body and notices that it can be used to touch and grab something. It also discovers its own voice and the ability to use different pitches by saying different

sounds in succession, such as 'dada' or 'gaga'. This babbling phase starts around seven or eight months. Gradually, children also start to make meaningful gestures, with songs, or by waving and moving. Speech and language develop much faster from about one year and most children say their first words between the ages of one and one and a half.

When they are about nine months old, babies start to concentrate better and longer. In this phase, interest toward peers arises and babies start pointing at objects and naming them with simple sounds or words. In this phase, children mainly react to moving images and sounds, and they like to grab parts or buttons. From nine months onwards, babies increasingly enjoy looking at pictures together, pointing out and naming what is seen, supplemented by what the parent or caregiver says or indicates. They like to hear their parent's or caregiver's voice and respond to the different ways in which the voice sounds. Gradually, the child discovers the connection between the different pictures in a story picture book, and they therefore start to like them more and more.

Young children choose more and more clearly what they would like to watch and develop their preferences. Nine-month-old babies, for example, already have a preference for abstract art over figurative art (Swaab, 2016). The degree of visual richness that the young child is exposed to at a young age partly determines how it will watch later and what appreciation or meaning it will give to what it sees, and this is therefore important for the growing child (Gardner, 1990).

An important developmental step for young children is imitating their environment in play and thus learning to 'pretend' (Scarlett et al., 2004). This generally starts between 12 and 24 months of age. We see this, for example, in language development when children begin to mimic conversations by imitating sounds. Often these are not yet recognizable or existing words, but parts of them or something similar. In doing so the child starts to use more and more recognizable words. Another way of imitating is, for example, to copy the behavior of the parents or caregivers.

'Pretending' starts as imitating and gradually becomes more and more imaginative. Around the age of 18 months, the child also develops the awareness that it can make mental combinations itself, so that the observations it makes can take on a different meaning. It gains appreciation for visual jokes if, for example, someone puts a pan on their head and pretends it is a hat (Vermeersch et al., 2016). Because imagination increases, the ability to imagine things further removed

from reality and concrete perception also increase. The child learns to play with perception and reality, adapting them and giving them their own context. In doing so, it also learns to use its own body and to discover what is possible with it. These skills and abilities can be further stimulated with elements of theatre and dance.

3.2   The pre-operational phase (2-7 years)

In this phase, the child primarily discovers that it is an individual with its own identity. In its development, it focuses mainly on itself. The child can also focus on only one thing at a time and can consider everything in its environment to be alive. Language use and gross and especially fine motor skills are also developed at this stage.

The characteristics of creativity are not the same at all ages. With young children it is still mainly about observing and imitating others in order to gradually develop their own creative perspective, artistic identity and ownership. This is a broader developmental process than just an artistic or creative process (Vermeersch et al., 2018, p. 39). It is an interaction between the child's own aptitude, the child's overall development and targeted stimulation from the environment. Cultural education and participation are also social events, in which creativity is generally shared with others in interaction. This is also an important aspect in the development of young children.

Toddler (2-4 years) / First individuation phase (18-36 months)

The toddler period is a time in which the child develops rapidly, for example with regard to understanding and talking. The child understands his parents and caregivers better and better, and also tries to answer clearly, to tell something and to indicate his own wishes. In this phase, children start to play more with other children their age, sharing toys and making contact. Initially, this starts with noticing that there are others who also have their own thoughts and feelings, after which they gradually become more aware of what others feel or experience. The first movements arise to do something for each other or to become friends. At the age of four, children already respond more

clearly to each other and are more considerate of each other.

Children at this age want to become more and more independent and they practice their independence. This does not always work at this age and can lead to frustration and tantrums: the so-called 'toddler puberty'. In this phase it is still difficult to remember what is and is not allowed, so what is not allowed is often not done intentionally. There is no internal conscience yet, and therefore no feeling of guilt.

Only from the age of one and a half to two years can children respond meaningfully to the content of what they are offered, and from that age they can empathize with the main character in a story. This does require a storyline with a familiar setting, which contains repetition and is appealing. From the development of playing with reality and perception, children also like to act out stories that they may or may not have made up themselves.

To increase verbal skills in toddlers and preschoolers, visual work can be used, especially in one-on-one conversations between adult and child (Vermeersch et al., 2018, p. 24). There are various ways to guide such a conversation, but it is useful to make extensive use of language in visual (learning) activities with the young child. Children under the age of four will initially give literal descriptions of what they see and only secondarily talk about characteristics of what they see, such as the shape or color of the object.

Role-plays and puppet shows have also been found to have a clear impact on the speaking skills of young children (Williamson & Silvern, 1990). Further research has shown that verbal creativity in particular increases in toddlers and preschoolers, with more flexibility and originality (Garaigordobil & Berrueco, 2011). As a result, they are better able to switch from one topic to another during a conversation and are better able to maintain eye contact. It also makes it easier for them to approach topics from different points of view and come up with new and original things.

Only from the age of two to three the awareness develops that a certain activity or action can be represented by an image, and the use of symbols develops (Berk, 2010). Children start to make and use increasingly focused scribbles, and thus begin to use symbol and note-taking systems that can eventually lead to targeted drawing as well as to reading and writing. Reading stories together word for word, with parents or caregivers, is therefore also useful in learning to recognize letters and

words. According to Carothers and Gardner (1979), this is also the time to introduce young children to aesthetic viewing in its broad context, including the appreciation of art, contemplation and analysis of image composition, and a basis for a vocabulary to discuss art. Although this introduction can be done at a young age, we can only expect to be able to work with it more extensively around the age of six or seven.

Social-emotional development at this age and the preschool age is positively influenced by both musical and theatrical activities. Toddlers and preschoolers who participate in interactive music lessons in groups develop stronger empathy and become more social (Rabinovitch et al., 2013). They are more social in their play behavior and more inclined to work together. By engaging in music with others, young children learn to get a better idea of the emotional state of others and identify with them; they learn to form a better picture of the feelings and thoughts of other children and therefore learn to get along better.

Social skills are developed by dramatizing and theatrical play. At an early age, children develop their listening skills; they learn to set goals for themselves, empathize with others and cope with pressure from their environment (Çetingöz & Günhan, 2012). On the other hand, these skills also increase the quality of play. Social competences are further developed through dance, too (Lobo & Winsler, 2006).

In a world that is especially new to young children and which can seem intimidating to them, strengthening self-confidence and giving a sense of security and self-control can also be achieved by engaging in artistic activities. Through art, the young child is offered a safe context to explore the world and themselves psychologically and emotionally, and to exercise a certain degree of control over what they do and who they are (Essame, 2010).

Preschooler (4-6 years) / First identification phase (3-7 years)

A toddler is still very dependent on the presence of others important to him to behave, and the temptation is sometimes too great not to behave if there is no adult around. As a toddler, a child becomes more and more an independent person and develops autobiographical memory from the age of four. It takes the initiative to undertake and discover activities. It dares to be active towards others, to participate in activities and to think

about how they want to play together with other children. The child also dares to stand up for themselves.

In this phase, the child develops awareness of rules and agreements as well and is increasingly able to adhere to them, even without direct supervision. This sets in motion the development of conscience, in which the child becomes aware of what is good or bad, and learns feelings of regret, guilt and shame. The sense of right or wrong is still poorly nuanced and the consequences of behavior are still insufficiently overseen. This also applies to the awareness of and feeling of other people's emotions. A toddler has little or no insight into what actions mean to the other person and what feelings or emotions that other person may have in the process. It is not until about six years of age that this ability is present and then develops further.

The toddler increasingly mirrors important adults who become role models. This also includes increasingly connecting to their gender role as a boy or girl. At the same time, a toddler has the feeling of being omnipotent and able to take on the world independently. They want to do more and more themselves, such as dressing, eating, and helping with everyday things that their role models are involved in, such as activities in the household. Thinking and doing often go hand in hand. Gradually, they learn to do tasks better, including at school, and they are a little better able to concentrate and work together.

Preschoolers interact with adults mainly through language and play, for example by constantly asking the 'why?' question. This has partly to do with actually wanting to know why something is the way it is, but also partly with making contact. They discover that asking questions leads to answers and conversation. Preschoolers like to play games with clear rules, and playing and learning are often intertwined.

Fantasy and reality are still easily mixed and fantasy is readily perceived as real. The ability to distinguish between these two develops over the years through experience and thinking skills. In dealing with material and also in language, creativity and imagination become increasingly clear.

The development of autobiographical memory has a major impact on cultural (self) awareness, because the child starts to think about what he has done and experienced, but also about who he is. In the beginning, the self-image is still limited and fragmentary, but this gradually becomes more complex. The child not only looks at himself, but also at

his (cultural) environment and reflects on it (Van Dorsten, 2015). This reflection is not tied to a particular art form, which makes it easy for children to move between the different disciplines. As a result, they often do not experience the difference between them. This could be called interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary play and learning, in which not only the children but also their parents can be included. This movement between and combination of artistic disciplines can be meaningful and useful for teachers as well (Harris, 2000).

Even without specific training, preschoolers have already developed a certain sensitivity to stylistic or aesthetic characteristics of what they see, such as color, form and content that are distinguished and appreciated or not. In part, the interpretation of images and observations has taken place spontaneously, but this is also partly an educational process, in which the child is guided and included, and in which it can thus be further trained and developed (Freedman, 2013).

In the case of four to six-year-olds there seems to be a link between visual arts education, such as drawing lessons, and geometric and visual-spatial thinking. Spatial visualization is stimulated in both (Vermeersch et al., 2018, p. 24). In addition, combining visual education, as well as other art education, with lessons in reading and writing is often useful for young children (Phillips et al., 2010).

