ARTS AND CULTURAL EDUCATION

uality Now!

TO THE NEXT LEVEL

Quality Now! Arts and cultural education to the next level

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Preface
Quality Now! Taking Arts and Cultural Education to the Next Level

Has modern primary education kept pace with what today's pupils need to know? And who determines if it has: the government, parents, teachers…? Though educationalists often hold diverging points of view, whatever their opinions on curriculums, teaching methods or didactic approaches, there is one thing they tend to agree on, which is that teachers play an absolutely vital role in improving the quality of education. According to the Dutch educator Micha de Winter, the issue is not so much about better learning outcomes with regard to literacy and numeracy but about the question of 'how we should equip our children to gain a firm footing in a fair society' (Cohen 2013, p. 40). He goes on to say that, 'You have to provide a good all-round education while at the same time giving children opportunities to shine in specific subjects'.

Twelve years ago, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science took the initiative as regards exchanging knowledge on culture education in schools, by inviting culture and education representatives from EU member states to a 2001 conference entitled *A Must or a Muse*. Other initiatives followed, including *Culture and School* (2004), *See, I See Why*, in association with Flanders (CICY 2009), and *Teacher and Artist Training* (2010), which was part of the OMC working group on *Synergies between culture and education, especially arts education* (2010).

This brings us neatly to the present day, and *Quality Now! Arts and Cultural Education to the Next Level.* At this conference, the central issue is cultural education as it is practised in the European member states: how it is being incorporated into the curriculum and what it is intended to achieve? According to the government, cultural education should contribute to building creativity and other '21st century skills'. Yet, does this not carry the risk of turning education into means rather than an end, and of distancing us even further from Micha de Winter's 'firm footing in a fair society' for our children?

How we answer these questions determines the criteria we set for cultural education and how we define and evaluate the learning outcomes of such education. Should we express these outcomes in terms of general knowledge and skills or, instead, in learning effects specific to the domain itself? And how, then, should we define quality in cultural education, and what steps should we take to strengthen and safeguard that quality? These core questions are central to this conference and will be considered from the perspective of the design and implementation of the school curriculum (ongoing learning pathways), the professional expertise of general teachers, subject-specific teachers and the impetuses provided by the cultural world.

The National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA) at the request of and in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Cultural Participation Fund and the City of Amsterdam prepared and implemented the conference. On behalf of the steering committee and project team, I would like to welcome you

to the European *Quality Now! Arts and Cultural Education to the Next Level* conference. The material in this publication, the speakers' contributions during the conference and the list of participants make us feel confident that this event offers plenty of vigorous debate and substantive discussion!

Ocker van Munster, Director of LKCA

Ocker van Munster graduated as an economist. He subsequently worked at management consultancy Berenschot for over 20 years. In 2008 he became Director of Culture at the Ministry of Culture, Education and Science and in 2009 director of the Stichting Kunstzinnige Vorming Rotterdam (SKVR), a platform for cultural education and amateur art. As of September 2013, he is Director of the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA).

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Introduction

Piet Hagenaars

In the late 1990s, after a lengthy pilot phase, the *Culture and School* project was launched nationwide with the general objective of getting school pupils to engage with culture from an early age. The underlying idea was that if children and young people were familiarised with the cultural resources in their local area over the course of their school career, it would be easier for them to make use of these resources later in life. Aside from this general objective, three specific aims were prioritised from the outset: the development of cultural competencies in children and young people, the promotion of cooperation between schools and their cultural environment, and making cultural activities an integral part of education. In the Culture and School project, all objectives are explicitly centred on participation (Hagenaars 2008).

The recent launch of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's Quality Cultural Education programme (for the period 2013-2016) marks the start of a campaign aimed at achieving structural improvements in primary school cultural education. Although the Culture and School project did increase pupils' exposure to the arts and to culture, and placed cultural activities on school agendas, the activities and initiatives remained sporadic in nature and were never anchored in cohesive learning pathways or school curriculums (Zijlstra 2011).

The Minister of Education, Culture and Science wants primary schools to set out learning pathways for cultural and artistic development, the area of learning in which pupils "learn to use images, music, language, play and movement to express feelings and experiences and to communicate" (Greven & Letschert 2006, p. 63). These learning pathways should define the knowledge, skills, insights and attitudes that pupils are expected to acquire through arts education classes during their time at school. In addition, they must show how cultural and artistic development relates to connected areas of learning such as history, citizenship studies or media awareness. Cultural institutions should provide content geared towards these objectives. The Quality Cultural Education programme marks a shift in the minister's existing policy of receptive cultural participation *outside* the school, towards an increase and improvement in active participation in arts subjects *within* the school.

Policy changes across Europe

The Netherlands is by no means alone in its new policy course, as is clear from education policy shifts in other countries across Europe. Of course, correctly appraising the value of those developments for local education practice is always difficult for outsiders from another country, not least due to the lack of any long-term national – let alone international – studies on arts and cultural education practices in primary and secondary education.

While we do, of course, have the *Compendium of Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe*, with Section 8.3.2 providing information on "arts in school", the information it provides does not lend itself to cross comparisons and, moreover, it is outdated and therefore unreliable (Council of Europe & ERICarts 2013). Currency is also a problem affecting the website *Community of Knowledge on Arts and Cultural Education in Europe* (comace.org), which describes cultural education at primary and secondary school level and in teacher training programmes in France, Austria, the Netherlands and Flemish Belgium. Even the recently issued report *Arts Education Monitoring System (AEMS)* (2013), compiled by the Austrian Educult organisation in coordination with experts from Spain, Germany, Hungary and England, demonstrates just how difficult it is to define current cultural education practices. To begin with, there is little agreement on what is meant by the

concept of 'arts and cultural education'. International studies demonstrate just how widely the connotations of this concept can range; it is defined differently and serves different objectives in every country. In Spain and Hungary, for example, the concept describes training programmes for professional artists, while Germany and Austria apply a very broad definition: reaching out to other policy fields like economic development, social inclusion and the obligatory/formal education system" (Educult 2013, p. 3).

Nonetheless, it is clear that not only the Netherlands but also other EU member states, such as Flanders in Belgium (Schauvliege & Smet 2012) and Germany (Kultur macht Schule n.d.), are undergoing a considerable reorientation in policy. This is also attested by the Educult report, which states: "During the two years of investigation, political changes and the financial crisis affected the economies of the partners' countries and their government's priorities. In England, the change of administration resulted in a move from the rhetoric of 'creative education' towards 'cultural education'. Spending cuts by private funders (e.g. in Spain) and governments (e.g. UK, Germany and Hungary) significantly changed how the arts and cultural education activities of the cultural sector were delivered and their aims" (Educult 2013, p. 3).

This publication

It is no coincidence that the Netherlands has chosen this moment to initiate an international meeting of the minds with policy officials, education and cultural education professionals and researchers from EU member states to discuss the organisation of quality and quality assurance in cultural education at primary school level. This conference will address the quality of cultural education from both the angle of the design and implementation of the school curriculum (ongoing learning pathways in cultural education) and of the expertise of general and subject-specific teachers.

This publication is being issued as a special edition of the Dutch-language journal *Cultuur+Educatie*, published by the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA), and serves as an introduction to the Quality Now! Arts and Cultural Education to the Next Level conference. An explicit goal of this publication is to inspire, stimulate and challenge those involved to join in the debate during the conference; to voice their opinions about the most important unchallenged but also controversial aspects of policy interventions and their effects in the field of cultural education within and beyond the school.

Piet Hagenaars (LKCA) traces the inception of the Quality Cultural Education programme in primary education and sets out its objectives. Comparing its structure and motives with those of other programmes, including the Quality Agenda for Primary Education (*Kwaliteitsagenda primair onderwijs*; Dijksma 2007), he establishes that this agenda and the national

Quality Cultural Education programme are pursuing the same goals and developing similar activities. His article concludes by citing a number of aspects that deserve special attention when implementing the programme.

In their article, Teunis IJdens and Marjo van Hoorn (both LKCA) focus on the question of what will be needed to assure the success of the Quality Cultural Education programme. They present these factors as steering requirements, based on their view that the real challenge will lie in the capacity of national actors to keep the programme on course during its implementation and to ensure that the activities genuinely contribute to improving the quality of cultural education at primary school level.

Jaap Scheerens' (University of Twente) article centres on our basic knowledge about effective teaching methods, drawing on both a 2010 Dutch publication discussing various perspectives on educational quality (*Visies op onderwijskwaliteit*; Scheerens, Luyten & Van Ravens 2010) and on more recent contributions on this theme. The author also looks at the extent to which this knowledge base is specific to the field as opposed to more general in nature, also considering it in relation to arts education.

In her contribution, Marja van Nieuwkerk (City of Amsterdam) discusses the specific case of the cultural education policy pursued by the city's administration. She characterises this policy on the basis of factors cited in policy decision-making and the anticipated results of current policy, as well as past outcomes. She considers previous research and evaluation studies, annual trend reports issued by Mocca (Amsterdam's expertise network on cultural education) and the Collard report. Her main question is how Amsterdam has used this knowledge to shape its current policy and how it is keeping track of the results of implemented policy measures.

Piet Hagenaars, *Quality Now!* project leader

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Quality Agenda for Cultural Education: a firm foundation

Piet Hagenaars

With the advent of the new programme Quality Cultural Education (*Cultuureducatie met kwaliteit 2013-2016*), the focus is shifting from the preconditions for cultural education to the substantive quality of the education provided. The strategy proposes continuity in learning pathways, professionalisation of teaching staff and a clear set of instruments for assessment. In these respects, it has much in common with the Quality Agenda for Primary Education, enabling us to speak of a Quality Agenda for Cultural Education.

To give school boards, administrators and teachers a more emphatic focus on the area of cultural and artistic development, former State Secretary for Culture Halbe Zijlstra (of the Netherlands Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, OCW) opted for an innovation policy. In his policy letter of 10 June 2011, he outlined a new approach to laying a firm foundation for cultural education. With considerable bravura, he announced a programme of Quality Cultural Education for primary schools (Zijlstra 2011b). This represented a notable shift in that it went against the prevailing education policy, pursued since 2007, which had centred on improving performance in literacy and numeracy while taking a more restrained approach to other requirements of primary education (*Quality Agenda for Primary Education* 2007). What was the reasoning behind Mr Zijlstra's decision to nonetheless devote additional attention to cultural education in primary schools?

This article seeks to identify the impulses that have shaped the policy on primary education in recent years and looks at why these choices were made. In pursuing this goal, I will further examine the Quality Agenda for Primary Education (Dijksma 2007) and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's action plans for literacy and numeracy that have emerged from it. I will then go on to describe the Dutch government's policy on cultural education and to take a comprehensive look at the nationwide Quality Cultural Education programme, before comparing the objectives and underlying motivations with those of the Quality Agenda for Primary Education.

The article concludes with considerations to fuel the discussion about the aims, approach, long-term prospects and budget of the national Quality Cultural Education programme, issues which also feature on the agenda for the European conference *Quality Now! Arts and Cultural Education to the Next Level* (Amsterdam 2014).

Quality Agenda for Primary Education

The Quality Agenda for Primary Education states that "children have a right to inspiring education of the highest quality so that they can develop to their fullest potential". In this regard, top priority is given to improving performance in literacy and numeracy, as these basic skills "are essential to children's success in other school subjects, in their further school career and in society at large." (Dijksma 2007, p. 1). The argument for this strong emphasis on numeracy and literacy is the global knowledge economy, in which the Netherlands seeks continued participation, and the prosperity that this participation brings. To monitor and improve learning performance, schools need a system to track their pupils' progress and teachers need to learn from and with their peers and from experts inside and outside the school, about the most effective teaching methods. Since the role of the teacher is crucial in improving literacy and numeracy results, it is also important to place

additional emphasis on this area in teacher training programmes for primary education.

In the years that followed the publication of the Quality Agenda for Primary Education, the Lower House of the Dutch parliament was inundated with letters, memorandums and action plans containing a stream of improvement initiatives aimed at achieving higher learning outcomes and furthering professionalisation among teachers.

In an action plan entitled A Basis for Performance (*Basis voor Presteren* 2011), the Minister and State Secretary for Education, Culture and Science provided an additional description of how the standard of primary education should be raised even higher. A mandatory final test in literacy and numeracy was one of the measures proposed. Another was a mandatory pupil and teaching monitoring system to enable schools to record pupils' progress. Many schools already had such a system, but made very little use of the data to improve the standard of education they provided. The Minister and State Secretary argued that improving learning outcomes, called for a more energetic and purposeful learning culture (Van Bijsterveldt & Zijlstra 2011b). In an interview, former Education Minister Marja van Bijsterveldt said on this subject, "If you expect too little of a child, too little is what you will end up with. You need to challenge children and tell them 'you can do better and we are going to work with you so that you can really show what you can do'" (Leverink 2011, p. 6).

Another action plan from the same year, The Teacher in 2020 - A High-Powered Profession! (*Leraar 2020 - een krachtig beroep!* 2011), dealt with the professional development of teachers and school managers and centred on making teachers more proficient in result-oriented working methods and tailoring education to individuals. It argued that teachers need to adapt their teaching material to better suit the educational needs of pupils. Systems that track pupils' progress and teaching process were presented as important tools in this process (Van Bijsterveldt & Zijlstra 2011c). Continuing education and additional training were put forward as instruments for improving the quality of the teacher and once again it was up to the teacher training programmes for primary school teachers to raise the bar in terms of quality.

Both action plans painted a portrait of the ideal teacher: they must radiate optimism and ambition to inspire and motivate young people; they have to thoroughly master their profession to achieve high standards of performance and they have to respond effectively to the various needs of their pupils. Both pupils and teachers, it was argued, thrive in an environment that is characterised by high expectations and high aspirations, where they can work purposefully and systematically towards achieving these objectives (Van Bijsterveldt & Zijlstra 2011a, p. 4). The primary focus was on good performance in the core subjects (literacy and numeracy), for both talented and less talented pupils, but also on the way in which these goals are

realised. An important element in a result-oriented climate is a safe working environment, characterised by efforts to achieve these improvements in performance through shared learning and improvements – the learning school organisation (Visscher & Ehren 2011).

Why have a quality agenda for primary education?

A major reason behind the Quality Agenda for Primary Education and the accompanying action plans was the 2006 report by the Dutch Inspectorate of Education which showed that 25% of pupils leave primary school with inadequate literacy and numeracy skills (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2006). The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science responded by setting up the Meijerink Committee to determine reference levels for literacy and numeracy. In 2010, these reference levels were formalised in the Act on Reference Levels for Dutch Language and Numeracy, which describes the minimum level of knowledge and ability for pupils at various times in their school career (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap n.d.).

