

## ● Review of Cultural Education: Response from the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

The Royal Geographical Society (with The Institute of British Geographers) is the learned society and professional body for geography. Formed in 1830, our Royal Charter is for 'the advancement of geographical science'. The Society is a charity that seeks to develop, promote and support the discipline of geography and its practitioners in the areas of research and higher education, teaching and fieldwork, policy and wider public engagement.

The Royal Geographical Society (with The Institute of British Geographers) welcomes this opportunity to comment on the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)'s consultation on cultural education.

### **Definition of cultural education**

The Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) recognises that the creative arts – such as music, art, drama and design – lie at the heart of cultural education. However, we would strongly argue for a broad understanding of cultural education, which enables young people to:

- experience and understand a variety of different cultural values and traditions
- explore the cultural, historical and geographical dimension of life in Britain and the wider world and how and why is it changing
- become connected with other places, experiences and environments beyond their immediate experience.

Cultural education should take place in the classroom and beyond; through performance, visits to exhibitions, collections and museums, and first hand experiences of the natural and built environment.

### **What is the value of Cultural Education and how do you value**

Cultural education, alongside other areas of the curriculum particularly English geography and history, helps young people to explore our past, present and future. It provides opportunities to encounter different perspectives explore personal responses to them and provides opportunities for young people to demonstrate their learning through performance and exhibitions.

### **What should be experienced at each Key Stage?**

School should be encouraged to make greater use of the statutory entitlement within geography across KS1, 2 and 3 to engage pupils with Britain's natural and built environments. There should be opportunities within these experiences for young people to both develop their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills and also to provide creative responses, such as through the visual arts, to the places they visit on fieldwork, for example.

### **What is it that works best about the way cultural education is currently delivered?**

Opportunities should be provided to recognise school's good work in this area, and alongside the Artsmark, is a scheme which focuses on work beyond the classroom door – the Learning Outside the Classroom awards scheme.

.....

**If there was a blank sheet of paper, what would be your view of the idea funding and delivery structure for cultural education?**

The development of the museums and libraries functions within the Arts Council (following the closure of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) provides the opportunity to provide further strategic integration of support for cultural education across the arts and heritage.

The Society would welcome all schools aspiring for a cultural education for their pupils that included, among other things, visits to and engagement with:

- a school's local museum and also with iconic museums and collections of national or international importance
- a variety of different British places that contrast with their home area and that demonstrate the beauty and distinctiveness of the natural and built environment and the diversity and creativity of our communities.

**Any other comments?**

The Society welcomes the English Baccalaureate which identifies pupils achievement at A\* to C at GCSE across English, mathematics, the sciences a language and geography or history.

We note that outside the English Baccalaureate there is still c40% of curriculum time available for pupils to study a wider range of other subjects including those, such as art, drama or music, that make a direct contribution to their cultural education. The Society believes that this provides an appropriate balance between the provision of a core academic curriculum at GCSE and the opportunity for pupils to study a broader range of subjects too.

The Society welcomes the assumption of the review that cultural education can take place both in and out of the classroom.

Cultural education in Britain has every opportunity to flourish given the quality and diversity of Britain's natural and built landscape; our iconic cultural institutions, museum and archive collections; strategic support for and the excellence of our arts and heritage provision; and dynamism of our cultural economy.

Dr Rita Gardner CBE  
Director  
Royal Geographical Society (with IBG)

20.05.2011