

DRAMA, THEATRE AND YOUNG PEOPLE - A MANIFESTO

The heart of the matter

Making drama and experiencing theatre is part of being human. It spans our histories and cultures and is a vital and treasured part of our lives. Through creative exploration in drama and theatre, aesthetic experiences and the making of shared meanings, we learn to lead passionate and compassionate lives.

What is the Drama and Theatre Manifesto?

This Drama & Theatre Manifesto has been led by the National Campaign for the Arts in extensive consultation with those involved in drama and theatre for children and young people in England. The Manifesto recognizes a common sense of purpose and a shared belief in the contribution drama and theatre makes to the quality of children's lives in school and beyond. It is a call to action to young people, parents, teachers and theatre practitioners to unify their efforts and ensure that young people have access to drama and theatre.

THE DRAMA AND THEATRE MANIFESTO'S CORE BELIEFS

- High quality drama teaching and theatre experiences should be made a curriculum and cultural entitlement for every young person.
- Exceptionally able and highly motivated young drama & theatre makers should be supported and developed.
- Successful young people's drama & theatre requires a world class workforce and infrastructure.

CORE BELIEF 1:

High quality drama teaching and theatre experiences should be made a curriculum and cultural entitlement for every young person.

How will the curriculum entitlement be secured?

Provision of high quality drama teaching from KS1 through to post-16 education requires:

- National recognition for the specialist nature of drama within the teaching profession.
- A curriculum entitlement supported by subject specialist teaching and an appropriate drama space in every school.
- High quality and specialist Initial Teacher Education (ITE).
- Training in technical theatre for drama teachers.
- ITE and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training in drama-based teaching methods for teachers of all subjects.

How will the cultural entitlement be secured?

Provision of high quality youth theatre and professional theatre for young audiences requires:

- Every child to enjoy a wide range of high quality live theatre experiences as a member of an audience every year.
- Ensuring the most disadvantaged young people can access professional theatre experiences.
- Support for specialist children's and young people's theatre artists, companies and venues.
- Work experience and apprentice schemes engaging directly with theatre professionals.
- Training for theatre professionals to work in classrooms or youth theatre setting.
- Encouraging and strengthening links between formal education and youth theatres and professional theatres.
- Engaging the support of national and regional theatre companies and national agencies in developing theatre work with and for young people.

CORE BELIEF 2:

Exceptionally able and highly motivated young drama & theatre makers should be supported and developed.

How will we secure opportunities and pathways for exceptionally able and highly motivated young people?

- Ensure a consistent and continuous level of access to drama & theatre education within schools, colleges and youth theatres and opportunities for students to see professional performances and to work with professionals
- Provide regular opportunities within schools, colleges and youth theatres to perform, produce, direct and stage.
- Encourage schools and colleges to build links with cultural organisations and centres, local clubs, youth theatres and drama groups.
- Develop wider understanding of the economic importance of the creative industries and the range of employment and volunteering opportunities it offers
- Supporting young people to develop as cultural entrepreneurs.
- Establishing mechanisms to ensure that drama school auditions are accessible to young people who cannot afford them.

CORE BELIEF 3:

Successful young people's drama & theatre requires a world class workforce and infrastructure.

How will we secure a world class drama and theatre workforce and infrastructure?

- Encourage closer collaboration between professional associations.
- Establish a common code of good practice to cover partnerships between formal education providers and theatre artists or companies.
- Improve signposting of careers in young people's drama and theatre.
- Strengthen mentoring and support networks for new entrants to the workforce.
- Establish models of good practice for work experience placements.
- Train building-based theatre employees in how to work with young people and with teachers.
- Encourage cultural organisations to ensure the effectiveness of the voluntary workforce and to provide appropriate training and support to volunteers, whilst paying due regard to minimum wage obligations.
- Encourage the sharing of resources through developing regional theatres as cultural hubs (in accordance with Equity agreements) and the use of schools and other cultural centres for promoting and hosting a wide range of youth, amateur and professional theatre.
- Encourage funders to create, develop and maintain spaces and places where young people can visit and make theatre.