Another underlying motivation for all these ambitions was international comparative research results, such as the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS). These studies reveal that Dutch primary school pupils perform well overall, but seldom excel, a result the Minister and State Secretary for Education described as "below par". They called for "ongoing efforts to achieve sustainable development and improvement in the quality of our education" (Dijksma 2007, p. 1), in line with the Dutch government's ambition to secure a top-five position on the world's education rankings. In international studies, the Netherlands is shown to perform well above average but is also losing ground to other countries. In the PIRLS literacy study, for instance, the Netherlands fell from 2nd place (2001) to 5th (2006) and then to 10th (2011). It is worth adding at this point that the scores of the participating countries are very much in the same ball park, and for primary education the international differences between the average and the top five are relatively small. Nevertheless the OCW publication Trends in Focus (*Trends in beeld*) has seen fit to repeat the prosperity mantra: education has "an undeniable effect on economic growth, but also on social cohesion". It all comes down to "the quality of knowledge and skills: the quality of human capital leads to higher productivity and more innovation and ultimately to greater prosperity" (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap 2013, p. 14).

In its report Core Skills for Work and Life (*Kernvaardigheden voor werk en leven*; Buisman, Allen, Fourage, Houtkoop & Van der Velden 2013) published in October 2013, the OECD's Programme for the International Assessment

of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) presents a more attractive picture of the achievements of the Dutch education system. This study of the level and use of core skills among 16-65 year olds in twenty-four countries shows that the Netherlands is performing relatively well. For language skills, the Netherlands has the third-best average score, surpassed only by Japan and Finland. For numeracy, the Netherlands shares second place with Finland, Flanders, Sweden and Norway, with only Japan scoring higher. In terms of problem-solving ability, we rank alongside Australia, Sweden and Norway in third place, outperformed once again by only Finland and Japan. In its conclusions, the OECD places the Netherlands in the educational forefront, along with Japan, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Flanders equals the Netherlands' performance on numeracy but fares slightly worse on language skills and problem-solving ability. Germany's performance is around the OECD average for all three skills areas. This also applies to the United Kingdom (Great Britain and Northern Ireland), except for a strikingly low average for numeracy. The United States is consistently found in the lower sections of the rankings and scores particularly poorly on numeracy and problem-solving skills.

According to current Education Minister Jet Bussemaker, we are on the right track. The PIAAC scores are better than the good results achieved by 15-year-olds in PISA surveys of 2006 and 2009. However, as befits an ambitious minister, Dr Bussemaker goes on to insist "we cannot simply rest on our laurels". Partly in response to the PISA findings, she is continuing to intensify the focus on strengthening literacy and numeracy in primary education (Bussemaker 2013a).

Increasing criticism

For several years now, we have seen that, despite a good average performance in literacy and numeracy, the Dutch government has made a strong commitment to further improving literacy and numeracy performance. The Minister argues that nothing should deflect attention from this goal. From 2015, there will even be a mandatory, centrally administered final exam in which primary schools assess whether pupils in Group 8 have achieved the literacy and numeracy reference levels established by law. Literacy and numeracy tests are also being introduced in general and vocational secondary education. Furthermore, teacher training programmes for primary education are also required to focus extra attention on literacy and numeracy. There are even four support desks to assist schools and school boards with questions about improving literacy and numeracy performance, selecting appropriate materials, administering tests and examinations, and the introduction of the reference levels (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap n.d.).

With so much energy being devoted to this issue, it would be reasonable to suppose that literacy and numeracy levels should reach an acceptable average level at a given moment in the school career. The question is whether education is not too concerned with "teaching to the test", based on the premise that the more we measure, the more control we can exert over the process (Stevens 2013). And under these circumstances, the question arises how much attention and time remain available for other areas of learning, such as artistic orientation, the area of learning in which pupils "learn to use images, music, language, play and movement to express feelings and experiences and to communicate" (Greven & Letschert 2006, p.63).

The Education Council of the Netherlands subscribes to this criticism of focusing exclusively on measurable performance. This has occurred at the expense of – and has adversely affected the level of – other areas of education, such as history, economics, philosophy and cultural education, and the focus on social competencies, citizenship education and the development of advanced skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, communication and IT literacy. Data on the levels achieved in areas such as history, politics, geography, economics, arts subjects, philosophy, biology or modern languages are scarce, if they are available at all. In terms of learning outcomes, the Inspectorate of Education has little to say about the quality of primary education in the school subjects and learning areas beyond literacy and numeracy (Onderwijsraad 2013, pp. 9-10).

Cultural education policy

Culture and School: preconditions

In the late 1990s, the Dutch government launched a national project entitled Culture and School with the general objective of familiarising pupils with cultural participation from an early age. The underlying idea is that if children and young people regularly come into contact with the cultural resources in their local area in the course of their school career, it will be easier for them to make use of these resources later in life. To achieve this goal, three main objectives were in place from the outset: the development of cultural competencies, the promotion of cooperation between schools and their cultural environment, and making cultural activities an integral part of education. As the years went by, learning to appreciate different cultures and cultural expressions was added as a new key aim in addition to the objective of participation (Hagenaars 2008).

In the early years of this initiative, the emphasis was on secondary education but from 2003 there has been a shift towards primary education. Tangible evidence of this shift came with the subsidy scheme Strengthening Cultural Education in Primary Education (*Versterking cultuureducatie in het primair onderwijs)* (Van der Hoeven 2004). Under this scheme, primary schools

can obtain an amount of €10.90 per pupil by undertaking activities to get children more involved in culture. The scheme's objective was set out as follows: "The school develops a vision of the role of cultural education in its educational programme and cooperates with its cultural environment to translate this vision into a coherent set of cultural educational activities" (Van der Hoeven 2005, p. 20). As a facilitating policy, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science established agreements with municipalities and provinces about the organisation of the cultural infrastructure. Like the schools, municipalities and provinces receive funding for cultural education and are responsible for network development and the cultural infrastructure in the region. By August 2008, 90 per cent of schools ended up participating in the scheme (Hoogeveen & Van der Vegt 2008).

Quality Cultural Education: content

As described previously, State Secretary Halbe Zijlstra in his policy letter More than Quality (*Meer dan kwaliteit* 2011) announced a new approach for cultural education. He noted that significant progress had been made in previous years but that activities and initiatives in schools could still primarily be characterised as incidental. They were intended as an introduction to culture and were geared towards participation, but had not yet led to a substantive learning pathway or curriculum for cultural education.[1] Having spent years investing in the preconditions, the emphasis now needed to be placed on the content of cultural education.

Mr Zijlstra opted to maintain the €10.90 scheme for primary schools, but from 2012 this has been incorporated in the so-called "performance toolbox", a budgetary measure aimed at improving the performance of pupils, teachers and school managers in primary education. At the same time, the objective has been modified and schools are required to spend the amount on strengthening the cohesion within the learning area of cultural and artistic development and to improve the quality of cultural education in general (Bussemaker 2012). The government is strongly committed to the educational programme itself and much less to simply bringing occasional cultural activities into the school.

The performance toolbox is now part of the national Quality Cultural Education programme launched in 2013. The aim of this programme is to enhance and guarantee the quality of cultural education in primary schools. There are four key factors in this process: the development of ongoing learning pathways; the subject-related professionalisation of primary school teachers (and educational staff of cultural institutions); encouraging cultural institutions to create content that is geared towards core objectives; and the

1. With regard to primary education, the State Secretary used the term "cultural education" to refer to the area of learning defined as cultural and artistic development.

development of instruments to assess whether the core objectives for the learning area of cultural and artistic development have been realised.

In effect, these amount to the same activities as the Education Ministry's school-wide action plans for literacy and numeracy. After all, these action plans also concern the detailed implementation of reference levels, raising learning outcomes and achieving the further professionalisation of teachers (Van Bijsterveldt & Zijlstra 2011b, 2011c). The Quality Agenda for Primary Education (a product of the Ministry's Education Department) and the national Quality Cultural Education programme (a product of the Ministry's Culture Department) share similar activities and motives. Given that the Ministry is focused on cultural education in its Quality Cultural Education programme (in the learning area of cultural and artistic development), we therefore regard the national Quality Cultural Education programme as the Quality Agenda for Cultural Education.

Why have a Quality Agenda for Cultural Education?

The basis for the State Secretary's opinion of the quality of cultural education in primary schools is unclear. In recent years, no public reports have been published about the quality of cultural education in primary schools. The last report on this issue was published in 2008 by the Inspectorate of Education, based on research by consultancy Sardes (2008), which also produced monitoring reports on this subject for the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science until 2009.

The Inspectorate's report is preliminary in nature and does not address the quality of education. It was intended as a thematic section within the 2007-2008 Education Report (*Onderwijsverslag*). From that year on, none of the Inspectorate's education reports have given coverage to cultural education or the learning area of cultural and artistic development. Even monitoring reports, which sketch a broad outline of what is happening in cultural education in schools (Oomen et al. 2009), have not addressed the quality of curriculums, lesson content, teaching staff and learning outcomes. The same applies to the Council for Culture's Sector Analysis of the Amateur Arts and Cultural Education (Raad voor Cultuur 2011), Cultuurnetwerk Nederland's sector analysis for primary education (Hagenaars 2012) and the evaluation of the Cultural Participation Regulations for Provinces and Municipalities 2009-2012 carried out by the Cultural Participation Fund (Wils, Zweers & Berger 2012). While the evaluation shows that provinces and municipalities have vigorously pursued the cultural education policy, the question of whether this policy initiative has led to the desired result cannot be answered given that the targets "are formulated in such general terms, that it is unclear at what point they have been achieved" (Wils, Zweers & Berger 2012, p. 7).

Furthermore, we are not aware of any national research reports about the

condition of cultural education in primary schools, let alone its quality. The immediate reason for this quality boost (an interesting development in our view) would therefore appear to come from another source. It is plausible to suggest that the social and economic importance attached to creativity and creativity development played a decisive role in the choice of innovation policy. The arguments contained in the policy letter in which Mr Zijlstra announced the Quality Cultural Education programme point in this direction. For instance, the learning area of cultural and artistic development was described as being "important to personal development and to the creativity of our society as a whole" and the "inquiring attitude" it instils in children is "of great importance to our knowledge society". Mr Zijlstra placed the emphasis on primary education, because "it is the foundation for personal development and for the creativity released by culture" (Zijlstra 2011b, p. 8).

To ascertain that he was on the right track, Mr Zijlstra requested an advisory report from the Education Council of the Netherlands and the Council for Culture that same year (Zijlstra 2011a). This report was released in June 2012 and its analysis pulled no punches. The Councils observed that primary schools in the Netherlands treat the subjects in the area of cultural and artistic development as an afterthought and that the teachers devote too little time and energy to them. This is linked to the rise of the internal cultural coordinators (ICCs) in schools and external intermediaries, in addition to the proliferation of educational programmes offered by cultural institutions themselves. It is up to schools to take control once again: the Councils argued that cultural education must be reinstated at the heart of education, as that is where quality improvement begins. They also recommended that a reference framework for cultural education should be developed (though not required by law) to specify the core objectives of cultural and artistic development and to give schools an understanding of the competencies that pupils should have mastered by the end of their primary education (Onderwijsraad & Raad voor Cultuur 2012).

Mr Zijlstra acted on this recommendation and – in terms more concrete than those used in his policy letter – called for the development of a learning pathway for cultural and artistic education that provides an overview of the knowledge, skills and attitudes that pupils are expected to acquire during each school year. In addition, this learning pathway must show how cultural and artistic development relates to connected areas of learning such as history, civil studies or media awareness. The learning pathway is intended for arts subjects at school and cultural institutions will be expected to adapt their activities accordingly. This description resembles the reference levels for literacy and numeracy, complete with guidelines regarding the skills and knowledge to be acquired by pupils each school year. Mr Zijlstra's decision to adopt the term "learning pathway", as opposed to the "reference level" or "reference framework" advised by the Councils, may reflect sensitivities between civil servants on the education and culture sides of the Ministry

regarding the formal use of the term. After all, if reference levels exist for cultural education, what is to stop them being applied to other school subjects and areas of teaching?

The new government which came into office at the end of 2012 maintained this policy. In her 2013 letter entitled Culture Moves (*Cultuur beweegt*), the new Minister of Education, Culture and Science Bussemaker reiterated the argument that arts subjects have a role to play in the development of creative skills, as one of the 21st century skill sets that today's society needs. Creativity and innovative capacity are "conditions for the further growth of our knowledge society" (Bussemaker 2013c). This has brought about a shift in cultural education policy from receptive cultural participation *outside* the school to an increase and improvement in active participation in arts subjects *within* the school.

The Netherlands is by no means alone in its new policy course. The Flemish government has also opted to develop a reference framework for integrated cultural education in pre-primary and compulsory education. In Flanders, incumbent teachers and teachers in training are also supported in their work by the CANON Cultural Unit. Another Flemish initiative concerns creativity development "that can be used in the later stages of life, career, leisure time etc." (Schauvliege & Smet 2012, p. 17).

Does good cultural education contribute to creativity development?

The government, the Education Council and the Council for Culture are working on the assumption that cultural education evidently contributes to creativity development. They base their position on the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, which links contemporary skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, innovative ability and creativity to learning outcomes in arts subjects (Partnership for 21st Century Skills 2010). But to what extent does cultural education actually contribute to the development of creativity and innovative ability?

The beginnings of an answer can be found in the recently published report *Art for art's sake?* (Winner, Goldstein & Vincent-Lancrin 2013). This is a review of over five hundred international studies looking at the transfer effects of arts education on performance in other school subjects and on skills for innovation, such as creativity and critical thinking. Only a handful of studies were found examining the effects of arts education on critical thinking and creativity. The available studies on creativity point to a positive correlation, but as yet no general conclusions can be drawn. It should be noted that lack of scientific evidence does not equate to a lack of relationships or effects; it simply means that, to date, these have not been demonstrated.

During two expert meetings on this OECD report, organised by the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA), Folkert Haanstra, lector and endowed professor in this field of research, wondered whether research into the secondary effects of arts education is actually necessary. In his view, there is a more pressing need among teachers for a better understanding of arts-related teaching methods and a greater need for research into the influence of various types of subject-specific teaching methods on the artistic achievements of pupils. Turning his attention to the quality of cultural education, Mr Haanstra argued that more psychological and educational research is needed (Haanstra 2013). Joost Kuggeleijn, policy officer at the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, observed that the effects found in the meta-study provide a strong enough basis to give art a firm place in the curriculum (Kuggeleijn 2013). In his closing speech, moderator Teunis IJdens of LKCA stated that rather than focusing on impact research that stems primarily from the need to justify arts education, we should pay more attention to good scientific research that benefits the quality of art education (Meewis 2013).