No link has been found between reading skills and music lessons, but the relationship between preschoolers who take music lessons and their verbal skills, their vocabulary and their verbal memory is evident (Vermeersch et al. 2018, p. 29). Improvising with theatre, such as creating situations and acting out storylines, also improves children's ability to understand, retell and reenact stories. Especially in the area of speaking skills, preschoolers develop better as a result (p. 26). By making intensive use of narrative theatre, children also seem to be better able to learn to read new texts. And in dance, too, there is a relationship between movements in preparation for reading. Think of depicting letters and words, or moving to a certain rhyme scheme. Dancing thus makes a positive contribution to reading.

To learn music, children must understand and be able to use complex structures and patterns, among other things. Many characteristics of learning music therefore show similarities to other forms of thinking, and stimulate the same neural networks and cognitive functions. When children learn music at an early age, they will also be stimulated to apply other thinking tasks and math skills (pp. 28-29). The ability to visualize

spatial patterns and to be able to turn or change them mentally or not is also clearly stimulated by working with music at a young age. Finally, combining music with motor and physical activities enhances toddler development in this area (Brown et al., 1981).

3.3   The concrete operational phase (7-12 years)

Between the ages of seven and twelve, most children are in school and are increasingly discovering the world. They become more aware of and interested in the world around them and form their own opinions about it. Gradually, more demands are made on them and they acquire skills that make their environment more accessible to them. They learn to read, write and count better, and are constantly offered new material at school. In daily life, the world outside school also becomes more familiar, such as spare time, money, digital resources and the immediate living environment.

Children increasingly gain self-confidence and self-esteem. When children have a sufficient sense of self-esteem, they can more easily connect with other children, also because a child becomes more sensitive to the opinions of others, both peers and adults. Children who are insecure about themselves and how things work have more difficulty mastering new learning materials and situations. The relationship with peers becomes more important and stronger and friendships develop. For good social and emotional development, these friendships with peers are very important.

Children think more and more about what they do and before they do something and they gain better control over their emotions and behavior. They become less impulsive and are able to understand that a process can also be reversed in the mind. Social rules are also learned in this phase; the child progressively learns more responsibility and cooperation. In groups, such as in the classroom, children learn to adapt to each other and to the group rules, to negotiate, to have differences of opinion and to enter into and resolve conflicts with each other.

The difference between fantasy and reality becomes increasingly clear, and children develop their logic. For example, the relationship between time, distance and speed becomes clear. Fantasy games become less and less intensive and when material is handled, reality is mainly imitated.

Language also focuses on the reality around them. At the same time, creativity is also developing, but simultaneously we see they attach increasing importance to productivity. Children can focus on several aspects at the same time and also play more associatively, which means that they are more likely to borrow or use elements or materials that they see being used by peers. As children get older, they play more cooperatively, often with the aim of achieving something together.

Children become more competitive, both socially and in terms of physical performance. This too plays an increasing role in dealing with adults, for example in the comparison that children make between the parents and the teacher.

Between the ages of five and ten, children learn to read independently. First, they learn to recognize sounds and letters, then to read words and simple sentences. Gradually they learn to read faster and gradually understand more what is being read. Early exposure to a rich literate environment, such as the presence of children's books, seeing other family members reading, or reading (picture) books together, ensures better literacy, and especially better vocabulary and phonetic awareness. This also leads to more interest in reading in general and better cognitive performance (Vermeersch et al., 2018, p. 36). Children of parents who have more cultural resources, such as books, works of art, musical instruments, are also more likely to go to places where cultural participation is possible and they thus receive more of it in their broad development (Mudiappa & Kluczniok, 2015).

Like toddlers and preschoolers, older children benefit from developing their language skills when they are engaged in drama and theatre. Creative theatre forms and acting techniques can stimulate other forms of creativity as well, such as visual arts and general creativity. A similar connection exists between dance education and creativity (Vermeersch et al., 2018, p. 27).

At this age, the school environment, the curriculum used by the school and the educational approach are an important part of the way in which children come into contact with the world around them and the place and role that arts and culture have in it. Of course, family and home circumstances still play a major role, as was the case in early childhood. In 2000, Burton, Horowitz and Abeles clarified in two diagrams the factors that can play a role in cultural education at school and their possible effects.

Conditions for teaching and learning for cultural education		
Entire school	*Class and teacher*	*Student*
• School climate • Administrative support for art subjects • Staff development • Coordination between teachers • Coordination and cooperation with external providers • Type and extent of art forms offered	• Collaboration with art specialists • Collaboration with external providers • Background and skills of the teacher • Degree of integration of art subjects	• Extracurricular art experiences • Intra-school offer

Possible effects of cultural education		
Cognitive	*Socio-cultural*	*Personal development*
• Expression of ideas • Layered relationships • Imagining new possibilities • Considering multiple starting points	• Cooperative learning • School climate	• Taking risks • Self-confidence • Self-esteem • Skill

These effects play a role in the child's learning and development in many different ways, and can therefore also influence the overall development, broad school performance, or performance in other learning areas. The publication Art for Art's Sake? (Winner et al., 2013, pp. 137-138), identifies four possible more general cognitive skills and two more

general learning and working styles on the basis of visual arts education that emerge from cultural education and which can be used more widely:

More broadly applicable outcomes of cultural education	
Cognitive skills	**Learning and working styles**
• Imagination/mental imagination	• Being involved and persevering/ motivation
• Ability to express yourself/personal vision	• Broadening and researching/ creative view
• Perceptual ability	
• Reflective ability / metacognition / critical appreciation	

In this stage of development, which largely coincides with the primary school period, the child's focus changes from itself to the other, to the relationship with the other. From a social-emotional point of view, it is therefore important that the child is given the space to discover, further develop and practice this aspect in all kinds of situations. Cultural education has a positive influence on several social-emotional skills. Research by Nevanen et al. (2014) showed that students gained more self-confidence and were better able to work together and deal with differences. Skills that are more related to performance at school, such as motivation (pleasure in learning new skills), success experiences, and presentation skills are similarly stimulated by cultural education.

Theatre and drama are also explicitly mentioned in various studies (Winner et al., 2013) when it comes to social-emotional development. In particular, an increase in empathy and interaction with one another are mentioned, in addition to better listening and speaking. It is expected that this is because children have to delve into the behavior and motivations of a (fictional) other person when playing a role. On top of that, portraying a character requires mastery and clear expression of various emotions. In addition, there is research showing that music contributes to the empathy of children. In the classroom of children who received music, there was a more positive climate, children judged each other more positively and fewer children were socially isolated.

Theatre and drama are also regularly used to combat bullying in the classroom. This proves effective when lessons focus not only on cognitive, but also on social and psycho-emotional learning by ensuring collaborative and inquiry-based learning. Such a setup creates better acceptance of each other and more mutual trust (Mavroudis & Bournelli, 2016). Other research (Comerford Boyes & Reid, 2005) confirms the view that art education leads to an improved self-image and more self-confidence, better motivation and a more positive attitude towards each other.

Teachers confirm this image and especially appreciate the possibilities of using theatre to draw attention to sensitive topics, different emotions, and certain behavior such as bullying, without immediately evoking shame or resistance in pupils (Brouillette, 2010). In addition, working with roles and scenes helped to try out reactions and interactions that had already been worked out in advance and to weigh different possible reactions against each other. In this respect, the teachers valued activities in the field of theatre and dance better than visual or musical activities, because the latter did not stimulate social interaction between pupils as much. Then it would depend more on the method of education than on the specific discipline. Other research shows that participation in music education provides a better sense of well-being and interconnectedness and better engagement in learning (Crawford, 2017).

A more positive attitude towards each other, and more empathy with the emotions and motivations of the other, are needed to be more open and to appreciate other people's views and beliefs. According to Houser (2005), this is an important condition for understanding both the social and overall complexity of society and for participating in our multicultural democracy. Cultural education, including heritage education, can therefore be used to develop critical awareness, and also to address more general topics from the past and present. In this way, it fits well in primary education with the learning area orientation to self and the world, but also with the learning area citizenship.

With regard to the specific school environment, integrating arts into the school environment can support learning in several ways (Lynch, 2007). For example, arts education requires children to take more responsibility for their own learning process, and by using arts and culture, a broader appeal is made to the child's abilities and commitment than just intellectual skills. Children can therefore become more emotionally and physically involved in the learning process. Other skills that emerge as an effect of cultural education in education are project creation and process

design, the ability to concentrate, develop new skills and practice. Children develop the ability to work in a goal-oriented and focused way and develop their problem-solving skills (Nevanen et al., 2014).

This way children get more inclusive experiences, where everyone can feel invited to participate in the learning process. Even the students who would otherwise find it difficult to keep up can get success experiences, in a different way and in a different area, and thus become more confident. On the other hand, art education ensures that children who are already strong(er) in linguistic ways of expressing themselves are stimulated to use other forms of communication such as images, music, sounds, or movements. In this manner children learn to think about how they can best convey what they know and can do. And this in turn has a positive effect on motivation and future learning for both groups of children.

Because of the strong emphasis on language and math in primary education today, specific attention is paid here to the relationship between cultural education with language, reading and math. In 2016, Maastricht University brought together a number of studies in this area for SIEN (De Jong & Vierenhalm, 2016, pp. 22-28). The effects found are partly related to the motivation to work with language or reading, whether or not in connection with the stories that are discussed in theatre education, for example. This ties in well with the conclusion of the Sardes report on the possible connection between reading and cultural education, in which stories play a central role (Broekhof et al., 2023). Working with stories also provides more understanding when children start working with new stories. Theatre too can be used to strengthen verbal expression skills.

