**Creative School Planning Framework 2021**

**Introduction**

## Creative Schools Initiative

## The Creative Schools (CS) initiative aims to put the arts and creativity at the heart of children’s and young people’s lives. Participating schools will be supported to understand, develop and celebrate young people’s engagement with the arts and creativity. They will draw on the range of resources within their school and wider community, developing new ways of working that reinforce the impact of the arts and creativity on student learning, development and well-being. Students will have a central role in the development of this process.

**What is the Creative Schools Planning Framework?**

The Creative Schools Planning Framework (CSPF) will structure your CS journey. It is designed to be embedded into your school planning calendar over the two year duration of your CS award.

The CSPF supports your school, working with your Creative Associate (CA), to carry out an analysis of your starting point. This analysis will support you to develop a sustainable plan which will deepen the arts and creative opportunities for children and young people and develop their creativity. It will help your school make considered decisions on the design and delivery of activities and to report on progress to the Arts Council. It is an aid to support your School Coordinator (SC) and your CA to have important conversations with the wider school including children and young people, school leaders and families.

There are two main documents as part of the CSPF – Understand and the CS Plan.

**CSPF Understand** assists your school to identify needs and priorities.

The Understand document will enable you to capture the creative conversations and consists of questions for you and your CA to consider and explore with your school community.

This document will support you to explore:

* Your current engagement with the arts and creativity (for definitions of the arts and creativity see the CSPF Glossary).
* The artistic and creative experiences and interests of your students, teachers, school management and parents, and how they could be developed.
* The current opportunities for children and young people to participate in decision-making in your school, and how these could be enhanced.
* The resources in your school and in your wider community on which you will be able to draw.

**The Understand document is for your school only and is not uploaded to the Arts Council.**

**The Creative School Plan** supports you to create a long term vision and aims for the arts and creativity in your school. Itdetails the arts and creative activities your school wishes to undertake and celebrates your school’s achievements

The CS Plan will enable your school to create a sustainable plan for the arts and creativity that will last beyond the CS initiative.

**Your CS Plan will:**

* Respond to your school’s needs and priorities.
* Identify challenges that will help you to develop from your current starting point.
* Identify indicators you will use to see whether you have achieved your goals.
* Ensure that students participate in all stages of the planning, implementation and evaluation process.
* Strengthen or develop links between your school and artists and arts and cultural organisations.
* Enable you to share your school’s achievements in the arts and creativity together as a school, community and beyond.

**Who is involved?**

The CA and the SC, working in partnership, are responsible for completing these documents. Involving multiple voices in conversations across the framework enriches the CS process. The CA and SC will devise the most appropriate (creative!) way to gather information to support the writing of the CS Plan.

**Getting Started**

It is important that there is time for your CA to establish a rapport with the school that will support effective working relationships with staff and students. CAs will go about this relationship-building process in a variety of (creative!) ways by drawing on their practical experience of creativity and responding to each school’s unique environment. When a working relationship has been developed the CA and SC should explore the CSPF together.

Some preparatory work on the definition of the arts and creativity is encouraged to be undertaken with students, teachers, management and parents / guardians or their elected representatives before beginning the CSPF. Please read and refer to the CSPF glossary in for definitions of the arts and creativity to assist this process.

**The Voice of Children and Young People**

Ensuring the involvement of children and young people in decision-making from the outset is a core part of CS. Working with Hub na nÓg: Young Voices in Decision-making at the Department for Children and Youth Affairs, CS have been supported to incorporate the Lundy Model as a valuable framework for supporting the active participation of children and young people in the development of the programme. It is recommended that this model is used during all stages of the planning framework.

**What happens to the Creative School Planning Framework documents?**

The CSPF documents are for your own school’s use. You can continue to refer to, use and update the framework documents to assist school planning beyond the two year duration of the award. In addition, to draw down the final 20% of the award towards the end of your 2nd year it is a compulsory requirement for your school to submit your **CS Plan**, along with an **income and expenditure account** and a **report form**, to the Arts Council through your Online Services account. Together these will contribute to an important body of knowledge about the initiative and its impacts and outcomes across different schools. The documents will also provide useful information for classifying and describing the various arts creative practices schools have implemented. When viewed together, across all CS, this will build a collective sense of how the initiative is delivering on its stated aims and objectives, and will help inform future planning.