Implementation of the Quality Agenda for Cultural Education

In early 2013, the Quality Cultural Education programme was launched. In the accompanying administrative framework, the Ministry stated that the Cultural Participation Fund (FCP), in close cooperation with LKCA, should do its utmost to prevent the wheel from being reinvented in several places at once in terms of ongoing learning pathways. Moreover, locally developed teaching guidelines were required to be as consistent as possible with the advice given by the Education Council and Council for Culture (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap 2012).

In implementing the national programme, the government, the provinces and the municipalities, each bear their own responsibility. There are three parallel processes at work: central (national government), local (provinces and municipalities) and the education sector (schools).

Central level – national approach

At central government level, innovation, networks and the development of knowledge represent a major focus. SLO[2] is developing a national curriculum framework for cultural education, with scope for teachers and cultural institutions to fill in the details at school level. It is therefore up to the schools to translate these plans into effective cultural education (SLO

2. SLO = National Expertise Centre for Curriculum Development

2013). An independent study, funded by NWO[3] and entitled Assessment in Arts Education (Van Boxtel 2013), was carried out, presenting an overview of international research on assessment instruments in the arts subjects in primary and secondary education. Lastly, FCP and LKCA are developing facilitating policies, and an annual sum of €3.8 million a year has been made available for this purpose. In the policy period 2013-2016, this takes the form of projects aimed at supporting national best practices, the development of continuing education, encouraging professional development and supporting pilot projects with monitoring and evaluation tools (Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie 2013). Parallel with this programme, the government has given explicit instructions to cultural institutions that receive state funding under the 2013-2016 Cultural Plan to engage in educational activities within the formal education sector.

Decentralised - provinces and municipalities

At local level, the Cultural Education Investment Matching Scheme for Provinces and Municipalities (Deelregeling Cultuureducatie met Kwaliteit in het primair onderwijs 2013-2016), has been set up under the auspices of FCP. FCP subsidises up to half of the budgeted costs (€10 million), and the municipalities and provinces match this by providing the other half. These funds are intended for local and regional activities in municipalities and provinces to be jointly developed by cultural institutions, schools and possibly other partners.

Since the subsidy is part of the cultural budget of the Ministry and not of the educational budget, only cultural institutions were eligible to apply. A total of 54 institutions from all parts of the Netherlands applied for a subsidy. FCP honoured half of all applications. A large number of these institutions have opted for a combination of two key areas: the development of learning pathways and the professional development of the teachers who are tasked with putting these learning pathways into practice in the classroom. Approximately half of the institutions are also aiming to achieve long-term cooperation between the primary school and its local cultural environment, while one third also expressed an intention to develop assessment tools.

In the ongoing learning pathways and the training of teachers, the applicants' focus is on music, visual arts, theatre and dance as school subjects. They also mention heritage and half of the applications make reference to creative writing or literature and new media. In addition to focusing on individual disciplines, there are also applicants who opt for the more encompassing terms "cultural education" or "creative ability". Since there is often a correspondence between the training of teachers and the development of ongoing learning pathways, the majority of applications are

3. NWO = Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

geared towards several or all of the arts disciplines (often including heritage) or cultural education in general (Van Hoorn & Hagenaars 2013).

On the application form, the cultural institutions were also asked to fill in their reasons for making the application and how they intended to improve the quality of cultural education through their activities. Generally speaking, the institutions tended to locate problems relating to the quality of cultural education in primary education in the context of the teacher or the school. Although they referred in general terms to the predominantly supply-driven practice of cultural institutions in recent years, they tended not to link this to the role they could play in that process. Furthermore, the general tone of their argument was that institutions will help schools deal with the quality of cultural education. The applicants' statements remained inconclusive as to why they were now better able to undertake this task than they had been before and what they were planning to do differently. Whether the applicants consider their own role and how they perceive it is certainly one of the main issues examined by FCP in its monitoring and evaluation of both the scheme and the activities of the applicants themselves. Others issues include how the applicants put this role into practice, what they are doing differently than before, and what they have learned from the process (Hagenaars, Van Hoorn & IJdens 2013).

The monitoring and evaluation of activities are carried out through an institutional programme and a national programme. FCP prepares this in consultation with the relevant municipalities and provinces and with LKCA. Monitoring and evaluation are geared towards outcomes: Is the project on track? Is it heading in the right direction? Is sufficient progress being made and are additional efforts required? What opportunities and threats can be identified in terms of a successful continuation of the activities? Are changes or additional efforts needed at national level in order to keep the scheme on track, to ensure its success and to sustain its effects beyond 2016? (IJdens, Van Hoorn & Tal 2013).

The educational process

The third course of action is aimed directly at the schools and an annual budget of €18 million has been made available through the education side of the Ministry. The funds are part of the aforementioned Performance Toolbox Scheme for Primary Education (*Regeling prestatiebox primair onderwijs*) and are intended to enable schools to bring greater cohesion to cultural and artistic development and to ensure that the core objectives for this learning area are achieved. The schools are free to spend the funds from the performance toolbox at their own discretion, but they are required to report on their ambitions and objectives, their results and the resources they invest.

An evaluation of whether schools actually spent the performance toolbox funds on cultural education was carried out in 2013. The results are not yet available. If it transpires that the money has been spent on

other school-related matters, the Ministry will modify the conditions of this budgetary measure and reduce the spending freedom of the school boards. In addition to the amount of €18 million for cultural education, the Performance Toolbox Scheme also has a budget for the professional development of teachers and school managers (Van Hoorn & Hagenaars 2013).

Practice in primary schools

Given the autonomy of schools in the Netherlands, the task of monitoring how school subjects are taught lies with the school boards. In 2012 the provinces of Noord-Holland and Zuid-Holland each carried out their own independent studies into the cultural education policies of school boards. They found that school boards regard cultural education as being important to the personal and creative development of children. However, the form that this cultural education takes turns out not to be a matter for the board but is mostly dependent on the personal preferences of a teacher or school director. And as far as the school boards are concerned, this is not likely to change to any great extent. This is because school boards only have a limited view of how cultural education is put into practice (Admiraal, Haas & Himmelreich 2012). Other research into how school boards operate shows that their members see creativity as a plus when hiring new teachers. Nowhere, however, did expertise in one of the arts subjects prove to be a criterion for selection when filling vacancies (Ligtvoet-Janssen, Van der Heide, Bams & De Wit 2012).

Nevertheless, there are some encouraging signs. As a condition for the awarding of subsidies as part of the investment matching scheme, FCP formally requested the cooperation of school boards. This encouraged the school boards to take their supervisory role in relation to cultural education more seriously in their schools. In the provinces of Drenthe and Limburg, school boards argue that culture makes children stronger and design their policies accordingly (Van Hoorn, Hagenaars & Meewis 2014, forthcoming).

In current practice within primary education, it is up to the teacher to give lessons in the learning area of cultural and artistic development, to select the relevant method and teaching materials, and to make the appropriate choices from the cultural resources available. This calls for subject-specific, pedagogic and didactic qualities. In order to develop these qualities in a responsible and well-considered way, we need to know more about the exact skills and abilities required. There is little empirical evidence on the qualities that primary school teachers possess in relation to cultural and artistic development and how they use these in interacting with their pupils (Van Hoorn & Hagenaars 2012, pp. 64-65).

During a working visit to a Zuid-Holland primary school in the autumn of 2013, collective school director Ben Kennedie summed this up for me:

"We have teachers who put their heart and soul into teaching our children. However, they are mostly trained in language, arithmetic and other traditional school subjects. The handful of music teachers, drama teachers and specialist physical education teachers have virtually disappeared from our schools." Mr Kennedie sees himself facing a shared assignment to professionalise teachers: "The teachers are willing! They want to teach, preferably across as wide a spectrum as possible, in a cultural environment that they are able and allowed to shape themselves. Let's make this process of professionalisation attractive to teachers. Facilitate training. The curriculum is full. It makes many demands. In this regard, therefore, we should approach teachers as professionals and make it possible for them to actually shape cultural education" (Kennedie 2013).

Final considerations

Clear concepts

Since the Quality Agenda for Primary Education and the national Quality Cultural Education programme are comparable in terms of their activities and underlying motivations, as already stated, we regard the national Quality Cultural Education programme as the Quality Agenda for Cultural Education. In doing so, we do away with the possibility of semantic confusion at a single stroke. The term Quality Cultural Education in fact refers to two things: the national Quality Cultural Education programme (with a central, decentralised and formal education component) and the Cultural Participation Fund's investment matching scheme with provincial and municipal cultural institutions (a decentralised component). For the national Quality Cultural Education programme, we will from now on and with due consideration use the term Quality Agenda for Cultural Education.

Quality agendas and global performance

In order to compete effectively as a global economy and to ensure greater prosperity for our children, we need to have a strong focus on literacy and numeracy in our schools today. After all, these basic skills "are essential to the success of children in other school subjects, in their further school career and in society at large" (Dijksma 2007, p. 1). The government therefore wants Dutch education to score ever higher in international rankings. A good performance is never good enough, as even a place in the top five means that we need to invest to maintain that position.

In the economy of the future, however, change is accelerating, and the role of transactions in a trading nation such as the Netherlands is set to become even more important. According to the Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) this leads to the conclusion "that our current

energies should primarily be devoted to 'learning', to inventiveness, to language skills, and to the ability to deal effectively with a multitude of situations" (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid 2013, p. 272). This means that not only literacy and numeracy are important for our present and future workforce but also skills such as problem-solving, independence, collaboration and creativity. As described earlier, the new emphasis on cultural education has been prompted by precisely these considerations. According to the Dutch government, cultural education contributes to the acquisition of 21st century skills and is "important to personal development and to the creativity of our society as a whole" (Zijlstra 2011b, p. 8).

Directing cultural education at the primary school itself

But what about the other school subjects? Don't they contribute to the development of these 21st century skills? Or are there other reasons for devoting so much policy attention to cultural education in primary schools, despite the marginal position it has occupied to date? Researcher Ton Bevers understands the government's reasons for seeking to bring about greater cooperation between cultural institutions and schools. Quite a few art teachers' collectives and cultural institutions are financially dependent on school visits and services aimed at schools. The schools, in turn, benefit from the expertise of these institutions and see the advantage of outsourcing activities and purchasing products as a way of lightening the workload. But in the middle of this apparent win-win situation, it is vital to consider whether this arrangement also has a positive effect on educational content. Bevers says he knows of no other school subject where the urge to literally bring the outside world into the school is so strong, to say nothing of the urge to head out into the outside world with pupils (Bevers 2010, p. 126).

What is more, would it not be better, bearing in mind the conclusions of the two advisory councils, for the schools themselves to take charge of the cultural education they provide (Onderwijsraad & Raad voor Cultuur 2012)? In the investment matching scheme, would it not have been preferable to make the budget available to the schools instead of the cultural institutions? It is the schools that bear the responsibility for their curriculums and for providing skilled teachers for arts classes. Schools should not therefore be handing their cultural education over to professionals from outside the school, such as arts centres, provincial support agencies and other cultural institutions.

This touches on an important discussion about where the primacy of cultural education should lie: in the education sector or with cultural institutions? Although many school boards still fail to sufficiently include cultural education in their policies, it is reasonable to expect the education sector to take the lead in this area, given that cultural education is part of the wider development of the child, a process for which the school is responsible.

On a working visit to a primary school, administrator Bert van der Lee expressed this as follows: "Unlike ours, not every school board automatically believes in the importance of cultural education. On occasion, the interest in cultural education is motivated by a desire for political correctness. It needs to be far more deeply integrated in the overall policy. It would be a considerable help to me if this principle were to be embraced in the Netherlands as a whole" (Kunstgebouw 2013, p. 6).

In the monitoring and evaluation of the Quality Agenda for Cultural Education, the focus should be not so much on the implementation of the policy, but on the content of cultural education. Has there been tangible progress with regard to the expertise of the teacher, the coherence of the curriculum, the learning outcome of the pupil and sustainable cooperation with cultural institutions? After all, the Quality Agenda for Cultural Education is not so much focused on the preconditions, as was the case in the previous national Culture and School project, but on the core elements, i.e. the teacher, the course, the pupil and the school. The school is the ideal place to learn new things in a well-considered manner and according to a well thought out plan (Bevers 2010).

Multi-year perspective and in-depth investment

The question remains whether this policy, in respect of a Quality Agenda for Cultural Education, should be granted long-term prospects and a higher level of funding. If, as the government asserts, it contributes to the desired knowledge economy and the preservation of wealth, then it needs to be sustainable and is surely deserving of in-depth investment? With long-term prospects and an increased budget, within a few years every school would be able to have a curriculum complete with learning objectives and educational content for music, visual arts, dance, drama and heritage education, structured cohesively with reference to teaching methods and pupil activities for each school year. Primary school teachers would then have the requisite subject-related knowledge and skills, and would know what pupils have learned in previous years with a view to building on this foundation. Moreover, a progress file would be available for each pupil detailing where his or her talents lie and pinpointing areas for improvement (Van Hoorn & Hagenaars 2013).

The Administrative Framework for Culture and Education (*Bestuurlijk kader Cultuur en Onderwijs*), signed by the portfolio holders of culture and education on 16 December 2013, shows the ambition that national, provincial and municipal governments share with school boards: to achieve a high standard of cultural education. This framework provides for a sustained substantive and financial commitment throughout these levels of government until 2023. In the words of our current Education Minister, this creates "the preconditions for schools and cultural institutions to continue to work on the quality of the cultural education" (Bussemaker 2013b). But in

the end, as with all innovations, the ultimate test for this quality agenda is not about how magnificent the plans were, but about what they ultimately achieve, about what pupils take from them.

Piet Hagenaars was Director of Cultuurnetwerk Nederland from its inception in 2001 until it merged with the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA) at the end of 2012, after which he became interim director of LKCA. Since 1 September 2013, he has been a senior researcher at LKCA. He has numerous publications on arts and cultural education and related policy to his name, and has fulfilled and continues to fulfil a variety of roles on advisory committees and boards.