Dance can be used very specifically to depict letters and sounds using the body and movement, thus enhancing language skills. This specific application (McMahon et al., 2003) did indeed improve the reading skills of lower-performing readers, as did their understanding of vowels, consonants and their associated sounds. However, this is a very specific application of dance.

For visual arts, the relationship with language and reading lies mainly on the connection with the motivation to read, the willingness to read. According to Burger and Winner (2000), it is possible that children become more motivated to read when art instruction and reading instruction go together, provided that the activities appeal to them. However, such a connection could also occur with other art disciplines or would not even have to be related to cultural education at all.

Music has a positive effect on reading skills, but also on other achievements in the field of language, reading and math (Winner et al., 2013, pp. 85-119). For example, there is a link between IQ and learning performance and taking classical music lessons. Although this relationship is not precisely indicated, it is assumed that this may be due to elements of music education such as intensive and daily training, memorization, repetition and reading notes. If these aspects can be found in the lessons in another art discipline, this could also apply to another art form. The better development of phonological awareness is consistent with what we saw earlier in the first adaptation phase (0-6 months). This awareness is linked to the decoding of words, and to the development and use of listening skills, just like in music education. Furthermore, music lessons stimulate the development of vocabulary and non-verbal reasoning.

As far as cultural education and math are concerned, there are fewer connections to be made; in that respect the relationship between music lessons and spatial insight is mentioned more often (De Jong & Vierenhalm, 2016, p. 22). Working with visual art also has a connection with the development of spatial insight, as we have already seen in the four- to six-year-olds (Vermeersch et al, 2018, p. 24). There is likewise a connection between music and math performance, although this is a modest relationship (Vaughn, 2000).

In a comprehensive study on the current state of cultural education within primary education Haanstra et al. examined what is known about factors that influence learning performance within the learning area of artistic orientation (Haanstra et al., 2022). This study focuses on strengthening the quality of cultural education and the development of skills and competences of four- to twelve-year-olds in the field of the various art disciplines (music, dance, visual arts, theatre) and on the themes of interdisciplinarity, cooperation with the cultural environment and creativity. The study is less focused on the effects on social-emotional development, although this cannot always be seen separately from cultural education.

3.4 The formal operational phase (from the age of 12)

The last phase that Piaget distinguishes is the formal operational phase, in which thinking becomes more abstract and increasingly detached

from the concrete. Children learn to think and reason logically more and better by making connections between different things and drawing their own conclusions from them. At the end of this period, young people and adolescents also learn to plan better, to oversee the consequences of their actions and to take responsibility for them. This development continues until about the mid-twenties.

In this phase NJi distinguishes two different developmental phases: the teenager (10-16 years) and the adolescent (16+) (NJi, s.d.-a). Following Jolles (2017), we refer to early and middle adolescence (10-16 years) and late adolescence (16 years and older). Puberty only has to do with physical and sexual development, while here we mainly want to focus on cognitive and social-emotional development, broad development, behavior and experience of the growing adolescent. Adolescence also extends over a longer period of time, namely from 10 to about 25 years, while puberty is much shorter. Jolles speaks of adolescence as a completely separate phase, both physically in terms of brain maturation and physical growth and in psychological, cognitive and social development (Jolles, 2017, p. 84). Adolescence can be divided into early adolescence, which lasts from about 10 to 14 years, middle adolescence from 14 to about 16 years, and late adolescence from 16 to about 25 years. These age limits are not fixed, but the order of brain development is. All kinds of variations in development are therefore possible.

Early and middle adolescence (10-16 years)

OBy the age of ten, motor, perception, and language skills are already considerably developed, as are memory and cognitive skills. As a result, a child at that age can already manage quite well in a protected and familiar home environment. In early adolescence, puberty and brain maturation cause children to be more emotional and sensitive. They are mainly focused on the immediate satisfaction of their needs. In this phase, abstract and logical thinking together with reasoning develop well.

However, more complex matters and prioritization are still difficult at this stage, and an early adolescent is easily and quickly distracted because the brain still has difficulty suppressing irrelevant information. The early adolescent also has a lack of self-insight and mainly benefits from positive feedback, stimulation and guidance. The different emotions are also much more extreme than in adults and alternate rapidly.

Furthermore, recognizing these different emotions is not yet going well and they have great difficulty in estimating the intentions of others.

In this phase, social norms become more important and the focus is more on acquiring a place within a certain social group. The authority of parents is no longer blindly accepted. In early adolescence, teenagers are not yet able to empathize with the (far-reaching) consequences of their behavior and are hardly open to the feelings of their peers.

In the ages of 14 to 16 or 17 years, planning and oversight of more complex activities develop, although the short-term option is still mainly chosen. A somewhat longer-term planning such as a week, month or year ahead is still difficult. Filtering information is also still difficult, although planning is already getting a bit better. Long-term consequences are not yet well understood, and action takes precedence over thinking, emotion over self-control. Rational knowledge does not yet seem to be properly linked to emotions. Teenagers in the middle adolescent stage are extremely sensitive to rewards and feelings in various areas and are prone to taking many risks without paying attention to the consequences of the behavior.

At this stage, there is a greater chance of problems with controlling one's own behavior and with mood regulation. Also, the emotional value of peer contact has increased enormously and a lot of value is attached to the relationship with them. The teenager begins to wonder what his or her peers think. In this phase, there is also a lot of attention for one's own body image, which is constantly changing under the influence of puberty. This is not only about how the teenager experiences this personally, but even more about how the peer group reacts to it, or how he or she thinks the peer group might react. Thus the body image is subjective. The approval of one's own group is central and much of the actions of teenagers are in line with the applicable social rules and laws. They adapt their behavior and opinions to be in line with their peer group. At the same time, teenagers in this phase develop skills to resist social pressure and to determine their own position. It is only in late adolescence that most teenagers actually start experimenting with going their own way.

Most mid-adolescents are not yet sufficiently skilled in independent planning and prioritizing, or in thinking from cause and effect. For this, the teenager still needs real guidance from an adult, especially to challenge him or her to think about this and to develop. It is only around the age of 22 that the choice process is usually well developed and the

young adult is able to make choices and consider the consequences and associated social norms and social developments.

The importance of mutual interaction with peers and alignment with internal values and norms is clearly apparent when it comes to singing in a choir (Ashley, 2002). Singing together offers several positive aspects for well-being, such as reducing stress and experiencing positive feelings. Singing also creates a positive self-image. Sharing music from everyone's own cultural background ensures more social inclusion and recognition for one's own culture, and a certain degree of belonging (Crawford, 2019). Participation in music education among teenagers aged 14 and older has also been shown to make them less likely to become involved in conflicts and to have a better quality of life (Gómez-Zapata et al., 2020). An important condition for affecting personal and social development, in addition to high-quality music lessons, is the degree of success that teenagers experience and the positive experience in the long term (Hallam, 2010).

Theatre activities likewise improve the development of teenagers on a personal and social level, but also in relation to their aesthetic and cultural development (Donelan, 2010). By taking theatre lessons, combined with writing and drawing, teenagers can grow in their personal and social skills and work better in groups. This also ensures a further development of their self-esteem, greater confidence in their own skills and knowledge and better problem-solving and metacognition (Catterall, 2007).

As teenagers are more sensitive to rewards than to punishments, the impact of cultural education can be strengthened by paying attention to pleasurable and rewarding experiences (Jolles, 2017, p. 99). Such an approach seems to promote the creative process during visual lessons, coupled with explicit instructions to learn to think differently, to think divergently. The students were not only confronted with a productive and receptive practice of visual art, but also with thinking about their own thinking (metacognition) (Van de Kamp et al., 2015).

Late adolescent (16 years and older)

De The late adolescent already knows better what his strengths and weaknesses are, and how he or she should deal with them. However, they

do not yet know how to use these insights properly and in an integrated way. During this period, the teenager develops increasingly complex behavior in which he or she also has a better understanding of the social and emotional consequences and the long-term effects. They gain increasing control over their own doings and are better able to plan and evaluate things. When making choices, feelings often still dominate over what is sensible, although the late adolescent becomes less impulsive. Peer influence is still very strong, although it is also becoming easier to resist social pressure if they really do not agree with a certain situation or decision. In this phase, gaining experience in assessing and deciding is very important; skills in choosing and deciding are undergoing a major development. It is important at this stage that the adolescent is stimulated not only to gain experiences, but also to evaluate them (Jolles, 2017, pp. 109-111).

Cultural education contributes to the development of confidence in one's own skills and possibilities, in addition to an increasing appreciation of art and culture itself (Lord, 2007). In addition, affective effects were also mentioned most often as a result of the use of cultural education among teenagers. This includes feelings like pleasure, pride and a sense of accomplishment. Social development, such as awareness of others and cooperation within a group, also emerged as effects. Finally, a transfer is visible of cultural education to more generic skills and attitudes for living and learning at and outside school, and focused on future life and work. This can relate to more general aspects such as emotional intelligence and self-expression (Winner & Hetland, 2001), but also to strengthening of social skills and knowledge and skills to better work with others (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005).

At this age, cultural education can be used to work on self-image and to strengthen confidence in one's own abilities, for example, in the use of theatre activities to reduce fear of failure for mathematics lessons (Allern et al., 2022). This is in line with the more general picture of support for developing self-confidence and self-esteem as a general effect (Catterall et al., 2012). By actively engaging young people in artistic activities, they may experience more success, which in turn ensures pride in what has been achieved and an increasing self-esteem. Greater self-esteem and a sense of accomplishment, in turn, contribute to building a positive self-image.