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School quality and the educational effectiveness knowledge base*

Jaap Scheerens

Educational effectiveness is an important facet of educational quality. In this article educational effectiveness is used as the general term for instructional effectiveness, school level effectiveness and system effectiveness. Instructional (or teaching) effectiveness largely depends on teachers' activities; school effectiveness depends on malleable organisational and curriculum conditions; system effectiveness largely depends on educational policies at national (or in some case subnational: e.g. in Germany) levels. Multi-level statistical analysis has contributed significantly to the development of integrated school effectiveness models. In contributions to conceptual modelling of school effectiveness, schools are depicted as a set of 'nested layers' (Purkey & Smith 1983), where the central assumption is that higher organisational levels facilitate effectiveness by enhancing conditions at lower levels (Scheerens & Creemers 1989).

* This article is based on two earlier publications by the author: Scheerens, Luyten & Van Ravens (Eds.) (2011). *Perspectives on Educational Quality*; Scheerens (2013). *What is Effective Schooling?*

Questions with regard to several learning domains, including arts education, can be addressed in educational effectiveness research. In this article educational effectiveness is, first of all, presented as a measurable facet of educational quality. Next, the main body of the paper presents an overview of the results from meta-analyses, providing a concise perspective on the current knowledge base. In the final section, implications for school improvement strategies are drawn and the applicability of the educational effectiveness 'paradigm' for research into the effectiveness of arts education is discussed.

Definition: school effectiveness as a facet of school quality

A basic systems model to depict the functioning of educational systems and schools as organisations is a good analytical tool to define facets of quality that are amenable to empirical analysis and verification. According to this model the school is seen as a black box, within which processes or 'throughput' take place to transform inputs into outputs. The inclusion of an environmental or contextual dimension completes the model (see Fig. 1).

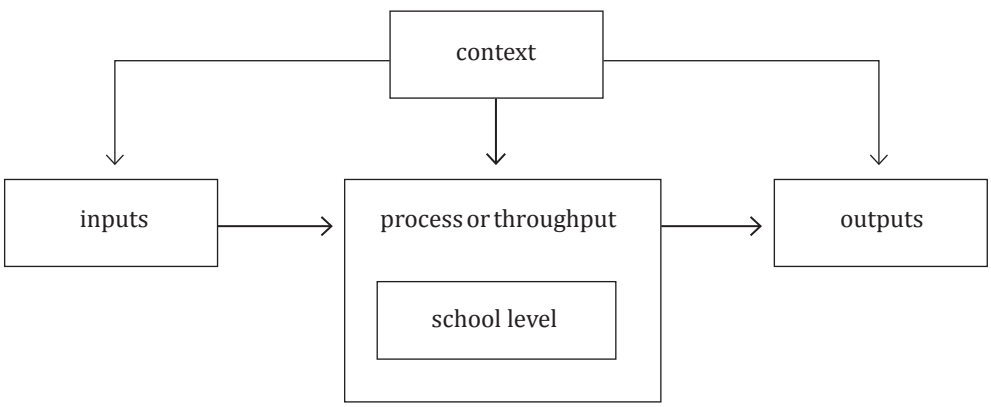

Figure 1. A basic systems model of school functioning

Five perspectives on educational quality may be distinguished.

Firstly, when the level of outputs is the core of quality judgments about educational programmes, schools or the functioning of national educational systems, this could be described as *the productivity perspective*. There are many practical applications of this perspective: test based accountability policies, school performance feedback systems, and the comparison of mean country level achievement among countries, on the basis of international assessment studies, like TIMSS and PISA.

Secondly, when interest is not focused primarily on average achievement levels but rather on the distribution of outcomes, inputs and processes, *equity* is the predominant quality facet. In international comparisons equity is getting more and more attention (see for example the OECD report titled *Overcoming social background*, based on the 2009 edition of PISA (OECD 2010)). At school level Inspectorate frameworks may contain indicators on equity (Janssens 2007).

Thirdly, when effectiveness is the predominant quality perspective, the focus is on the instrumental value of input and process indicators to maximise output. This is the question on 'what works best'. From a quality perspective this means that it is not the 'beauty' of organisational arrangements or teaching strategies, but the added value of such arrangements in terms of school output.

Fourth, when effectiveness at the lowest possible costs is at the centre of quality considerations, *efficiency* is the quality facet in question. Monetary measures of inputs are key aspects in efficiency measurements.

Finally, the relationship of a school with its environment or context may be the core issue for quality judgments; particularly the question of *responsiveness*, which in the most general sense means that a school pays attention to impulses from the larger context. Where effectiveness and efficiency deal with the question of 'doing things the right way', responsiveness may be seen to address the question of 'doing the right things', such as choosing educational objectives that fit the demands of the next educational level or the labour market.

These facets of educational quality, defined on the basis of their key elements and interrelationships included in figure 1, are summarised on the next page:

Quality facet	*Key indicators and relationship between indicators*
Productivity	Outcomes
Equity	Distribution of inputs, processes and outcomes
Effectiveness	Association between inputs and processes on the one hand and outcomes on the other
Efficiency	Effectiveness at the lowest possible costs
Responsiveness	Fitting input, processes and intended outcomes to environmental demands

Two final remarks with respect to effectiveness as a facet of school quality are in place here. Firstly, it should be noted that effectiveness refers to causal relationships between means and ends in a complex practical situation. Therefore it may be an 'easy' analytical concept but a 'problematic' concept in empirical research. Secondly, this very characteristic of being centred on malleable, 'man-made' causes of intended effects also points at great practical relevance, namely its potential for evidence-informed school improvement.

Research evidence: results from reviews and meta-analyses

Qualitative review: fair consensus about factors that really matter
In three recent state-of-the-art review studies by Reynolds et al. (2013), Muijs et al. (2013) and Hopkins et al. (2013) an overview is given of the most relevant factors enhancing educational quality in three respective research sub-fields: school effectiveness research (EER), teaching effectiveness research (TER), and school and system improvement research (SSIR).

Table 1. Conditions enhancing educational quality

Teaching effectiveness	*School effectiveness*	*System improvement effectiveness*
Opportunity to learn Time Classroom management Structuring and scaffolding, including feedback Productive classroom climate Clarity of presentation Enhancing self-regulated learning Teaching meta-cognitive strategies Teaching modelling More sophisticated diagnosis Importance of prior knowledge	Effective Leadership Academic focus A positive orderly climate High expectations Monitoring progress Parental involvement Effective teaching (time) Staff professional development Pupil involvement	Dimensions of organisational health School based review School development planning Comprehensive School Reform Facets of educational leadership (transformational, instructional, distributed) Effective systemic reform*

Sources: review studies by Reynolds et al. (2013), Muijs et al. (2013) and Hopkins et al. (2013), cited from Scheerens 2013. * See Hopkins et al. (p. 15): among others, student achievement and teaching quality emphasis.

There is a fair consistency in the factors being mentioned in the three contemporary reviews, for example with respect to core factors like: academic emphasis; time and opportunity to learn; structuring and scaffolding[1]; leadership; and monitoring. Moreover, most of these factors also appear in earlier reviews. In more recent reviews however, there is more differentiation and emphasis on classroom level instructional variables, both from the tradition of structured teaching and direct instruction and from more constructivist orientations (importance of prior knowledge, self-regulated learning and teaching meta-cognitive strategies). From this consistency among review studies it might be concluded that school and educational effectiveness research have an established knowledge base.

1. Scaffolding means that the teacher establishes an individual learning environment (scaffold) for each pupil, providing support where the pupil asks for it and challenging the pupil where this is needed. Cf. Sawyer, K. (2006). *The Cambridge Handbook of the Learning Sciences*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

However, two notes of dissonance are to be considered. Firstly, behind this consensus on general characteristics there is a considerable divergence in the actual operationalisation of each condition. Evidently concepts like 'productive, achievement-oriented climate' and 'educational leadership' are complex and individual studies tend to vary in the emphasis put on different elements. Scheerens and Bosker (1997, Ch. 4) provide an analysis of the meaning of factors that are considered to be working in schooling, as apparent from the questionnaires and scales used in actual empirical school effectiveness studies. This work has been taken to a further level of detail by Scheerens, Luyten, Steen & Luyten-de Thouars (2007). Secondly, there is far less consensus as far as quantitative effect sizes of these factors is concerned, this will be discussed in the subsequent section.

Quantitative effects: less consensus about the size of effects

Unlike the agreement on the most important variables in school effectiveness research, reviews of effect *sizes* – in the sense of the estimated association between a specific factor and educational achievement – show far less consensus. This state of affairs will be elaborated in subsequent sections.

In meta-analyses average effect sizes are computed across individual research studies addressing the association of a certain independent variable and educational achievement. Various coefficients may be used for the estimates. The standardised mean difference (between a treatment and a control group), coefficient d, and certain correlation coefficients (r), are the most common. Hattie (2009) provides massive quantitative evidence on the association of numerous school, teacher and teaching variables with student achievement. Average effect sizes for school, curriculum, teacher and teaching factors in terms of the standardized difference between means reported by Hattie are .23, .45, .49 and .43 respectively (*ibid*, pages, 74, 109, 130, 162 and 201). According to Cohen (1977) effect sizes of .20 are considered small, .50 medium and .80 large. When applying these standards the average effect sizes should be considered as slightly below medium. Still, meta-analyses carried out by European authors show effect sizes that are even lower (see for example Witziers, Bosker & Krüger 2003; Scheerens et al. 2007; Seidel & Shavelson 2007, Creemers & Kyriakides 2008). By way of illustration some of the results on key variables listed in the three state-of-the-art papers are compared: educational leadership; evaluation and monitoring; learning time; structured teaching; and quantity of teaching.

Table 2. Overview of school level variables and teaching level variables in earlier meta-analyses

School level variables	Scheerens *et al*. 2007	*Hattie 2009	Creemers & Kyriakides 2008
Consensus & Cohesion	.02	-	.16
Orderly climate	.13	.34	.12
Monitoring & evaluation	.06	.64	.18
Curriculum/OTL	.15	-	.15
Homework	.07	.30	-
Effective Learning Time	.15	.34	-
Parental involvement	.09	.50	-
Achievement orientation	.14	-	-
Educational leadership	.05	.36	.07
Differentiation	.02	.18	-

Teaching level Variables	Scheerens *et al.* 2007	*Hattie 2009	Seidel & Shavelson 2007
Time and Opportunity to Learn	.08	.34	.03
Classroom management	.10	.52	.00
Structured teaching	.09	.60	.02
Teaching learning strategies	.22	.70	.22
Feedback & monitoring	.07	.66	.01

* Results from recent meta-analyses (coefficients) are based on the Fisher Z transformation of correlations; as Hattie presents effect sizes in terms of d, these are indicated in bold

Weighing the evidence from meta-analyses

School effectiveness research is mostly field research. From the perspective of applicability, this can be seen as an advantage. Another way to express this would be to say that school effectiveness research will tend to have high ecological validity, meaning that this research is closely related and therefore relevant to real-world phenomena. The key independent variables in school effectiveness research were already mentioned, and underlined by pointing at their malleable nature. Referring again to the knowledge base on educational and school effectiveness, the question 'what works best in schooling' could be answered by [a] considering the set of factors on which a fair consensus among reviewers exists (see the overviews in tables 1 and 2), and [b] by rank ordering these variables according to the average effect size reported in meta-analyses. Any attempt at this kind of synthesis should be seen as tentative, because of the noted variation in effect sizes across

meta-analyses, and the fact that it is not possible to capture a moving target, as new results are continuously added to the knowledge base.

Nevertheless an attempt at such a tentative synthesis will be made by putting together main results from Marzano (2003), Scheerens et al. (2007) and Hattie (2009), see table 3. Results presented by Marzano depend to a large extent on a meta-analysis by Scheerens and Bosker (1997). Hattie's results are based on syntheses of numerous meta-analyses for each variable. In a few cases, there was no straightforward match with variables that were included in Hattie's synthesis of meta-analyses, and somewhat specific operationalisations were chosen; these are marked and explained in the legend to the table. Variables mentioned Marzano's overview is taken as the starting point and rank-ordered from high to low in their association with student achievement. The fourth column of the table shows the average of the three coefficients for each variable. It appears that Marzano's original rank ordering is preserved in the averages.

Table 3. Rank-ordering of school effectiveness variables according to average effect sizes

Variables	Marzano 2003	Scheerens et al. 2007	Hattie 2009	Average effect size
Opportunity to learn	.88	.30	*.39	.52
Instruction time	.39	.30	.38	.37
Monitoring	.30	.12	.64	.35
Achievement pressure	.27	.28	**.43	.33
Parental involvement	.26	.18	.50	.31
School climate	.22	.26	.34	.27
School leadership	.10	.10	.36	.19
Cooperation	.06	.04	***.18	.09

Average effect sizes (d-coefficient) reported in three reviews/meta-analyses.
* Operationalised as 'enrichment programmes for gifted children'; **Operationalised as 'teacher expectations'; ***Operationalised as 'team teaching'.

Of course variable-labels in Table 3 are quite general. Still, even these general labels provide a relatively clear idea about aspects of school functioning that should be optimised in order to enhance student performance. Opportunity to learn basically refers to a good match between what is tested or assessed in examinations and the content that is actually taught. Instruction time may be expressed in a more global sense as officially available or allocated learning time or more specifically as 'time on task', or 'academic learning time'. Monitoring may include various types of school based evaluations, like school based review, school performance feedback, or school aggregate measures of formative assessment at classroom level. Parental involvement

might mean the actual involvement of parents with school matters, or the policies by the school to encourage parents to be involved. Achievement pressure refers to school policies and practices that make use of achievement results and performance records, but also to more climate like and attitudinal facets of fostering high expectations of student performance. School climate generally refers to good interpersonal relations at school, but often more specifically to 'disciplinary climate' and the fostering of an ordered and safe learning environment. On school leadership many specific connotations are used. Instructional leadership appears to be the most frequently used and successful interpretation in this literature. Cooperation in general terms, often measured with proxies like the number of staff meetings, usually has a relatively weak to negligent association with student performance. Only when cooperation is explicitly oriented to performing tasks and achieving results somewhat larger effect sizes are found (cf. Lomos, Hofland & Bosker 2011).

When the rank ordering of these results is further contemplated it appears that curriculum variables (opportunity to learn and learning time) predominate. Monitoring could be seen as part of this curricular 'syndrome', but could also be seen as a broader performance lever, which might include teacher appraisal, and schools being part of accountability schemes. The first four highest ranking factors are all to do with a focus of the primary process of teaching and learning at school. The lowest four factors are organisational measures, or 'secondary processes'. In the literature on school improvement variables like staff cooperation and school leadership are overrated for their importance, when one considers the quantitative evidence on performance effects. An orderly school climate is more like an organisational condition that is directly supportive of the primary process, in the sense that it is about creating a safe and productive learning atmosphere.