Art and culture enable young people to explore and try out complex emotions and thoughts in a safe environment, which improves their ability to understand and express their own feelings and those of others

(Hetland et al., 2007). By working on imagination and creativity, cognitive flexibility is also stimulated and the development of other perspectives to arrive at solutions.

Through forms of cultural education that connect with the perception of adolescents, it can help shape the experience and expression of one's own identity. For example, hip-hop can play a role in processing problematic situations from the past, both socially and personally (Gitonga & Delport, 2015). Dance education can contribute to a more realistic physical self-image of young women, rather than the images edited by photoshop that are shown in the media and advertising (Nativ, 2015).

3.5   Conclusion

Cultural education can make an important contribution to the development of children and young people, from birth to adulthood. First and foremost, it contributes significantly to gaining knowledge of and experience with arts and culture itself, as a part of daily social life and as a special feature in places where art and culture can be experienced. But it also makes an important contribution to the more general development in the field of social-emotional and personal development. This is done in a different way and with a different effect for each developmental phase, so it is important to ensure that the cultural experiences offered are well suited to the stage of development, if only to guarantee that the cultural experience can be experienced and undergone by the young cultural participant.

From its contribution to general development, cultural education also has an effect on other learning areas, although there is by no means always the direct transfer effect that is often sought after (Hoogeveen & Waaijer, 2022). In general, this is related to overlapping areas that a participant develops both through participation in cultural education and through another learning area, for example because the same organ is used (think of phonological development in music and language) or the same brain area, such as in the development of spatial awareness.

Part 2
Vision and
issues
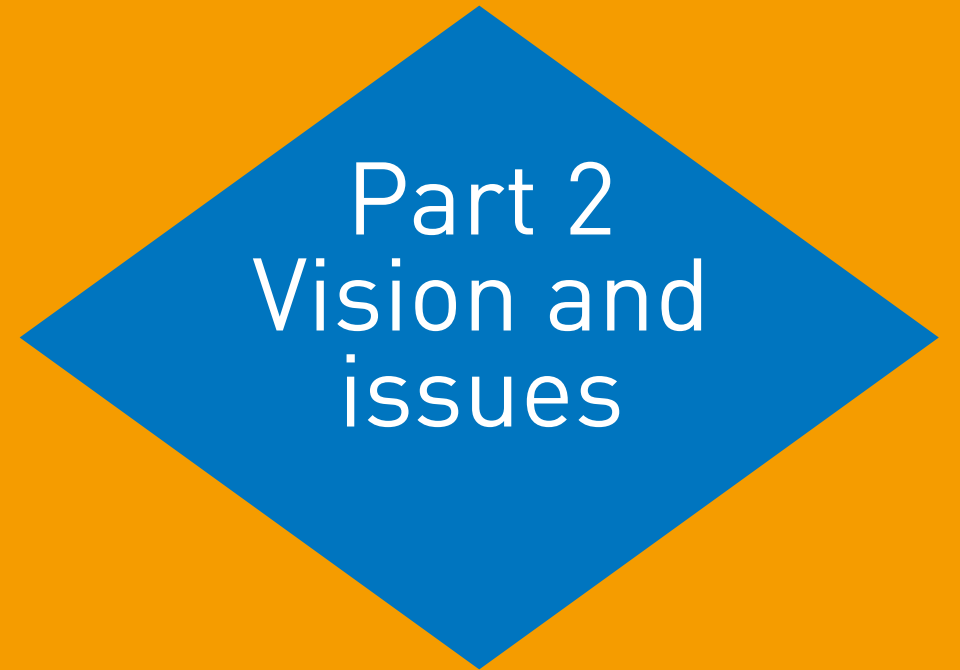
A different learning environment for cultural education

Art and culture are an integral part of any community. Knowledge and skills in this area are required in various ways for full participation in society. Therefore it is necessary for children and adolescents to develop well in this area. This means that all children and young people must have access to an adequate offer and adequate guidance in cultural education, both in the home situation, in the immediate vicinity, in childcare, and at school. In this chapter, we outline what we believe to be the ideal infrastructure for cultural education and its content.

Childcare and school play an important role in the social responsibility for the full growth of children to become participating adults in their own communities, at work and in society in general. Government policy and associated interventions can have a direct influence on the course of activities in these places, such as the revision of the curriculum, the (financial) accessibility of childcare, and out-of-school cultural education. Within the family, there is much less direct influence on the course of events and it consists mainly of information and encouragement. Nevertheless, this role and the possibilities within the family situation must also be carefully considered.

With regard to school and childcare, we limit ourselves here to the pre-school period, primary and secondary education and general education within secondary vocational education. With this limitation, we focus roughly on the age of zero to about eighteen years, from birth to about halfway late adolescence.

4.1 The curriculum

When we speak about the curriculum at school, we often only think about the subject content. However, a curriculum has more aspects, which Van den Akker (2003) has brought together in a clear way in a spider web diagram (SLO, 2024). In addition to the ten aspects that emerge in this spider web, we must take into account that the curriculum exists at different levels and has impact on all of these levels. At the macro level, we are dealing with the national education system, at the meso level with the situation at school, and at the micro level with what happens in the classroom in the interaction between teacher and student. In The Netherlands, this means that we have to deal with the core objectives at the macro level, with the school policy plan at the meso level, and with the education plan and/or method at the micro level. To be able to describe a different learning environment, we will sometimes have to include all three levels, although the emphasis here is on the macro level.
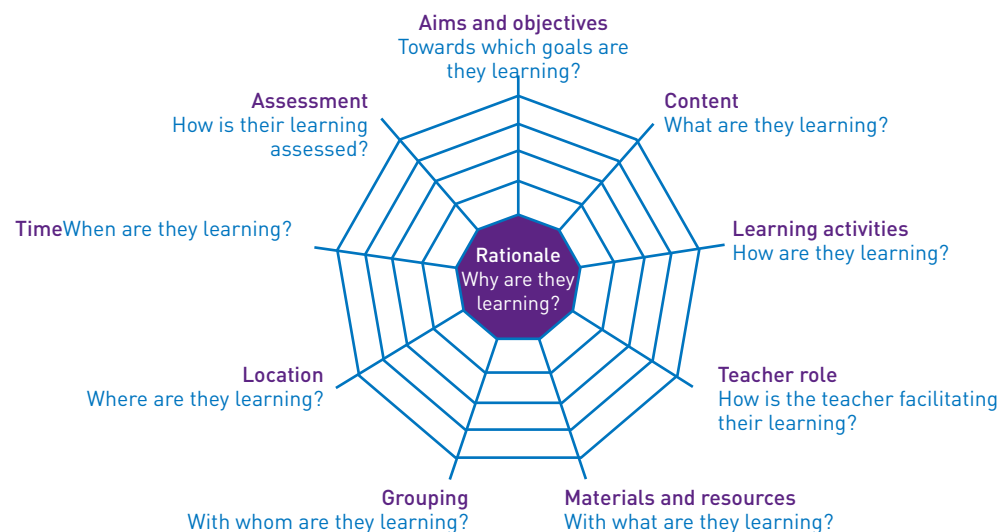

Figure 1: Curricular spiderweb (van den Akker, 2003)

The ten elements of the curricular spider web provide a good basis for the description of a new and different learning environment. We elaborate on these below.

4.2 Rationale

The rationale forms the core of the curriculum and focuses on why children should be educated. At the national level, the emphasis has already been placed in a general sense on the broad development of the child in order to be able to participate fully in society in all its facets. In this regard, three elements are mentioned: qualification, socialization, and personal development (Biesta, 2017b). However, these elements are far from balanced in current education and in recent years we have seen an increasing emphasis on qualification and even talk about basic skills (reading, writing, numeracy, citizenship, digital literacy (Wiersma, 2022b) indicating that other areas of learning are considered less important. In some schools, this reinforces the idea that more effort in the field of cultural education leads to poorer school results, rather than cultural education having a reinforcing effect (BBC News 2018).

However, the role and importance of art and culture in the life of the child turning into an adult may not go unexploited. Art and culture and its history not only teach children a wide range of emotions and expressions, but also enable them to discover and understand themselves, their environment, society and the world. In today's (culturally) diverse world and society, it is important that children learn to know themselves and their own culture, but also the other and their culture. Art and culture, as Biesta also argues, have unique existential qualities, both in terms of dealing with the world around us materially and socially, as well as in which way can be dealt with resistance and overcome it (Biesta 2017a, pp. 122-123). In doing so, you also work on the desires that a person has with regard to the world and their existence in that world. This is not only an intellectual exercise, but also requires commitment and effort with heart and hands: a dialogue with the world.

At present, the extent to which children are given the chances and opportunities to make use of art and culture appropriate to their developmental stage, and to benefit from this for their development, depends very much on the home situation. It is only at the age of four that there is more structure because they go to school, but then the child is again dependent on the school situation. As a child grows older, there is an increasing dependence on the possibilities in the (immediate) environment. Unfortunately, we have to admit that for some children it is an accumulation of poor facilities when neither the parents, nor the childcare, nor the school, nor the environment provide sufficient and enriching opportunities.

In our view, facilities to benefit from arts and culture from birth, both from the guidance of parents, childcare, school and the environment, must therefore be available. There must be a continuous approach, appropriate to the developmental stage of the child, from zero to eighteen years of age, coherent and integrated, within a culturally rich environment. Only in this way can all parents be supported in providing a wide and rich palette of artistic and cultural opportunities.