Effective teaching and effective teachers in effective schools

Effective schooling is, to a large extent, providing support at school level for optimizing teaching at classroom and individual student level. A good overview of the most relevant variables in teaching effectiveness is provided in table 4 cited from Brophy (2001).

Table 4. Variables in effective teaching (from Brophy 2001)

Opportunity to learn
Curricular alignment
Supportive classroom climate
Achievement expectations
Cooperative learning
Goal-oriented assessment
Coherent content; clear explanations
Thoughtful discourse
Establishing learning orientations
Sufficient opportunities for practice and application
Scaffolding student's task engagement
Modelling learning and self-regulation strategies

Good, Wiley and Florence (2009) refer to three latent teaching factors: structure and classroom management, supportive climate and cognitive activation. The integration of these ideas and Brophy's overview of teaching variables is shown in table 5, based on Klieme (2012).

Table 5. Latent and manifest teaching variables (adapted from Klieme, 2012)

Structure and classroom management
Opportunity to learn
Available time
Degree of student involvement
Curriculum alignment
Visible and coherent planning
Goal oriented assessment
Focus on what is important
Supportive classroom climate
Pro-active and supportive classrooms
Caring communities
Appropriate expectations
Help students to exceed
Cognitive activation
Coherent content
Sufficient depth
Thoughtful discourse
Scaffolding students' ideas and task involvement
Understanding at a higher level
Authentic application of concepts in different contexts

Application: strategies for improving school effectiveness

The substantive focus of school level strategies

The school and educational effectiveness knowledge base provides an instrumental orientation to school improvement, meaning that enhancing identified school factors is expected to lead to better student performance.

In very broad terms the variables identified in educational effectiveness have to do with the technology of the curriculum (as intended and implemented) and with facets of organisational climate. In this way one could say that a first broad orientation to school improvement could be labelled as *the technology and climate emphasis*. However, it should be noted that schools can choose alternative orientations. A second strategy might be labelled the *teacher recruitment and professional development strategy*. According to this strategy most of a school's energy to improve should be focused at teacher issues, including human resources management. In the third place schools could capitalise on *matching and grouping issues*. Matching could be both externally oriented, towards the local community, towards higher administrative levels, other schools and to parents, and internally oriented in grouping of students in classrooms and learning groups and assigning teachers to these groups of students. The first, externally oriented approach is very close to assuring responsiveness to environmental demands. The second, internally oriented form of matching is aimed at obtaining optimal results from available physical and human resources in a school by strategic allocation. For example, by aligning the best teachers to the weakest classrooms, and by providing (possibly scarce) ICT resources to those students who will benefit from extra and remedial tasks.

As noted above, applying the knowledge base of educational effectiveness research is closest to the Technology and Climate orientation. The general factors that have been discussed and rank-ordered in previous sections are all candidates to be stimulated. More minute and detailed descriptions of these variables are available in the literature, e.g. Marzano (2003), Scheerens et al. (2007) and Hattie and Alderman (2012). On the level of strategy choice a more synthesised description of the key factors is considered helpful. The following alternative emphases within the Technology and Climate orientation are distinguished:

- *exposure to educational content.* This could be seen as a composite of opportunity to learn and instruction time. It expresses the curricular focus and duration of exposure in school curricula and teaching;
- *evaluation, monitoring and feedback provisions.* Evaluation and feedback can be seen as driving improvement at school and classroom level. This implies such facets as: clarity of purpose through standards; examination syllabi etc.; verification of what students have learned; identification of strengths and weaknesses in content and skills that are mastered; feeding

back and diagnosis of outcome patterns; systematic consideration of remedial strategies; and setting concrete goals for improvement at student, classroom and school level in cooperation with other teachers, school principals and eventual support staff. This latter characteristic could make evaluation, feedback and systematic corrective action the core of task related professional development and teacher cooperation;

- *managing the school climate.* This involves diverse facets like creating a safe atmosphere, positive interactions, as well as fostering high expectations and pressure to achieve;
- *managing the teaching and learning programme.* Repeated studies, in which more behaviouristic approaches like 'direct teaching' were compared to constructivist approaches and where no significant differences in student achievement were found, have inspired analysts to propose more general underlying constructs. One example is the construct of 'cognitive activation' (Klieme 2012), discussed earlier. Another example is the term 'focused teaching' coined by Louis, Dretzke and Wahlstrom (2010). Hattie (2009) proposes 'active teaching' as an overall construct. Careful attention to lesson planning, variation in structure and independence in learning assignments and keeping students engaged seem to be the core issues in these constructs;
- *meta-control* as the overriding leadership approach. Meta-control is a concept from control theory, and literally means 'control of controllers'. Applied to school leadership this concept emphasises the notion that schools are professional organisations, with teachers as semi-autonomous professionals. Teachers may be metaphorically seen as the prime 'managers' of teaching and learning at school. A school leader as a meta-controller is not a laissez-faire leader, but one who sets clear targets, facilitates, and monitors the primary process of schooling from a distance (Scheerens 2012).

These five strategic angles to the substantive focus of enhancing school effectiveness are contingent upon each other. Exposure and evaluation/feedback have a common element in educational objectives and learning standards. Alignment of what is taught and what is tested is the key issue of opportunity to learn. High expectations and pressure to achieve, as facets of the school climate, likewise need a substantive focus in the form of objectives, standards, assessment instruments and feedback. The educational content dimension, perhaps indicated as the implemented school curriculum, is a core dimension of the teaching and learning programme, next to the ideas on transmission that are more central in concepts like cognitive activation. Managing all of these strategies, as well as their connections, is the task of school leadership as meta-control. Integration of these angles to school improvement, inspired by the educational knowledge base, is very close to the approach of Comprehensive School Reform, e.g. Borman et al. (2003).

How system level policies could foster these school level strategies

System level policies and structural characteristics of educational systems (like teacher policies, accountability and school autonomy) can be seen as pre-conditions or constraints of school level improvement policies, to which schools need to adapt. More analytically one could ask which system level conditions could be seen as supportive of effective schools and effective school improvement. A third, more 'neutral' approach might be to just establish where there are matches between the major system level reform dimensions and structural conditions on the one hand and school level improvement strategies on the other. A first example might consist of schools following up on national opportunities for professional development. A second example would favour accountability policies as the best matching system level arrangement for the Technology and Climate orientation to effective school improvement. Accountability policies touch directly on core facets of school functioning, like performance standards, achievement orientation, and perhaps also on the 'internal accountability' of schools (see Carnoy, Elmore & Siskin 2003). As accountability policies are almost inevitably associated with a degree of centrality in the curriculum, this would emphasise the connection with exposure to pedagogical content and with opportunity to learn at school level.

Other system level policies and structural arrangements are more closely associated with alternative orientations. Enhanced school autonomy, as well as strong teacher policies appeals more to teacher recruitment and professional development. Choice and market mechanisms, as well as tracked versus comprehensive school systems, are more associated with admittance, selection and grouping processes at school level.

Applicability to measuring and improving arts education in primary schools

When considering the question to what extent the educational effectiveness knowledge base is applicable to enhancing the quality of arts education (at primary school level), the following considerations are in place:

- the educational effectiveness knowledge base, as presented in the above, has been developed largely on the basis of results in core subjects, like arithmetic/mathematics, language and science;
- from available studies (Hermans, Van der Schoot & Sluijter 2001; Seidel et al. 2009; IJdens 2012; Schönau 2012; Van Weerden 2012) addressing the subject, it appears that arts education requires rather complex methods of assessment, depending strongly on expert judgement, and that a large diversity exists in the content that is taught and the teaching strategies being used.

These considerations mean that, strictly speaking, evidence for applicability of the knowledge base is missing. At the level of professional discourse, however, one might argue that the conditions for effective instruction (see

table 5) appear to be relevant for arts education as well. Next the oftentimes low political priority and the complexity of the field make it unlikely that fully fledged, causally oriented effectiveness studies addressing arts education will become more numerous in the future.

Even though expectations are low on the issue of effectiveness research, preliminary steps for such research are considered as having practical relevance for enhancing the quality of teaching in the subjects subsumed under the heading of arts education. These preliminary steps coincide very well with the approach that was taken in the Dutch national assessment programme (PPON), namely:

- making objectives in this field operational;
- mapping the territory as far as content offered is concerned;
- developing assessment instruments, standards and procedures for expert judgement;
- actual assessment and description of content offered and methods used in primary school arts education.

Whether such an assessment approach could take one further step to approach the design of educational effectiveness research – namely by systematically studying relationships between content covered and methods used on the one hand, and assessment results on the other – remains an open question. In the meantime the field of arts education in Dutch primary education would be served by developing feasible instruments for assessing pupils' performance in arts education (cf. Van Boxtel 2013) and by a new cycle of PPON assessment in the near future preparing the ground for an evaluation of outcomes of the current programme 'Cultural education with quality, 2013- 2016'.

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The art of arts education policy

An exploratory analysis of public management issues in arts education policy

Teunis IJdens & Marjo van Hoorn

The National Expertise Centre for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts in the Netherlands (LKCA) has been called upon by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) to play an advisory and supporting role now that the new policy programme *Quality Cultural Education for Primary Schools* has been launched. The Cultural Participation Fund (FCP), as a subsidising agency funded by the Ministry, plays a central role in the programme's implementation, alongside the Ministry itself and local (i.e. municipal and provincial) government.

We have undertaken an analysis of the new programme from a public management perspective, with the aim of contributing to and strengthening its prospects for success (IJdens & Van Hoorn 2014: forthcoming). For our analysis, we have looked at steering mechanisms in arts education policy in the Netherlands since the 1980s. Why look back? Because we feel that in order to ensure the success of the new programme – in terms of its impact (effectiveness) and efficiency – important lessons can be learned from previous policy programmes, despite the lack of a systematic and comprehensive evaluation.

For over 30 years, Dutch central government has taken various policy measures in addition to the statutory regulation of arts education as a compulsory subject in primary schools to promote appreciation of the arts among children and to ensure their cultural participation. However, the *quality* of arts education in primary schools has received far less attention. This changed with the announcement in 2011 of a new Quality Cultural Education programme by the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science. The programme was designed in 2012 by the Ministry in collaboration with the Cultural Participation Fund and representatives of provinces and municipalities with more than 90,000 inhabitants. The programme is co-funded by local and provincial government and is due to run from 2013 to 2016 (Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap 2012).[1]

The new programme's intentions are well-considered and ambitious. In addition, a sizeable budget been made available: approximately €170 million over a four-year period. But what is the scope and the influence of the authorities responsible for the programme's implementation: national and local government, together with the Cultural Participation Fund? Will preaching the gospel of quality in arts education and allocating subsidies be enough to ensure that cultural organisations and schools do the right thing and do it well? In the Netherlands, primary schools are given full responsibility for educational quality and granted autonomy when it comes to shaping their own curriculum. This applies to all subjects, including the arts. Cultural organisations, local government and the Cultural Participation Fund remain 'outside agencies' when it comes to school and teaching practice. Nevertheless, these agencies aim to bring about durable changes in education, or are called upon to do so, by working towards quality curriculums for arts education and developing the primary school teacher's competencies in this area. This is a complex mission. What does it take to make sure that the programme has the intended effect?

We have chosen to approach this question from a public management perspective because we believe that the ability of the Ministry and the Cultural Participation Fund, in cooperation with local government, to keep the programme on track during its implementation is an essential aspect of this process. They have to be able to manage cultural organisations – which in effect function as agents of change – in such a way that the activities they are paid to undertake make a genuine contribution to the quality of arts education in and by primary schools. School autonomy in matters of educational quality, including arts education, is the starting point of our analysis. We go on to characterise the national arts education policy for

1. Continuation of the programme after 2017 is a serious option, as indicated by the agreement on culture and education signed by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science and the Councils of the major municipalities and provinces on 16 December 2013.

primary schools from 1985 to 2013, focusing on management challenges presented by the new programme, and make a number of comparisons with educational policies and steering instruments for primary education in other countries (England and France). A systematic analysis of international similarities and differences is far beyond the scope of this article but we hope that this exploratory work will spark debate during the conference *Quality Now!* and act as a basis for further research.

Our conclusion is that public management in arts education policy in the Netherlands has largely consisted of communicating values and aims, alongside temporary subsidy schemes that encourage arts organisations to supply schools with cultural and educational activities and that enable schools to pay for these activities. We also observe that there is a considerable focus on policy development and designing policy measures, while hardly any attention is devoted to policy implementation and evaluation. This tendency is not confined to arts education policy but applies to government policy in general. To use the parlance of political science: policy intentions and aims tend to be altered, bent and even 'broken' during implementation due to the interplay between the various parties involved. It takes a concerted effort to keep a policy programme on track and focused during the implementation phase. In addition to programme design, or rather as part of the programme design, an implementation strategy is needed (Noordegraaf et al. 2010).

Shaping primary education

Arts education policy for primary schools should be seen within the framework of statutory regulation and policy for primary schools in general, with regard to the aims, structure, funding and other rules or conditions governing the system of primary education. This section provides an outline of the following instruments for the system-level strategic management of primary education:

- legislation with regard to content, funding, teaching qualifications, etc;
- control and supply of textbooks;
- incentives through temporary programmes and subsidy schemes;
- monitoring and assessment of school and pupil performance;
- communication of values and aims.

Table 1 gives a brief overview of these steering instruments for primary education policy in the Netherlands, England and France. The purpose of this comparison is merely to illustrate differences and similarities in general strategic management instruments for primary education, not to provide a systematic description.

Table 1. Framework for comparing policies for primary education

Steering instruments	Netherlands	England	France
Legislation	Statutory curriculum framework: core objectives	National curriculum; programmes of study based on key stages; subject content, attainment targets	National common core of knowledge and skills (national programmes of study)
Control and supply of school textbooks	No state-approved list of textbooks	No state-approved list of textbooks	State-approved and prescribed content and format for textbooks and texts
Incentive programmes (subsidies): examples	Improving the quality of teaching and leadership, arts and cultural education (Prestatiebox)	Improving the quality of teaching and leadership (e.g. School Direct)	Improving the quality of teaching, territorial educational project(s) (PEDT)
Monitoring schools	Inspectorate: annual report	Inspectorate (Ofsted): annual report	Inspectorate (IGEN): annual report
Assessment of pupils' performance	Age cohorts: 11/12 (PRIMA) Periodical Assessment of Pupils' Performance	Age cohorts: school entry (5), 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11	Sample: at 7/8, 10/11
Communicating values and aims	Children's cognitive, personal and social development; knowledge economy, network society, advanced skills, identity, core subjects vs. Bildung, etc.	New world economy, highest standards of education; core subjects; improve literacy standards	Highest standards of education; basic skills, reduction of inequalities

Sources for Table 1:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice%20/documents/thematic_reports/113EN.pdf
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00198792/art
http://www.education.gouv.fr
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk
http://www.artsmark.org.uk/
http://www.nfer.ac.uk/what-we-do/information-and-reviews/inca.cfm

Legislation

The Netherlands has been called "world champion in school autonomy" (Scheerens 2010). There is a long tradition of autonomy in the Dutch school system, which has its roots in the religious freedom of education guaranteed by the State: the State funds schools founded by religious communities without interfering with educational content and school governance. Part of the deal is that municipalities are obliged to provide public, non-religious primary schools if enough parents ask for them. Without going into further detail on this matter, it is important to note that primary school governance is nowadays in the hands of large, independent school governing bodies with a background in public education or private (religious and non-religious) communities. These bodies usually 'own' more than one primary school and they act as employers, providing various services to individual local schools.