4.3   Aim and objectives

The learning objectives describe what children are offered, what they need to know, and what they need to be able to do. In this respect, we would like to agree with what was indicated by the Art and Culture development team in their 2019 advice in the context of Curriculum. nu (Ontwikkelteam Kunst & Cultuur Curriculum.nu, 2019). In a coherent whole, children must be enabled to develop their artistic-creative ability, learn to make art and culture, learn to experience and learn to give meaning to both making and experiencing it.

The artistic ability focuses on the imagination or sounding of experiences, feelings, thoughts and ideas in an artistic expression, using matching techniques and artistic skills. The creative ability refers to an iterative process in which children learn to apply creative making and thinking strategies that are characteristic of art and culture. For example, diverging and converging, playing, fantasizing, empathizing, experimenting. In this process, children have to deal with learning to persevere and show courage, to fail and to deal with it, to feel discomfort but also to celebrate successes.

4.4   Content

The learning content is broadly defined by the main topics described in the above-mentioned proposal under Curriculum.nu (Ontwikkelteam Kunst & Cultuur Curriculum.nu, 2019). There is also a more specific elaboration to be found in the eight so-called Great Assignments:

1. Artistic-creative ability (making and thinking strategies);

2. Artistic expression;

3. Artistic techniques and skills;

4. Artistic innovation;

5. Artistic and cultural-historical contexts;

6. Purposes of the arts;

7. Experiencing the arts;

8. Showing and sharing your own work.

At a young age, we believe that a broader approach to the arts and culture is desirable, so as to gradually offer more and more separate disciplines in a targeted manner. The terms 'artistic orientation' and 'musical education' as they are used for the learning areas in the Netherlands and Flanders respectively should be understood here in their full breadth and not as a loose collection of disciplines.

In the period from birth to the concrete operational phase, this broad development is central, which involves sound, color, form and more of the general aspects of art and culture. In the concrete operational phase, between the ages of seven and twelve, the various disciplines can be gradually introduced, together with the corresponding professional skills and activities.

In this first period of development, the foundations are laid and cultural education focuses mainly on getting acquainted with and acquiring basic skills in the various art disciplines and expressions. This is done by starting from a broad formation in cultural education and thus contributing to general education, to *Bildung*, and the acquisition of various skills. This foundation is supported by two general pillars:

- A thorough introduction to the artistic-creative process, the common part of all art disciplines; ;

- A comprehensive introduction to the various art disciplines in which basic skills in different disciplines are acquired. This introduction enables children to choose to deepen their knowledge of one or more disciplines. In this way, they learn to discover and further develop their interests and talents at an early age.

In addition, we believe that children at this age should be enabled to work specifically with one or more art disciplines, because of aptitude, interest, or from a broader education.

In the formal operational phase, the focus is gradually on specific disciplines that appeal to the adolescent, while attention to other disciplines and perspectives is maintained in a more general cultural education. In early adolescence, the line of development from the first period continues. Central to the development of the artistic-creative process is the further deepening and elaboration in a limited number of disciplines. During this period, young adolescents can explore and experience what their possibilities are in different disciplines and how they want to shape them. This allows them to make an informed choice about the role that art and culture will play in their lives. For those who have already started with a certain discipline at an earlier stage, this is often a period of reorientation, often in combination with the transition to secondary education. It is important to give attention and space to this reconsideration from the perspective of the art discipline as well.

In our view, the period of middle and late adolescence revolves around deepening and specializing in the art disciplines and cultural heritage. It is important to offer separate disciplines, with the possibility of concluding them with an exam at school. This applies both to current disciplines (drawing, visual arts, music, dance and theatre) and to new disciplines, such as media and film. Cultural heritage also has a fully-fledged place in this.

Because art and culture are everywhere and are intertwined with all kinds of facets of society, cultural education also lends itself well to connecting with other (knowledge) domains and development areas. In addition to learning in and about art and culture, there is also learning through art and culture, in which elements of cultural education can be used to strengthen, inspire and support other areas. The coherence with other learning areas can be sought in the coordination of two or more components, such as language and music (Broekhof & Hoogeveen, 2020), or cultural education and the promotion of reading (Broekhof et al., 2023). The connection with citizenship (Crone, 2021) or the more technical elements, think of STEM – STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) or Maker education (Neele et al., 2019) is also easy to make, as is with digital skills and history or social studies (Neele et al., 2020).

4.5   Learning activities

Learning activities outline the way in which learning takes place. In cultural education, the emphasis is more on the process of achieving a result rather than on the end result itself. In addition, it is about being actively engaging with art and culture and giving meaning to it, as well as experiencing the activities of others, both peers, amateurs and professionals.

This means that the learning activities consist partly of acquiring skills and techniques, designing and performing, and partly of visiting historical or current cultural expressions, interacting with cultural professionals and learning and reflecting on art and culture from the past and present. In addition, it is important that art and culture are also put in context, in the functions they may have and in the relationships with other subjects, society and the world. Integrating subjects and subject or learning areas into projects or themes enables children to understand the connection between different subjects and society. A proper integration of disciplines also requires a sufficient basis in the individual areas and a good alignment of learning objectives and content.

Because not every school or learning environment is able to offer all art disciplines in the current situation, scaling and collaboration will be necessary. Enlargement of scale does not equate to large-scale complexes; it can also be found in physically bringing together smaller

units with communal facilities or virtually bundling these units with good transport to the communal facilities.

With respect to offering all disciplines as exam subjects in a region, schools can work together in the offer of their exam subjects, so that a total range of cultural subjects is accessible in each region. For less chosen exam subjects, pupils from different schools can be brought together in order to achieve a sufficient group size. In this way, young people have the opportunity to take exams at a high level in the subjects they want to follow, also from a practical point of view. A cultural subject as an examination subject contributes to the preparation for future professions or studies, whether in an art subject or not.

4.6   Teacher role

Good cultural education requires teachers who are adequately trained. This requires an appropriate set of knowledge and skills, both in the field of culture and the general positioning of culture, as well as in the field of pedagogy and didactics. On the one hand, this argues for the use of art teachers trained in pedagogy and didactics in their discipline, aimed at a certain stage of development of children. On the other hand, general teachers and pedagogical staff must have sufficient affinity and training in the cultural field. This means that they can make the connection with culture in subjects, projects and thematic work, and that they can achieve good cooperation with subject teachers. The question is whether they should be trained to teach the art subjects themselves, or whether they should gain experience and knowledge in their education to recognize the value of art and culture and the connection of art and culture to children's broad development and other learning goals.

When teacher, pedagogical staff member and art subject teacher work together in good interplay, they are able to work with (elements of) art and culture in relation to different subjects and themes. Research in this area shows that the teacher and art teacher have to find a balance between the challenge for the students, their own knowledge and skills, and the school culture (Van Meerkerk, z.d.). The teacher or pedagogical staff member takes care of the big picture and integration, the subject teacher takes care of the art- and culture-specific line and content. Good coordination in the classroom, the school and in cooperation with the immediate surroundings of the school is indispensable, for example in

the form of an in-school cultural coordinator in collaboration with an extracurricular counterpart.

The changing role and position of knowledge and skills in our society requires a different role of teachers. They change from 'knowledge carrier' to 'knowledge gateway': they guide their students in finding and interpreting the right knowledge and information. This does not mean that the knowledge and skills of the teacher in a subject area are less necessary, but rather focuses on how they transfer this knowledge and skills. Thematic and project-based education gives students room for self-direction and personality development. Teachers fulfil the role of supervisor and coach. It is important that they guide their students well and provide a stimulating learning environment with room for experimentation. The artistic-creative research and process, and the cultural-historical context can play a more emphatic role in this.

4.7   Materials and resources

Art and culture have many forms of expression and presentation. The material used, whether it is the body itself, an instrument, device or tangible material, is crucial for the proper development and application of art and culture. This means that the facilities must also be designed for these forms, such as studios, stages, and rehearsal rooms. A good and broad introduction to and application of cultural education does not ask for a choice or to use a slimmed-down form, but needs a broad and well-equipped supply.

In addition, professional expressions and experiences should be seen as a source for children's development in the field of art and culture. Therefore, there must be space and opportunity to meet arts professionals, either in the professional's own environment or in the learning environment of the child or adolescent, at school or daycare. To make this possible, many of the current schools and childcare facilities are too small. As with learning activities, scaling up therefore makes sense.

4.8 Grouping

Although all children and adolescents go through the different stages of development, this does not happen according to a strict schedule linked to a specific age or order. If we want to adopt to the developmental stage a child is in, it is not possible to form groups purely on the basis of their age. Also, not every child will have the same affinity or aptitude with certain forms of art and culture, and will therefore develop faster or less quickly in this area.

In order to stimulate children, it is important to match with their level of development in the field of art and culture in a general sense or with a specific discipline. Because art and culture are focused on communication and (groups from) society, it is important to form groups of equal levels of development. This allows children to learn from and with each other, something that is important from an early age. Individual instruction is then in the service of maintaining the connection of the individual in a group or of promoting the development of the group. This may mean that a child who is lagging behind receives extra attention to stay connected or to make a switch to another developmental group. But that can just as well apply to a child who has a leading role in a group: by giving him or her the space to shape rapid development and possibly move to another group.

Due to the nature of the different disciplines and the way in which skills are taught, group sizes vary to suit the chosen activities and disciplines. From the perspective of feasibility and affordability, it will be necessary to look for an optimum in which the various interests are properly weighed against each other. As with learning activities, upscaling makes sense here, also in order to be able to put together sufficiently large groups of the same level of development.

In addition, it is important that children take note of each other's expressions and process, and that they are enabled to present to each other. This can be done both within their own development groups, but also within other development groups. For groups that are less advanced, this can be stimulating, for groups that are already further in their development it can help them to reflect on their own process and development. Working together in a group towards a presentation or performance stimulates self-confidence and solidarity.

4.9 Location

Learning about and from art and culture takes place both in one's own learning environment and in the environment of the cultural professional, such as a museum, theatre or music venue. It is important to have suitable spaces and facilities within one's own learning environment, and children must be able to move around to important places for art and culture in the area. This can be cultural heritage such as a castle or mill, but also a library, gallery or dance studio. In order to be able to use this in the development of children, a rich cultural environment with both amateurs and professionals is needed, but facilities are also needed to be able to get there or to offer the rich cultural environment within the learning environment.

When it comes to responsibility for the culturally rich learning environment, provinces and municipalities play an important role. Children and adolescents must have opportunities to follow the widest possible range of disciplines and expressions and also have perspective on how they can continue to actively participate as adults. And, in doing so, provide a richer cultural environment in their future home situation.

4.10 Time

At present, there is no legally prescribed schedule of teaching hours in The Netherlands, but there is a minimum number of school hours set during the school career and there are designated times and periods that may or may not count as teaching time. Lessons provided during the summer holidays, for example, do not count as teaching time, even if the same content is taught as in the month of September. The obligation for a five-day school week and a balanced distribution of hours throughout the day is also laid down in the Dutch law. Furthermore, primary schools are obliged to provide after-school services when parents request it. However, in the pre-school and out-of-school periods, no other times have been set within which opportunities for childcare or youth guidance must be offered. Only pre-school education is subject to an offer of 16 hours a week up to a total of 960 hours.

Although at first glance it seems that there are few obstacles to connecting to the developmental stage and needs of children and adolescents, in practice it turns out to be difficult to fill teaching time in a different way in order to offer the student an appropriately varied learning day. In recent years, the obstacles to achieving a good offer have been well mapped out, and solutions have also been put forward for the organizational structure (Van Rozendaal et al, 2015) and flexibilization of teaching time (Vereniging IKOOK, 2017). The current system of equal teaching time but unequal learning time outside school reinforces inequality of opportunity for children and adolescents (Ploegman, 2023). By the way, the obstacle caused by the school system applies not only to primary education, but also to secondary vocational education and higher education (Lutters, 2021).

In order to provide equal opportunities for all children, we believe that developmental opportunities that are currently offered in school and outside school should be brought together into one, so that 'extracurricular activities' such as a culture lesson, also during the day, can be offered alternately with 'in-school activities'. We envision a learning day in which activities that are currently organized as in-school and out-of-school activities are offered alternately during one day, so that an integrated approach to learning and development becomes possible which also can be varied with student attendance. In this way, it is possible to better meet the needs of the home situation in terms of the child's presence and attendance. Within this, you can work with an alternation of compulsory blocks and choice activities. This includes a structure in which at least fifty weeks a year, during the weekdays from seven o'clock in the morning to seven o'clock in the evening, children and young people can go to a facility to develop, learn and discover, relax and meet each other. Attendance should become more flexible, adapted to what the child needs and what the family situation requires: for example, starting later in the day, or finishing earlier. For example, shorter free periods that occur more in the winter than in the summer, because parents have more work in the summer than in the winter.

That this is possible is shown by the experiences of schools that have been given permission to experiment with school hours. It is also evident from the experiences of integrated child centers that have come to an actual merger of primary school and childcare and that offered a varied program, with different roles and divisions for teachers, subject teachers and pedagogical staff.

4.11 Assessment

The last aspect of the curriculum deals with the method of assessing the development of the child or adolescent. In the current Dutch situation we are dealing with a mandatory package of transfer tests at the end of primary education and a central final exam at the end of secondary education, standardized tests for language and arithmetic, and student monitoring systems with interim test moments. These tests are often summative, i.e. focused on a one-off moment in which the child has to show what it can and knows, and much less formative, i.e. charting what development the child has gone through and where it now stands in its development. The results of these tests are used to assess the quality of the school, or the state of education (PISA ranking), and they are highly determinant for the child's chances of advancement during and after primary education. As a consequence, pressure is exerted on the summative result from all sides. This in turn translates into an attitude within the school in which learning is mainly for the test ('teaching to the test') instead of focusing on the broad development of the child and adolescent. A clear example in The Netherlands is the great attention paid in the final year of secondary education to practicing old exams. The term 'exam year' that is used for that year also indicates that the exam is central and not the development of the student.

Assessment should be more in the service of the child's development and appropriate to its developmental stage. This means that more formative testing should be done, and that the child's development in the past period is recorded. This forms the basis for the approach of the next period, and therefore also influences the way in which the guidance is organized in the next period. In this way, differentiation in levels and development can be more easily controlled. A logical consequence of this is that standard tests and standard assessments for the entire group at the same time are not possible. This does not mean, however, that there is no standard against which to compare development and achievements. It is a different system, not a different standard. The role of the teacher in assessing the level a student is at becomes much more important, similar to the Finnish system.

4.12 An integrated learning environment

When we bring together the above aspects of the curriculum, we see that this requires a different design of the way in which we provide support to parents and guide children and adolescents in their development. By connecting to children's developmental stage, developmental level, preferences, and interests, we offer them optimal opportunities to develop. And by providing these opportunities for all children and adolescents, we ensure equal opportunities for all. This applies both to the possibilities in the field of art and culture as well as to developmental opportunities in other areas. Art and culture cannot be seen separately from society, which also means that the introduction to art and culture, and the development within it, cannot be seen separately from the broad context of society and learning situations, and therefore cannot be seen separately from other learning areas. This leads to broad learning experiences and therefore better learning (Van Heusden et al., 2016, p. 126).

For an optimal curriculum that focuses on the broad development of every child, also in the field of art and culture, we will have to review the current structure of education and childcare. This requires an integrated learning and development place with activities for all children and adolescents from zero to eighteen years old. This place is a combination of current primary and secondary education, part of vocational education, out-of-school care and out-of-school education. In short: a bundling of the current fragmented efforts around growing children. In this view, a day consists of a combination of learning, playing, experimenting, experiencing and discovering. This creates a combination of current learning areas, school subjects and projects, extracurricular cultural education, sports and play, social play and the social encounters that children and adolescents have in their free time. Playing and learning, relaxation and concentration alternate, more in line with the needs and natural rhythm of children and young people. The term 'school' is no longer applicable here, so it is better to speak of a 'learning environment'.

The learning environment we have in mind offers activities and guidance from seven in the morning to seven in the evening, at least fifty weeks a year. Children and parents have the freedom to choose in starting time, duration and period, with a mandatory minimum annual attendance. For children and adolescents, teachers, pedagogical staff and other professionals this means a more varied day. Different professionals alternate during a day or period to take care of the education and development of the students. They do this in coordination with each other based on their own professional knowledge, skills and availability. With development files and plans they can guide, support and monitor growing children in their development as much as possible. Of course, clear frameworks for obligations and responsibilities for children and professionals must be provided.

With this approach, the current in-school and out-of-school cultural education for the age of zero to eighteen years is brought together in one facility as part of an integral learning and development place. This makes it possible for all children to follow group and/or individual lessons in the field of art and culture at an early age. The teaching options will no longer be limited to the edges of the day but are instead integrated into the entire day program. Until the age of eighteen, it is then possible to continue to offer this in this broad context, which does not alter the fact that it is still possible for children and young people in this age group to participate in associations for art and culture or in other areas, or to participate in projects or meetings. It is precisely the flexibilization of the day and the attendance in a day that makes it easier to make choices and more opportunities for participation arise, not only in the evening or at the end of the day, but also during the day.

The opportunity to get acquainted, to develop and deepen with culture is the same for every child within an integrated learning environment. Due to the integral curriculum and the integral daily schedule make visits to or from cultural activities natural and easy to fit in. In this way, cultural institutions can better contribute to cultural development and, where possible, the cultural expertise and background of parents can be used as well.

Offering equal opportunities to all children and young people, including in the field of art and culture, does not mean that every child should follow exactly the same program. Connecting to the developmental stage, developmental opportunities and interests means making choices in terms of offer and guidance. These choices can be made by the parents and the child at the level of activities, but also on the basis of a specific profile or offer of the learning environment. This does not alter the fact that there is a broad basis that should be offered in all learning environments.

To provide all facilities and possibilities, the current scale of education and childcare is often too small. This applies not only to the requirements for buildings and the affordability of facilities, but also to the possibilities of creating dynamic groups that match the development and possibilities of a child and young person during their period of growing up. Connecting to the developmental stage of a child and young person does mean paying more attention to individual development, but it certainly does not equal individual education. In fact, (learning to) function in groups of different sizes and compositions is an important part of development.

A changed design of the learning environment also requires a different view of housing and facilities and their scale. Current schools and facilities will have to work together more and be brought together more. This can be physical, by bringing institutions together in a certain area, with, for example, small, intimate locations for different groups of children. But it can also be virtual, when locations work together and provide mutual transport.

If one location is chosen, the children can be brought by bus, with fixed pick-up and drop-off points in the neighborhood, but they can also be dropped off and picked up by their parents or go themselves at a later age. Hot meals are provided at school, as is breakfast for children who opt for it.

An integrated learning environment offers amateurs or professionals the opportunity to provide activities, performances or presentations as an integral part of the developmental process that children and adolescents go through. In addition, the integral daily schedule ensures that there is room for groups to undertake cultural activities. In this way, the integrated approach in the education of the future is also reflected in the physical layout of the school and its surroundings. After seven o'clock in the evening, the facilities could be used for and by adults to actively engage in art and culture, or with other activities such as sports, technology or nature.