Schools (i.e. school governing bodies) are responsible for educational quality within a statutory framework that sets two conditions for funding: 1. *schools* are obliged to provide teaching in a number of *learning domains* – the current total is seven, one of which is arts education (including cultural heritage); 2. *teachers* need to be qualified according to certain standards. Furthermore, every school must have a school plan, updated every four years, describing the steps being taken to monitor and improve quality and outlining the school's policy on educational matters, staffing and internal quality assurance (school self evaluation). School autonomy has been particularly marked in the domain of pedagogy and educational content: curricular content, methodology and materials, including selection and use of textbooks. However, in order to receive funding, schools are expected to organise their teaching in such a way that pupils can achieve the centrally determined core objectives by the end of primary education. Learning domains and core objectives for these domains are the only specification of content and quality requirements within broader statutory values and aims. Primary education should firstly ensure continuity in pupils' development; secondly facilitate pupils' emotional, cognitive and creative development, and their acquisition of necessary knowledge and social, cultural and physical skills; and thirdly acknowledge that pupils grow up in a pluralistic society, stimulate active citizenship and social integration, and ensure that pupils learn about the various backgrounds and cultures of their peers. (Wet op het Primair Onderwijs, Article 8)

In comparison to the Netherlands, other countries, such as England, France and Germany (with its *Länder* educational legislation) seem to impose stricter pedagogical and organisational obligations on primary schools. In England, central government has overall responsibility for the education system and schools are legally obliged to teach the National Curriculum (a new National Curriculum will be introduced from September 2014). The English National Curriculum ensures that primary school pupils study the same subjects to similar standards. It is divided into key stages,

each with its own test. Schools have freedom to select their own textbooks. In France, the state defines details of the curriculums at all levels of education. Primary schools are required to guarantee their pupils access to the first stages of the Common Base of Knowledge and Skills set out by the Guidance and Planning Act for the Future of Schools. There is a commercial supply of state approved textbooks but central government prescribes content and format, approves all textbooks for use in schools, and provides a list of approved texts.

Incentive programmes

In theory, national educational policy could simply be limited to supplying funds for salaries, school buildings and facilities, and seeing to it that legal conditions and requirements are fulfilled (accountability, monitoring and assessment). In practice, however, education policy goes far beyond this remit. Schools are the object of intense public scrutiny and concern, and are subject to a host of public policies in all kinds of areas, from quality, aims and objectives to health, safety and social inclusion. To a great extent, educational policy consists of non-statutory policy that is over and above the State's legal obligations. Additional policies are often developed and implemented through temporary programmes and subsidy schemes for specific activities. Yet more programmes directed at schools emerge from other branches of government, private funds and organisations, and business interests. Schools and schoolchildren are a sizeable target group for various interest groups and they are very easy to find.

Member States of the European Union have agreed to improve the quality and equity of their education systems and have subscribed to common objectives for European Union education and training systems (Scheerens 2010). The paradigm shift towards pupil-centred (or student-centred) learning (as evidenced by the preoccupation with PISA, PIRLS) which is critical to improving education, represents a challenge to teaching traditions. In England (e.g. School Direct), the Netherlands (Prestatiebox) and France, improving the quality of teaching and leadership is a shared and additionally funded task, emphasising the need to provide opportunities for ongoing professional development.

Monitoring and assessment

While general funding conditions for primary schools in the Netherlands lay the responsibility for educational quality firmly at the door of the schools, the Inspectorate of Education is the statutory agency for monitoring the quality of schools. The Inspectorate publishes an annual report and has the authority to oblige schools to take action if their performance is found to be 'weak'. If a weak school does not meet quality standards at its next inspection, the Inspectorate may advise the Ministry to withdraw the school's funding. At the level of individual student assessments, there are

well-established procedures, including a periodic national assessment of the educational level of primary school pupils (PPON), the CITO test and cohort studies of pupils' school-careers (PRIMA, COOL). Recently, new legislation has been drafted that requires all primary schools to administer one central test for school leavers and to make pupil monitoring systems in primary and secondary schools mandatory.

In England, autonomy in the education system is balanced by a high degree of accountability, including the publication of school performance data (i.e. pupil attainment in standardised tests and external qualifications). The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) is responsible for the inspection and regulation of schools. The inspection in France consists of four units whose function it is to analyse and assess the education system and education policies: IGAENR, the Inspectorate General of the Administration of National Education and Research; IGEN, the General Inspection of National Education; regional educational inspectors/academy inspectors (IA-IPR); and National Education Inspectors (IEN). At the end of each cycle of classes, pupils take standardised national (diagnostic) tests assessing their acquisition of basic skills (French and mathematics).

Communication

In addition to legislation, incentives, monitoring and assessment, education policy always involves communication campaigns aimed at promoting various desirable developments and outcomes with regard to the education system and the role of schools Shuayb and O'Donnelll (2008, p. 2): "In the last 40 years, primary education in England and the other countries of the study has witnessed considerable change and, in some cases, restructuring. Despite a large number of initiatives and system changes, the aims, purposes, values and priorities of primary education have continued, during the period, to be shaped by two main influences or theories. The first, put forward by advocates of a child-centred and progressive education, calls for a flexible and autonomous system of primary education; the second, driven more by a country's political and socio-economic goals, emphasises centralisation and standardisation." In addition to these two discernible educational approaches, various economic, social and cultural values and perspectives are frequently referred to in general policy papers on education. A simple list of concepts must suffice here: the knowledge economy, cultural identity, network-society, 21st century skills, advanced skills, narrow education versus Bildung, etc. All of these general perspectives refer to some mix of the socialising and qualifying functions of education, and the values attached to these functions.

Shaping arts education in primary schools

We will now look at arts education policy for primary schools, giving a brief overview of changes in the main steering instruments in the Netherlands from 1985 to 2013. We will then compare these changes with similar arts education policy instruments in a some other countries.

Legislation

In its survey of arts education in Europe, Eurydice distinguishes between four *levels of responsibility* for the creation of the arts education curriculum: central, regional, local and school. The report shows that the Netherlands is the only country where this is solely a school-level responsibility and where there is not even *co*-responsibility at national level. (NB: This applies not only to arts education but to every other learning domain). Furthermore, the Netherlands is the only country where this 'institutional autonomy' results in a lack of data: since there is no national curriculum, there can be no objectively quantifiable status for arts education within this context.

While schools have remained entirely responsible for the time allocated to arts education and its content and quality, some changes in legislation have taken place since 1985. Statutory changes affected the title of arts education as a learning domain (from 'creative expression' to 'arts orientation'), the number of core objectives and their description. The number of core objectives for the domain was reduced from nineteen in 1985 to fifteen in 1993 and then to three in 1998. This was part of the general reduction of core objectives for all learning domains, within the framework of deregulation. However, it is important to note that the reduction in core objectives in arts education was more severe than the overall reduction: arts education objectives expressed as a percentage of the total number of core objectives dropped from 16% in 1985 to 14% in 1993 and then to 5% in 1998.

Incentive programmes and subsidy schemes

From 1985 to 1997, national subsidy schemes were designed to stimulate cooperation between primary schools, professional arts organisations and artists, intermediaries and local government in order to achieve a structural and balanced supply of arts activities for children. From 1998, new national subsidy-schemes were devised and deployed within the framework of the policy programme Culture and School, which was partly integrated with the Cultural Outreach Action Plan (2001-2008). While the main focus was on secondary education during the first five years of the Culture and School programme, primary education became a core concern from 2004. In that year, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science introduced a new subsidy scheme which granted primary schools €10.90 per pupil to develop their vision and policy for arts education and to organise appropriate cultural activities.

In 2006, the Minister of Education, Culture and Science announced that most primary schools now paid serious attention to arts education, and attributed this to the success of the programme and the €10.90-per-pupil subsidy scheme for schools (Van der Hoeven 2006). Referring to Ann Bamford's influential report on the state of arts education worldwide and her dictum that bad art education is worse than no art education at all (Bamford 2006), the Minister went on to say that attention should be paid to the quality of arts education. However, this assertion received no immediate follow-up. In the years that followed, cultural policy continued to focus on cultural participation and cooperation, with the Cultural Participation Fund and the Ministry's Department of Culture at the centre of the action.

In 2011, however, the Ministry announced a new policy programme to be developed for the period 2013-2016: *Quality Cultural Education for Primary Schools.* The programme's core goal is to have a sustainable impact on key conditions for the quality of arts education in primary schools by developing strong curriculums aimed at the core objectives, by raising the general class teacher's pedagogical content-knowledge, by stimulating durable cooperation between schools and cultural organisations, and by developing instruments for monitoring and assessing pupil development in the domain of arts education.

The programme consists of three subsidy schemes and supporting activities. The Cultural Participation Fund subsidises projects by local cultural organisations, together with provinces and municipalities (accounting for an annual joint total of €20 million) and educational projects by other cultural organisations (€2.5 million). The Ministry's €10.90-per-pupil subsidy scheme for primary schools has been continued and embedded within the programme's framework (nearly €19 million). The Ministry also commissioned the national institute for curriculum development (SLO) to develop a general framework of guidelines for arts education curriculums. A subsidy scheme dedicated to ensuring the professional development of general class teachers in arts education is in the making (in collaboration with the Cultural Participation Fund). Finally, the new State-funded National Expertise Centre for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA) is expected to provide support for the programme by means of various activities. These range from sharing knowledge through websites and through physical and digital networks, to advising the Cultural Participation Fund, the Ministry and cultural organisations on the monitoring and evaluation of subsidy schemes and activities, stimulating relevant research and conducting its own research.

All in all, an annual sum of between €40 and €45 million is being spent to strengthen the quality of arts education in primary schools, adding up to approximately €170 million over the whole four-year period. This constitutes a clear statement that today, quality really matters!

Monitoring and assessment

Looking at the monitoring and assessment of arts education in primary schools and the role of the Inspectorate, a significant change can be observed over the years. Although the Inspectorate devoted attention to arts education in the 1980s, complete with regular surveys by CITO (the national institute for developing tests and educational assessment), it passed over this learning domain from 1993. CITO measured educational performance in music and visual arts for the last time in 1996 and 1997 (Van Weerden & Veldhuijzen 2000; Hermans, Van der Schoot & Sluijter 2001). More recently, as the Ministry's *cultural* policy came to have a greater influence on additional arts education for primary schools, the main institutions for *educational* assessment withdrew. Instead, monitoring research among schools was instigated by the Ministry's Department of Culture in order to keep track of progress in the status of arts education in primary schools following the €10.90-per-pupil subsidy scheme for schools, launched in 2004 (Oomen et al. 2009). A thematic report on arts education in primary schools was published by the Inspectorate in 2008 but this was written by researchers from the monitor report and was based entirely on the data in that report (Inspectie van het Onderwijs 2008).

Given that the last surveys concerning educational quality in this domain – measured in terms of pupils' knowledge and skills – were carried out in the mid 1990s, there are no valid and reliable data concerning the quality of arts education in primary schools at present. The urge to rectify this situation is largely grounded in anecdotal evidence, criticism voiced by arts professionals and interested parents, and the opinions of a number of experts in arts education.

Communicating values and aims

The final aspect of arts education policy and steering instruments since the 1980s concerns its goals and the values it communicates. Arts *participation* (or cultural participation, including cultural heritage) has been the core goal and value down through the decades, with *cooperation* between schools and cultural organisations as the prevalent means to achieve this end. An important argument for promoting arts education in primary schools is that the school population is made up of children from all social classes and cultural communities. Cultural participation policies aimed directly at influencing citizens' leisure preferences have proved to be relatively unsuccessful in encouraging those with limited educational qualifications to appreciate and consume high-culture products and attend high-culture events and venues (Van den Broek 2010). In primary education, however, children from various social and cultural backgrounds can easily be reached and their appreciation of the arts will hopefully be affected by arts activities organised within and through the school. The other side of the coin is that the value of arts education in primary schools has traditionally not been judged by its educational quality but by its alleged impact on cultural participation in later life.

Table 2. Framework for comparing steering instruments in arts education in primary education (2013)

Steering instruments	Netherlands	England	France
Legislation	Learning domain of arts education (including cultural: heritage) 3 core objectives	Art and design and music. Dance and drama are part of another compulsory non-arts subject. Key stages (1-3) with attainment target level descriptions	Art and History of Art (Art and design; music and media arts) -(CE1 class, 7-8 year olds); humanist culture; (CM2 class, 10-11 year olds). Dance and drama are part of another compulsory non-arts subject. Attainment targets: ' multi-annual learning cycle' (basic learning cycle and consolidation cycle)
Incentive programmes	Quality Cultural Education	Artsmark, National Plan for Music Education	Partnerships in the domain of arts and cultural education (e.g. PAC)
Monitoring and assessment of schools		Ofsted reports on Art and Design and Music (approx. once every 3 years)	-
Assessment of pupil performance	No recommendations at central level	Descriptive scale of levels	No recommendations at central level
Communication	Trend participation > quality, co-operation schools-environment, creativity and innovation (Skills21)	Trend participation > quality, co-operation schools and other organisations, enjoyment and enrichment, social benefits	Trend participation, enjoyment and enrichment

Sources for Table 2:
http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice%20/documents/thematic_reports/113EN.pdf
http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/curriculum/primary/b00198792/art

http://www.education.gouv.fr
http://www.ofsted.gov.uk
http://www.artsmark.org.uk/
http://www.nfer.ac.uk/what-we-do/information-and-reviews/inca.cfm

Comparison in time and place

In comparison with previous periods, recent additional policy in the Netherlands seems to have changed considerably. The first of these changes has been a shift in focus towards the quality of arts education in schools. Cooperation between schools and cultural organisations remains an important goal, but is now expected to make a qualitative contribution rather than simply making cultural experiences available to pupils. The second change is that goals are now specified more clearly than they were before, which will make it easier for cultural organisations to focus their activities and for the Ministry, the Cultural Participation Fund and other stakeholders to assess the results and the impact of the programme at a later stage.