4.13 Visions of the future

To give you an impression of what our vision can look like, here are two descriptions of a day of a child or adolescent:

Vision of the future 1: a child's day

At seven o'clock in the morning, mother wakes Bram up to get him ready for his day at the integral child center (ICC). The nine-year-old boy quickly gets dressed so he can have breakfast. Mother walks with Bram to the place where the special bus stops to take all the children from the neighborhood to the ICC. Also on the bus is Zoë, who is the same age but goes to a different ICC. Their ICCs, together with other ICCs, are located on a large campus in a green area just down the road.

On the playground, Bram sees his friends Max and Mohammed, who came with another bus. "What are we going to do today?" he asks the other two. "Um, play soccer?" They think that's a good idea. But the teacher has other plans today. When the children arrive at the ICC at eight o'clock, they have plenty of time to play and play soccer until about nine o'clock, but then the lesson begins, with writing, language and interactive arithmetic. At eleven o'clock it is time to play together again and a few children go to the music or sports lesson they would like to take. Bram takes his trumpet with him for his music lesson. At lunchtime there is a meal for everyone.

After lunch, the students work in groups on the project 'Where do I come from?' The children collect images on the internet of the places where their parents and grandparents come from and look up how they lived back then. Everyone has brought an object from grandpa or grandma that has been important to them in their lives. They pay a lot of attention to the design of the work, which they present with a self-made play or poem. In this way, they also learn a lot about the places and countries where the parents and grandparents of classmates lived and what happened during that time.

'What a strange tent dress your grandfather is wearing', Bram laughs when he sees a photo of Mohammed's grandfather. "Ha, look at yours, with those weird long hair and flowers in his hair. That's even crazier', says Mohammed, who can't believe that Bram's grandfather really looked like that.

After the students have worked on the project, it's time for the next activity on the large campus: sports in the hall or on the sports field, or taking art lessons in the cultural center. Students of different ages engage

in the sport or art subject of their choice. Older students or students with great talent help the younger students. At the end of the afternoon, the bus takes the children back home. Zoë went home earlier, because her parents had taken that afternoon off with her.

'How was your day today?' mother asks when Bram jumps out of the bus at six o'clock. 'Oh, just like usual', says Bram, 'I played well and saw Mohammed's grandfather in a tent dress.' Mother smiles and grabs his hand as they walk home for dinner. After dinner, Bram goes to the rehearsal of the youth orchestra of the brass band and doesn't go to bed too late. After all, tomorrow is another day.

Vision 2: the day of an adolescent

Today is the first day in the new year that Izaira goes back to school. Small breath clouds indicate how cold it is and Izaira shivers in her new coat. Since the promotion round in December, she has been in a different building than her best friends Sara and Meike. They have gone to the practical stream, and Izaira is going to the theoretical stream. All three turned 15 shortly before the turn of the year. They celebrated it together; a kind of birthday and farewell party in one.

Izaira doesn't know what she wants to do when she grows up. Continuing her studies, yes, but going to a college or university? And which direction? She still has plenty of time to get her bearings. In recent years, it has become clear to her which fields suit her best. A bit artistic, but also the exact direction. That makes it all a bit more difficult to choose. No, then Hassan, her older brother. He had a much easier time choosing: very linguistic, science subjects were not for him. He is now studying Dutch at Utrecht University.

It's always exciting, a first day in a new period. The groups for the different projects have changed based on the individual progression and choices. And the split into the practical stream and the theoretical stream makes it all even more different.

Izaira starts the day with dance, one of the art subjects in which she wants to take an exam. After dance, she is doing a project on the urban planning of Paris, a combination of French, mathematics, physics, history and geography. Fortunately, she is allowed to skip the French language components because she did not choose French as an exam subject. That language doesn't suit her at all. English is much more fun, especially because she can work on the grammar at her own pace and because she is going to London in three months for an exchange project.

Now let's get dancing and wake up properly. Izaira opens the door to the dressing room and quickly changes her clothes. After greeting her friends with best wishes for the new year, she opens the door to the dance room where the music is already greeting her...

Next steps for Cultural Education

Since the publication of the first *Handreiking Basis voor Cultuureducatie* in 2016, there have been several developments that are in line with the outlined vision of the future. Consider the more integrated approach and the continuous learning trajectory for cultural education as proposed by the Art & Culture Development Team in the process of curriculum revision. Or the far-reaching cooperation between education and childcare in order to arrive at a more integrated approach in the ages of zero to twelve. The government's proposed 96% funding of childcare for children of working parents brings a fully funded integrated child center closer. On the other hand, the emphasis on Dutch language and arithmetic/mathematics in education has only increased and, together with citizenship and digital literacy, these subjects have been declared the core of education. This development has not strengthened the position of art and culture, but rather weakened it. It is still unclear what the balance in the new school curriculum will look like. The increased interest in the arts professional in leisure time and cultural participation is a positive development, but it does require additional funding at a time of increased inflation.

Some steps require adjustments in laws and regulations at the national level or an adjustment of policies at the municipal or provincial level. Other steps need to be taken by education or the cultural field. In the cultural field, we should consider both the art professional who provides cultural education for students to learn skills and knowledge, as well as cultural institutions that offer in-depth knowledge and skills to visitors and spectators through educational programs. In some cases, all that is needed is courage, perseverance and attention, although this is sometimes more difficult to achieve than a formal change.

5.1 Principles for sustainable cultural education

A structure for sustainable in-school and out-of-school cultural education is primarily about offering equal development opportunities for all children and young people up to the age of eighteen. Cultural education and participation make an essential contribution to a broad development and future opportunities for every child. For example, children with a high level of cultural baggage achieve significantly higher academic success rates in further education (Glorieux et al., 2015). Art and culture contribute to social cohesion, social-emotional and personal development and provide space for other ways of expressing and appreciating things. In doing so, they also contribute to an inclusive society in which issues are discussable.

Sustainable and high-quality cultural education means:

• a solid position in educational practice, with a continuous learning trajectory and connection with other learning areas and subjects;

• a sustainable connection between cultural education in education and beyond;

• a high-quality offer consisting of appropriate content, facilities and providers;

• a culturally rich living and learning environment with equal cultural development opportunities for all, at school and in leisure time;

• affordable and accessible facilities for introduction to art and culture, for practice, and for talent development.

We elaborate on these five elements in more detail below. In general, most of the actions to be taken can already be implemented without changes in laws, regulations or financing. Of course, these latter can support the actions and contribute to better implementation and quality. But equally important are the conviction and vision of those involved, and examples (Kox et al., 2020) and frameworks on how this can be worked out in practice. Knowledge sharing and networking are essential requirements for this.

5.2 Solid position in educational practice

The learning area of art and culture is one of the mandatory learning areas in formal education in The Netherlands. With the development of new core objectives and exam subjects, it seems that cultural education has a better position in the compulsory curriculum than has been the case for a long time. The subject 'ckv' will probably become part of the combination grade for all school types again and the curriculum revision provides for a continuous learning line from primary to secondary education and for the transition from one type of school to another.

However, education is ultimately done in the classroom and at the school, carried out by teachers and subject teachers, and supported by other professionals. All professionals involved must be sufficiently capable of fulfilling the core objectives and be able to inspire, guide and teach students. They also must feel sufficiently supported in this by the school management: in educational vision and in the space they are given to take care of the learning area. Within the overcrowded school schedules, this requires the connection with other learning areas and subjects as well.

To achieve this, the following elements are important:

Schools:

• have included a vision on cultural education in their school plans and have reserved sufficient budget and staff space for this in their budget;

• have a cultural coordinator who is sufficiently facilitated to serve as a contact point for the team and external parties for art and culture;

• employ one or more specialized teachers such as art teachers to take care of the learning area;

• ensure sufficient time and space in the schools' schedule to provide cultural education;

- work with a continuous learning trajectory for the learning area and coordinate this with other schools in the area for possible cooperation and a wider range of exam subjects;

- use art and culture in a conscious way to learn both in art and culture and through art and culture;

- work with integrated core objectives that include art and culture, for example in the form of projects and thematic education;

- provide quality assurance of cultural education in the form of monitoring at student and school level;

- train art teachers adequately and in line with the continuous learning pathway, and ensure sufficient additional training and development opportunities.

Governments:

- ensure that the Inspectorate of Education explicitly includes the position of art and culture in its inspection framework (central government);

- supervise adequate core objectives and examination structure (central government);

- take financial account of the requirements for art and culture in the maintenance and new construction of school buildings (municipalities);

- facilitate refresher courses for art teachers, coordinators and directorates (central government).

The cultural sector:

- supports the qualitative design of cultural education in a demand-oriented and dialogue-driven manner.

5.3   Sustainable connection within and outside education

Within the current set-up and structure of education, cultural education will always be limited to a broad introduction for all students and a certain amount of in-depth learning for students who ultimately choose one of the art exam subjects. For most students who want to discover whether active participation in art and culture suits them and want to deepen their knowledge, it is necessary that they also do so outside of formal education time. This can be done in consultation with or through out-of-school care, in the context of an integral child center, an enriched school day or a separate organization. But this can also be done by parents or young people who are independently looking for deepening, broadening and enrichment in the field of cultural education and participation.

When working on a qualitative continuous learning trajectory for cultural education during the formal school period, it is important that the non-formal, extracurricular education connects to it appropriately. This means, on the one hand, that the student must be given the space and opportunity to deepen and acquire skills in extracurricular education, and on the other hand, that these more far-reaching skills and insights do not form an obstacle to formal cultural education at school. This requires a good mutual balance and the skills of the teachers in both formal and non-formal education to respond to this.

Ideally, formal and non-formal education, not just for art and culture, should come together in an integrated approach and can be offered in a diverse and varied manner. This makes it easier to make connections and also overcomes practical objections such as travel distances and availability. In this situation, too, however, it is necessary that there are sufficient opportunities for participation and even more extensive deepening outside this broader context, because there will always be limits to what can be offered within the broad context of an integrated school system.

In all cases, this requires a connection and coordination from the school with the cultural environment. Time and space must be made available for this, with clear points of contact on both sides. Points of contact with knowledge and overview of what is happening within the school context and what is happening in the cultural environment (Van den Eijnden et al., 2015).

To achieve this, the following elements are important:

Schools:

- enter into an integral partnership with out-of-school care and non-formal cultural education;

- align the content of their ongoing cultural education curriculum with the (partly yet to be formed) frameworks and curricula of non-formal cultural education;

- have a cultural coordinator who is sufficiently facilitated to serve as point of contact for the team and external parties for art and culture;

- employ one or more specialized teachers such as art teachers to enable a good connection in terms of content;

- train art professionals capable of collaborating with education and of providing further training.

Governments:

- facilitate a coherent support structure for the connection between education and the cultural field by providing intermediary persons and organizations at local, regional and national level (central government, provinces, municipalities);

- facilitate a structure for non-formal cultural education, which provides clarity to users and providers about the requirements that qualitative non-formal cultural education must meet (state, provinces, municipalities);

- offer education and the cultural field the opportunity to work together more intensively and in a more varied way, for example by dealing differently with teaching time (central government, provinces, municipalities);

- facilitate the continuing education and training for art teachers, coordinators and directorates (central government);

- facilitate low-threshold access to cultural education in the vicinity of children and young people (municipalities);

- stimulate cooperation between culture, education and the broader welfare approach (central government, provinces, municipalities).

The cultural sector:

- connects to and works from a continuous qualitative learning pathway, in line with and enriching and deepening the formal continuous learning trajectory of cultural education, using framework curricula or other national framework documents for this purpose;

- works with qualified teachers, appropriate to the content and target group;

- is connected to and part of an intermediary structure for connection between education and the cultural field;

- makes clear the intrinsic and social added value of cultural education and art and culture in general.

For the most part, the above actions are already possible within current regulations and funding; only for teaching time and continuing training additional regulation and possibly funding is needed.

5.4 High-quality offerings

A good anchoring of both formal and non-formal cultural education is a requirement for achieving a high-quality offer. The quality of education is then determined by good teachers, good content and good material. In the case of cultural education, this involves facilitating both active and passive participation, so that people can get started themselves, but also to take note of what professionals and amateurs in art and culture have to share.

To achieve this, the following elements are important:

Schools:

- have sufficient suitable spaces and materials to provide high-quality cultural education;

- work with teachers qualified for the target group with the right pedagogical and didactic skills and adequate, up-to-date professional knowledge;

- train subject teachers for both formal and non-formal (extracurricular) cultural education, at an appropriate subject level with corresponding pedagogical and didactic skills;

- work with clear end and intermediate goals for cultural education;

- ensure an appropriate monitoring and tracking system to monitor both the development of the student and the quality of education;

- provide appropriate in-service training for the updating and expansion of the knowledge and skills of the subject teacher;

- share developed material, knowledge and experience to support and develop the overall quality.

Governments:

- provide sufficient facilities and activities in a rich cultural environment to enable encounters, acquaintances and education in the field of art and culture (provinces, municipalities).

The cultural sector:

- works with qualified teachers for the target group with appropriate pedagogical and didactic skills and adequate and up-to-date professional knowledge;

- works with continuous learning pathways, framework curricula or frameworks to which activities and efforts are aligned;

- provides an inspiring and diverse offer: enriching, in-depth and in line with the cultural background of children and young people;

- provides an appropriate monitoring and tracking system to monitor both the development of the student and the quality of education;

- shares developed material, knowledge and experience to support and develop the overall quality.

5.5 Culturally rich learning and living environment

Students learn and develop in a broader context than just school and extracurricular teaching situations. They also learn through contact with others, with their parents, their peers, as well as by coming into contact with expressions and activities of professionals and amateurs in the field of art and culture. Their own knowledge and skills also improve when they can be used at other times and in other contexts. For high-quality and sustainable cultural education it is therefore important that children and young people can come into contact with a wide variety of art and culture at different times in their living environment, sometimes appropriate to their experience and preferences, sometimes clearly inappropriate. Only in this way can equal cultural development opportunities be offered to all at school and in their free time.

To achieve this, the following elements are important:

Schools:

- coordinate with each other about the offer and exchange of cultural education, for example by making agreements about the mutual distribution and exchange of art exam subjects and students;

- jointly tackle cultural projects with and for the environment;

- encourage the participation of children and young people in cultural education and participation outside school hours, for example by cooperating with out-of-school care, information, introduction or the use of the Culture card.

Governments:

- coordinate locally, regionally and provincially what is needed to stimulate and maintain a rich and varied cultural environment. To this end, they also map out the environment (provinces, municipalities);

- establish a culture law that sets out the responsibilities and minimum commitment for a rich and varied cultural environment so that it is safeguarded throughout the country. It also includes frameworks on what this should look like as a minimum and how participation should be made possible for everyone (central government);

- establish policies and install cultural combination officers that strengthen the connection between schools and the cultural field (municipalities);

- ensure knowledge sharing at local, regional and national level (central government, provinces, municipalities);

- ensure a legal alignment of regulations and funding for education, childcare and extracurricular activities so that cooperation and integral coordination are improved, for example in the area of teaching hours and requirements for childcare (central government).

The cultural sector::

- collaborates with and connects to other areas, both with schools and other (cultural) organizations for a rich learning environment;

- coordinates on the provision and exchange of activities in the field of cultural education;

- provides an inspiring and diverse offer: enriching, in-depth and in line with the cultural background of children and young people;

- jointly tackles cultural projects with and for the environment.

The above actions are largely already possible within current regulations and funding. Additional legislation is only needed concerning a culture law and the equalization of education and childcare. In order to be able to offer a rich day arrangement to all children, childcare must be accessible to all children, both by letting go of the work requirement and by making childcare freely accessible or affordable.

5.6   Affordable and accessible facilities

Sufficient presence of cultural activities in the immediate vicinity is no guarantee that they will be used equally by everyone. Issues such as affordability and accessibility are important, but so are identity, meeting needs and recognition for different backgrounds. For example, it is known that low-income families do not always use facilities such as a Youth Culture Fund. Out of ignorance, but also out of fear that the support will stop after one or two years and their child will be disappointed.

In order to achieve affordable and accessible facilities, the following elements are important:

Schools:

- take into account the diversity in the students' backgrounds in connection with the cultural environment of the school, also in relation to a possible extracurricular follow-up trajectory, and work together with relevant welfare organizations;

- have an eye for the application of the cultural activities at school in the home situation. Consider, for example, working with materials that can be found in everyone's home for music lessons or visual arts lessons, such as packaging materials and everyday utensils;

- coordinate their cultural education with each other and possibly also open it up to students from other schools with a similar need for cultural education. Consider, for example, the alignment of the art exam subjects offered.

Governments:

- coordinate the support and design of their cultural environment with those directly involved, governments and parties in a wider region in order to arrive at an appropriate composition (provinces, municipalities);

- support not only the cultural infrastructure, but also include financial and physical accessibility to this infrastructure. Consider, for example, transport options, safe travelling to and from activities, cultural vouchers for families in disadvantaged situations (provinces, municipalities);

- stimulate and facilitate the coordination of a diverse cultural offer in their environment (provinces, municipalities);

- stimulate cooperation between culture, education and the broader welfare approach (central government, provinces, municipalities).

The cultural sector:

- considers how participation can be made as accessible as possible when developing activities and offerings;

- ensures a diverse range of products that are mutually coordinated with each other and maintains mutual contact about this;

- provides referral and growth opportunities within cultural education, in which, in addition to substantive talent development, attention is also paid to the accessibility and recognizability of the various identities and backgrounds;

- works with governments, education and welfare for a broader approach.

5.7   Final remarks

The world of cultural education is a complex composed whole, with many parties influencing how and with what quality the cultural activity of the student is fulfilled. Many of the imperfections in regulation, funding and support are compensated for by the enthusiasm and drive of those who want to bring cultural education to the growing child. As a result, not all difficulties or limitations are always disclosed or revealed in time. This seems to send a message to society that no matter what happens, cultural activities will always be there.

Although art and culture are inextricably linked to being human, impoverishment and cultural poverty can certainly occur. A gradual erosion of facilities or neglect will imperceptibly lead to the disappearance of a diversity of expressions, which in turn will cause fewer people to feel addressed and more people to get the feeling that it is not their culture or that art and culture is not for them.

This means that we cannot assume that with sufficient vision and enthusiasm for art and culture, things will work out by themselves. It requires an active attitude to keep the value of culture, art and heritage visible and experienceable, and activism and idealism to achieve a better society. Continuous investment in and development of cultural education in the broadest sense of the word will remain necessary to provide a growing generation with sufficient knowledge, skills and appreciation for their own cultural background and that of anyone else. Culture is of value, but culture makers are certainly not defenseless. This resilience will continue to be desperately needed in the near future. With this document, we want to give a foundation and direction to the boundless energy that exists in the sector to make culture, art and heritage part of everyone's life. Every single day.

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