These changes in additional policies should not blind us to *structural features* that remain the same: primary schools' statutory autonomy and conditions; an incentive-based policy programme initiated and largely administered by the Ministry's Department of Culture instead of the department responsible for primary education; and the allocation of subsidies for arts education projects, weighted more heavily (both in financial terms and in terms of policy and communicative effort) towards cultural organisations via the Cultural Participation Fund than towards schools via the Ministry's €10.90-per-pupil scheme. The only real and important change so far has been *symbolic*: a policy shift away from the goals of cultural participation, cooperation and giving due attention to arts education towards quality in arts education, stressing the importance of strong curriculums and teacher competencies in arts education.

In order to keep the programme on track, an implementation strategy is needed: at both national *and* local/regional level, and at both policy *and* operational level. Monitoring and evaluation procedures will be an important part of such a quadruple strategy. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Cultural Participation Fund are working on monitoring and evaluating procedures that will give a clearer picture of what is really happening in schools and in teaching, and this demonstrates how the new programme will affect curriculums and general teacher competencies for arts education. There are also plans to have the Inspectorate look into arts education, although it is not yet clear what form this will take.

Comparing policy on public management of arts education in the Netherlands with the situation in England and France, it appears that the core objectives of arts education in these three countries are largely similar. The conception of arts education curriculums varies: both in England and

France, some arts subjects are accorded a separate place in the curriculum (e.g. music, art and design) while in the Netherlands they are conceived together as an integrated domain. Although arts education in primary schools is compulsory in the Netherlands, legislation in England and France is more specific, prescribing key stages or learning cycles. England goes even further in carrying out a regular external evaluation of arts subjects, including the assessment of pupils' achievement in these subjects. In all three countries, nationwide schemes or initiatives have been established to connect schools more closely to the world of arts and culture, to enrich the curriculum and/or to promote arts education.

Conclusion and discussion

How can we ensure the successful implementation of the new policy programme *Quality Cultural Education*? Having looked back on three decades of arts education policy for primary schools in the Netherlands, this question seems entirely appropriate. The new programme aims to bring about a serious change in the orientation of all parties involved, from stimulating cultural *participation* as a core value to ensuring and improving *quality* in arts education. It is largely the same actors who were responsible for policy and practice in the previous decades who are being called on to bring about this change: national and local authorities, cultural organisations, and schools. Given that primary schools are responsible for the quality of their curriculums and their standard of teaching, it is up to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Cultural Participation Fund and local and provincial authorities to ensure that cultural organisations act as agents of change instead of simply doing what they did before in more or less the same way as they used to.

We began our reflection on implementation issues of the new policy programme for arts education with an analysis of general steering mechanisms in Dutch primary education, comparing the Netherlands with some other countries. This comparison was by no means a systematic examination of all relevant characteristics but merely an illustration of differences and similarities for analytical purposes. Nevertheless, there is a serious question underlying this comparison, pertaining to the impact on educational quality of various systemic factors and instruments. How do policies and steering approaches at system or institutional level affect the quality of education in schools, as it is provided by teachers? In our opinion, the relative impact of the statutory regulation of educational structures, content and quality on the one hand and 'additional' steering by incentives (temporary policy programmes, subsidies) on the other should constitute a focus of future research. We are glad to leave considerations of this kind to high-stakes educational policy research, such as that carried out by the OECD.

Next, we analysed implementation issues in arts education policies for primary schools, again focusing on the Netherlands and contrasting our findings with some examples from England and France. As in the general analysis above, it proved much easier to describe differences and similarities between statutory aspects of arts education policies in different countries than to find comparable information about additional incentive policy programmes, subsidy schemes and the like. International comparative research on arts education is still in its infancy. Laborious and respectable efforts for international comparison have been made by Anne Bamford, Educult and others (Bamford 2006; Schad & Szokol 2013; Wiesand 2013). Regarding the necessary continuation of these efforts, we advocate a theory-driven approach that focuses on comparable 'big' research questions, in close connection with state-of-the-art educational policy research.

One such question would be how and to what extent arts education as practised in schools is affected by varying combinations and means of statutory regulation on the one hand and additional, incentive policy programmes on the other. A second question, following on directly from the first, would be whether various combinations of statutory and incentive-based public might suit one type of school better than another. Statutory policy may well benefit the average school – measured in terms of its ambitions and qualities – better than schools that are relatively 'weak' or 'strong' in arts education. It may therefore be more effective and efficient to gear arts education incentive programmes specifically towards 'weak' and 'strong' schools instead of all schools or average schools. An evaluation of the Quality Cultural Education programme in the Netherlands will certainly have to address the issue of how cultural organisations select schools for participation in local and regional activities and what the added value of these activities will be for the educational performance of these schools. First and foremost, international comparative research on arts education in primary schools requires reliable data on institutional, system-level differences in structure and steering mechanisms between countries one the one hand and data on differences in schools' performance in arts education on the other hand.

The Netherlands presents a clear case of 'leaving it up to schools themselves', especially in arts education but also in other subjects aside from the three R's. There are complaints about the quality of arts education in primary schools, often voiced by more highly educated parents and by arts professionals, but no valid and reliable account of the quality of arts education is available to indicate whether it is average, below or above average. This makes it impossible to draw a reliable comparison with the situation in other EU countries, where primary schools have to meet specific requirements in arts education, for example in line with a statutory national curriculum.

In order to extend our knowledge from detailed descriptions of the

varying ways in which things are done at an institutional, systemic level in different countries to an understanding of what works at this level, why it works and how it is made to work for arts education, we need strong comparative research. In the absence of research of this kind, it may be wise to stick to the zero-hypothesis that systems make no difference and that it's only school leadership and teachers' competencies that count where educational quality is concerned (cf. Riggall & Sharp, p. 363; Scheerens, this publication). If teachers are actually given the opportunity to implement policy programmes in schools, greater attention should be devoted to this level of practice, competencies, commitment and innovation rather than to national policy networks and systemic steering mechanisms. Without careful attention and strategic management at the level of educational practice, the powerful instrument of national education policy may end up missing its target altogether.

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A structural approach to cultural education in Amsterdam

Marja van Nieuwkerk

On 20 March 2013, the City of Amsterdam entered into an agreement with the school boards in primary and special education to make arts and cultural education a structural element within the school curriculum. In this covenant, the school boards and the City of Amsterdam set out the intention of providing cultural education for at least two hours a week for a period of 10 years. (Gemeente Amsterdam 2013a). The covenant represents the culmination of an important phase in a process that started over two decades ago. Three main phases can be identified in this process: the move towards greater diversity in supply of arts activities (1992-2004), the shift from a supply-oriented system to a demand-driven system of arts activities (2005-2010) and the emphasis on integration in the school curriculum and on quality (from 2010). In each phase, independent research and the critical perspective of external parties have played an important role. Cultural diversity and cooperation with other policy areas – most notably youth and education – have been the recurring themes. Furthermore, there is a strong connection between national policy on arts and cultural education and the policy pursued by the City of Amsterdam.

In 2013, Amsterdam's museums, theatres, music schools and concert halls enthusiastically invited schools to cross the cultural threshold. Activities that centre on music, theatre, dance, the visual arts or cultural heritage are slowly but surely becoming a permanent fixture on the timetable. In the past twenty years, the City of Amsterdam has made a strong commitment in this area. The central points of the most recent policy phase have been a focus on Amsterdam's great cultural diversity, encouraging demand and the schools' own vision, the quality of cultural education and its structural integration into the school curriculum.

As far back as the 1993-1996 Amsterdam Arts Plan (*Amsterdams Kunstenplan 1993-1996)*, the City was keen to emphasise its "long history in the field of amateur arts, art education and artistic development" (Gemeente Amsterdam 1992, p. 41). The available budget for arts education in 1992 was €4.9 million. This, combined with the sum of €0.8 million for the amateur arts, accounted for approximately 10% of the total cultural budget of €58 million. While it would be interesting to delve even further into the past, this first Arts Plan offers a suitable vantage point from which to survey twenty years of arts and cultural education policy in Amsterdam. At the heart of it lies a four-year planning period, both at central government level and in the City of Amsterdam. Where the City of Amsterdam is concerned, it is the Amsterdam Arts Council that advises the administration on the subsidy applications made by arts institutions. The budget for culture has grown from €58 million in 1993 to €109 million in 2013. Of this amount, over €82 million is made available to institutions in the 2013-2016 Arts Plan. The percentage of the culture budget spent on cultural education and the amateur arts has fluctuated between 8% and 12%. Arts and cultural education has remained a major focus for the City of Amsterdam ever since 1993-1996. From the beginning, it has had strong links with other themes such as cultural diversity and the policy areas youth and education.

Roughly speaking, there have been three separate phases in the development of arts and cultural education policy over the last twenty years. The first period, from roughly 1992 onwards, was about the development, diversity and organisation of the supply side of arts and cultural education. From 2005, the focus shifted to the demand from the schools, both in supporting policy pursued by central government and in Amsterdam's radical switch from a supply-oriented system to a demand-driven system. The last period, from 2010, centres on the structural integration of high-quality arts and cultural education in the schools.

Amsterdam is changing

Amsterdam enjoys a rich cultural life. Residents and visitors from home and abroad are more than happy to make use of the cultural amenities available. But even in the 1993-1996 policy period it was already clear that not all Amsterdammers benefit equally from these opportunities. An urgent need

to make the arts and arts-related activities more accessible and to expand the audience for the arts arose from both "the legitimacy of government support to the arts sector and for financial reasons". In addition, "the need to take serious account of the ever-changing demographic composition of Amsterdam cannot be emphasised enough" (Gemeente Amsterdam 1992, p. 15). At that time, approximately 50% of young people in the city under the age of 18 had a non-Western background and by 2011 this had increased to 60%.

The tone in which this first Arts Plan announced a drastic reorganisation of arts education was forthright: "Research into subsidised arts education activities has shown that it is primarily the financially better off who benefit. In view of the changing demographics of Amsterdam, among other issues, this is a particularly troubling situation in arts education" (Gemeente Amsterdam 1992, p. 41). Therefore, the proposal was to offer a coordinated programme of arts activities to all 220 primary schools and the first-year classes at all 75 secondary schools, in the form of a basic programme. This was to cost many millions to implement, funded by both the culture and the education budget, in addition to budgets for social innovation (Gemeente Amsterdam 1992, p. 42).

To this day, the "ever-changing demographic composition" is one of the main reasons behind this transition from extracurricular arts and cultural education to arts and cultural education within the school. Or, to quote Paul Collard, in his advisory report on the city's arts and cultural education: "Amsterdam is changing. This apparently simplistic statement is intended to challenge a quite different and prevalent view – that Amsterdam has changed. The difference is of great importance. (…) The challenge is to develop strategies which remain effective within a changing environment, anticipate the new challenges which will arise, and which encourage positive change rather than stifle progress" (Collard 2011, p. 20).

The first stage: towards development and diversity in supply

In Amsterdam, the policies aimed at reinforcing school-based arts and cultural programmes were set in motion in 1995. The Amsterdam Arts Education Foundation (*Stichting Kunstzinnige Vorming Amsterdam*) and the Amsterdam Music School Foundation (*Stichting Muziekschool Amsterdam*) – along with smaller institutions – ran 65 programmes that reached approximately 80% of primary schools and 50% of secondary schools. In addition, youth theatre performances reached another 9000 children and classes in music appreciation and art appreciation in museums provided by

the city authorities[1] reached another 11,000 children (Gemeente Amsterdam 1996, p. 37).

But how substantial was this experience? Research found that the city's primary schools visited a cultural institution twice a year on average, while the average for secondary schools was once a year (Haanstra & Lington 1998). It is worth noting that the providers of these activities were unable to provide reliable data. At that time, the major institutions were incapable of breaking down their visitor numbers into specific categories, while the smaller institutions recorded no data at all (Haanstra & Lington 1998, p. 23). Only a limited impression could therefore be formed of the range of pupils being reached, while there was no overview whatsoever of the composition and quality of supply. The names of the visiting schools were also unavailable. In recent decades, however, arts institutions have come on in leaps and bounds in terms of their professional development. Virtually every institution can now detail the number of pupils they have reached and the frequency with which this occurs. The more elaborate subsidy conditions set by the City have now made this a requirement.

The diversity and quality of supply has also developed significantly, partly due to two central government programmes. The Culture & School programme (1997-2013) was aimed at establishing and maintaining sustainable relationships between schools and arts institutions and at strengthening arts and cultural education within the school curriculum. The programme budget for Culture & School was intended to be matched by the provinces and the larger cities in the Netherlands, and was mainly deployed by Amsterdam to enable Arts Plan institutions to develop educational projects. In the other programme, the Cultural Outreach Action Plan (*Het Actieplan Cultuurbereik*, 2001-2008), the central government worked with provincial and municipal authorities to reach a wider and more diverse audience. As a result, under the auspices of the 2001-2004 Amsterdam Arts Plan, over twenty institutions were partly financed by the programme budgets of the Cultural Outreach Action Plan. The aim was twofold: to tap into new creative talent – mostly in a younger age range – and to attract new audiences. The key concept was diversity.

Broad remit for cultural diversity

In preparation for the 2001-2004 Arts Plan (*Allianties: Kunstenplan 2001-2004*), the City appointed its first "cultural commentator": Trevor

1. Ten free classes for visual arts education in museums (*Kunstkijkuren*, since 1948) and listening to music (*Muziekluisterlessen*, since 1954) were made available to pupils in their final years of primary education. Approximately 80% of schools made use of these. Following the decentralisation of urban districts in 1990, these provisions (known as "consensus facilities") were funded by the districts, while the organisation remained the responsibility of the city's central authorities (Education Services Office).

Davies, Director of the Copenhagen International Theatre. He was given the broad remit to take a comprehensive view of the cultural life of Amsterdam, explicitly incorporating "the changing population of the city and in particular the multicultural nature of the population and the young" (Davies 1999, p. 5). Davies spoke to over 100 key figures in the cultural sector. He pointed out in his commentary that the city's rapidly changing demographics would lead to a far-reaching review of the role of the arts sector: "the 'New Amsterdammers' are the majority of the young people and a challenge to culture" (Davies 1999, p. 48). In Davies's view, the established institutions had their hearts in the right place but lacked the requisite competencies and sensitivity. Few institutions saw cultural diversity as a challenge: "Many of the people I met, saw the problem as a problem of audiences. Few saw the problem as a question of product, expression, power or resources and even fewer saw the issue as a creative opportunity" (Davies 1999, p. 49). This was also true for the arts education institutions. They needed to be more responsive to new audiences, new needs and new teaching methods, methods that focused both on the individual and on specific groups.

The core of the Arts Plan was to encourage cooperation at all levels: between the city authorities and the arts institutions and among the institutions themselves with a view to joint programming and reaching a more diverse audience. In addition, cultural diversity became one of the main priorities in the cultural policy of the City of Amsterdam (Gemeente Amsterdam 2000a). At national level, State Secretary Rick van der Ploeg brought this sharply to the fore in his 2001-2004 Cultural Policy Document – Culture as Confrontation, which encompassed programmes such as the aforementioned Cultural Outreach Action Plan (Van der Ploeg 2000).

More control in supply

At the same time as the 2001-2004 Arts Plan, a Cultural Education Policy Document was published (Gemeente Amsterdam 2000b), coining the term "cultural education" for the first time. This term expressed the connection between arts education and the broad field of cultural heritage, and did justice to the wide range of educational programmes that the cultural institutions in Amsterdam had developed in this area. One of the priorities of this policy document was to strengthen and expand the range on offer, by bringing providers together in a single, coherent structure. This included institutions such as the Amsterdam Music School and Kunstweb[2]

2. In 1996, *Stichting Kunstzinnige Vorming Amsterdam* merged with the *Jeugd Tejaterschool*, *Scapino dansacademie* and the *Amateurtheaterschool* to form the Kunstweb Foundation (*Stichting Kunstweb*). This was in accordance with a recommendation made by the Amsterdam Arts Council to operate on the basis of "a content-based and discipline-based approach to the newly subsidised activities and not on the basis of current organisations" (Gemeente Amsterdam 1992, p. 43).

as well as the City of Amsterdam, which provided lessons in art and music appreciation. Together they were to form a "cultural education collaborative alliance".

At that time, the cultural education activities reached over 80,000 children and young people on an annual basis (Gemeente Amsterdam 2000a, p. 11), but there was still a lack of consistency between these activities. This was reflected in the analysis of the second external city commentator, Michael Wimmer from Austria, which revealed a strong need for cooperation in the field of cultural education. Wimmer noted that the promotion of diversity in supply had mainly resulted in the formation of islands – something he saw as characteristic of Amsterdam. There was a lack of direction and reflection. *How to Make Peninsulas out of Islands?* was the telling title of his commentary: "It was quite evident that cultural education is not just about doing. It is equally on reflecting what you are doing why with whom under which circumstances (…) That seems to me a major outcome of my visit: We cannot any longer trust our good will. We have to add to our particular emphasis a way of coherent strategic planning with the goal to develop a common policy on cultural education in the city. And that won't be an easy job" (Wimmer 2002, p. 2). Wimmer concluded that there was a lack of cooperation between the central city administration and the urban districts, between the traditional arts institutions and new initiatives in the districts, between the established order and new culture, between the old elite and youth culture.

Like Davies, Wimmer pointed to the need for a more effective response to cultural diversity: "Is it one of the tasks of integration policy to make islanders out of all the people from abroad? Or can this challenge – and it is a considerable challenge for a traditional society – be taken as a chance for the redefinition of the relationships not only between the old and the new members of your society but also between the traditional islanders themselves?" (Wimmer 2002, p. 2).

The second phase: towards a shift from supply to demand

The call for direction and reflection was loud and clear, as was the need for a central agency or coordinator for cultural education. Wimmer's recommendations made a valuable contribution to the thinking about a coordinating body for cultural education to align supply and demand. His critical commentary was given a platform with the Long-term Vision of Culture for 2015 (*Langetermijn-visie Cultuur 2015*) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2003a) and the 2005-2008 Arts Plan – Amsterdam Creative City (*Kunstenplan 2005-2008. Amsterdam creatieve stad)* (Gemeente Amsterdam 2005).

In both documents, the concept of "stakeholdership" was central: "Amsterdammers should see themselves as co-owners of the city through

their involvement in and responsibility for the cultural supply, and through a greater interest in the cultural expressions of 'new' Amsterdammers" (Gemeente Amsterdam 2003a, p. 13).

The aim was to make all Amsterdammers feel like a "stakeholder" in the city's cultural amenities. Cultural education and cultural participation were the key components of the stakeholdership programme. The ambitions in the field of cultural education in the Long-term Vision of Culture for 2015 were far-reaching: "Culture should become an integral component of the school curriculum. The arts should serve to enhance knowledge and insight and should provide a basis for interaction, mutual appreciation and exchange. Many schools are eager to invest in cultural education […] yet lack the organisational and financial means to do so. To achieve lasting results, various authorities must work together to tackle cultural education in a manner that transcends any one department" (Gemeente Amsterdam 2003a, p. 13).

The cooperation in the field of school-based cultural education which was so ardently wished for in the 2001-2004 Arts Plan, between departments but also between institutions for school-based education, was unfortunately lagging behind expectations. For their part, Amsterdam's city authorities provided the impetus for the profiling of new arts institutions, including the Aslan Music Centre, which mainly offered music classes for schools on the basis of non-Western musical traditions. Aslan was (and still is) an example of differentiation within music education.

Greater focus on primary education

The subsequent period can be characterised with reference to some notable developments. From 2004, the government programme Culture & School was structurally intensified in favour of primary education, the restructured lower years of secondary education and the alliances between arts institutions and schools (Van der Hoeven & Van der Laan 2004). For the first time there was also a focus on connecting cultural education activities in an ongoing learning pathway to be specifically developed for primary education and preparatory secondary vocational education (vmbo). A specific scheme: Strengthening Cultural Education in Primary Education (*Versterking van Cultuureducatie in het Primair Onderwijs*, CEPO) made incentives available to primary schools and schools for children with special needs (€10.90 per pupil per year).[3]

3. As part of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science's scheme, all schools (in primary education and primary and secondary special education) received €10.90 per pupil per year in the period 2004-2012. From the 2012-2013 school year, these funds were incorporated into the performance toolbox for primary education. Schools in secondary special education also received the amount of €10.90 per pupil per year from the performance toolbox.

In order to give the schools more of a say, the funds were channelled directly to them. Amsterdam followed this governmental lead. In addition though, the City continued to aim at the first two years of preparatory secondary vocational education (vmbo) through its own culture vouchers scheme (tokens for funding cultural activities). The Executive was very concrete in its objectives for the 2005-2008 Arts Plan. Its stated aim was that "in 2008 40% of schools in primary and general secondary education will have incorporated cultural education into an ongoing learning pathway" (Gemeente Amsterdam 2005, p. 10). Furthermore, the setting up of a new centre of expertise for cultural education, to align supply and demand, was scheduled for 2005. Similarly a redesign of the new infrastructure for cultural education was scheduled for 2007 (Gemeente Amsterdam 2003b, p. 12; Gemeente Amsterdam 2005, pp. 10-11). Another aspect to re-emerge was that the authorities concerned – central government, the City and urban districts – had to work together to coordinate their resources. A first step in this direction was taken in 2004, when the Executive Councillor for Culture Hannah Belliot and the Executive Councillor for Education Ahmed Aboutaleb forged an administrative partnership.

Demand from the schools

On the subject of how to organise a new infrastructure for cultural education, external recommendations were made by the Cultural Education Infrastructure Commission (Boonzajer Flaes 2005). These recommendations confirmed the aforementioned change of direction that the City was keen to make. Following in the footsteps of the national policy for primary education, from 2006 onwards the City of Amsterdam also focused on strengthening the role of cultural education in primary schools. A key aspect was its focus on the *schools' own needs* in terms of cultural education. Schools were given support in formulating their own cultural education policies and in purchasing programmes from arts institutions in line with their needs and goals. This was seen as the best guarantee for the effective incorporation of cultural education in a school's curriculum.

Amsterdam adopted a three-pronged approach in its demand-driven strategy. The first was the subsidy scheme for schools and arts and cultural institutions provided by the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts (€1 million per year). The second was formed by the culture vouchers: electronic financial balances (initially €16 per pupil and rising to €20 from the 2007-2008 school year) for primary education, special needs education, and the first two years of preparatory secondary vocational education. The third was the setting-up of the aforementioned expertise centre for cultural education: Mocca (Matching Education and Culture in Amsterdam).

Broad-based approach to talent development

The main focus of the 2006-2010 Amsterdam City Council Programme Agreement, People Make Amsterdam (*Mensen maken Amsterdam. Het programakkoord 2006-2010)*, was to put after-school and extracurricular talent development and the development of community schools on the political agenda: "It is of great importance that children who have talents should have the opportunity to develop these. It is therefore desirable that schools should point them in the direction of resources such as music lessons and sports clubs. A series of activities in the field of sport, recreation and arts and culture, accompanied by facilitating policies in the field of care and parent participation, creates community schools which are open during office hours. This enables pre-school and after-school care to be integrated into the formal education system" (Gemeente Amsterdam 2006, p. 12).

The 2009-2012 Arts Plan also expressed a commitment to the chain of talent development: everyone should have the opportunity to pursue a 'cultural career', from the basic to the highest level; from introductory encounters through development and mastery and leading – for some – to the achievement of excellence. As regards formal education within the school, the cultural education action plan was to be further developed and given a sound financial basis (Gemeente Amsterdam 2006, p. 19). By then, the reform of the system for cultural education had just been completed. The main ambition was now to take the 40% of primary schools that had incorporated cultural education into their curriculum and expand this to include *all* schools. The first results from Mocca's trend reports for the years 2006 and 2007 were positive, as were the initial evaluations of the use of the culture vouchers. Approximately 70% of the schools had formulated a cultural policy plan in one form or another, while the voucher budget had been almost fully utilised (Mocca 2006, 2007).

New partnerships had been initiated between the providers of music education in the city, while music appreciation classes had taken the form of coaching for teachers carried out by The Concertgebouw. The two cultural education schemes run by the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts were merged into a single scheme aimed at schools and arts institutions simultaneously (with an annual budget of over €1 million).

The mission to develop ongoing learning pathways in a substantial part of the Amsterdam primary schools however had not yet been accomplished. Therefore, in 2008, a steering committee for broad-based talent development, headed by the Executive Councillor for Sports, Arts and Culture, Carolien Gehrels, and the administrative representative of the urban districts Martien Kuitenbrouwer, set the assignment of describing in relative detail the basis that children should be given in the field of cultural education. The cultural education working group that carried out this task included representatives of school boards, the city's central administration, the urban districts (both culture and education officials)

and arts institutions. In March 2010 this culminated in a policy document entitled Art and Culture for Every Child in Amsterdam – A Basic Arts and Cultural Education Package for Children aged 4 to 12 in Amsterdam (*Voor elk Amsterdams kind kunst & cultuur – Basispakket Kunst- en Cultuureducatie voor kinderen van 4 tot 12 jaar in Amsterdam*) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2010b).

The document detailed the knowledge and skills that children need to learn in the areas of music, the visual arts and cultural heritage. These echoed the core objectives formulated at national level for education with regard to "cultural and artistic development" and "awareness of yourself and the world".[4] The starting point was a balance between active, reflective and receptive activities. The document suggested that primary schools should spend an average of at least three hours a week on the disciplines of music, the visual arts and cultural heritage. This Basic Package was the starting point for the next phase: structural integration of cultural education in the curriculum in all primary schools.

The third stage: towards incorporation and quality

Since not all children automatically come into contact with culture and the arts at home, primary education has a key role to play in this regard. This became the guiding principle for the most recent Amsterdam policy plans. Although the ambition in previously formulated policy plans was to reach all primary school pupils, in practice this resulted not so much in ongoing learning pathways as in isolated projects in most cases. Many schools had formulated their cultural education policy plans with the help of Mocca but that did not yet mean that structural integration of arts and cultural education in the primary school curriculum had been achieved.

In light of the quality offensive that the City was now eager to undertake, the central focus was on the integration and development of ongoing learning pathways for grades 1-8. This would mean that children not only became *acquainted* with art and culture, but could also *develop* in these areas, as they did in other subjects. In this respect, the diversity of schools and their population of pupils should always be taken into account. The Amsterdam focus on ongoing learning pathways reflected the nationwide attention to quality and integration of arts and culture in school curricula, as stated in policy documents such as the Quality Cultural Education

4. Core Objectives for Primary Education (Greven & Letschert 2006):
   - 54 pupils learn to use images, music, language, play and movement to express feelings and experiences and to communicate;
   - 55 pupils learn to reflect on their own work and that of others
   - 56 pupils acquire some knowledge of and gain an appreciation of aspects of cultural heritage.

programme (Zijlstra 2011; Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie 2012).

An administrative breakthrough was achieved when the ambition to establish a covenant on cultural education with school boards and urban districts was included in the 2010-2014 Amsterdam City Council Programme Agreement – Choosing the City (*Kiezen voor de stad. Programakkoord Amsterdam 2010-2014)*. The three hours of cultural education a week proposed in the Basic Package (music, the visual arts, cultural heritage) was the instrument by which this would be achieved. These hours were preferably to be taught by subject-specific teachers. One condition was that central government should support the initiative (Gemeente Amsterdam 2010a, p. 24). The Basic Package was also included in the 2010-2014 Local Educational Agenda / Young Amsterdam 2 (*Lokale Educatieve Agenda 2010-2014 / Jong Amsterdam 2*) (Gemeente Amsterdam 2011) with the aim of establishing a firm connection with the education sector. The City went on to give the introduction of the Basic Package a central position within cultural education policy in order to achieve the ambition stated in the programme agreement. In doing so, it had the backing of two reports which showed that Amsterdam's arts and cultural education system had functioned well between 2006 and 2010, although there was still room for improvement.

Building policy on reports and reviews

The City believed it was important to thoroughly evaluate the cultural education system for the period 2006-2010, prior to starting a new policy cycle. The first evaluation was carried out by Paul Collard, Director of Creativity, Culture and Education from Newcastle in the United Kingdom. Collard particularly highlighted the perspective of arts institutions and young people. In his report, Collard was very positive about the cultural system, even suggesting that Amsterdam was capable of setting a "world standard" in cultural education: "The City should aim to establish a world standard in how children and young people can, through cultural engagement, develop their talents and fulfil their potential for the benefit of the City as a whole" (Collard 2011, p. 8). Yet he also identified areas for improvement:

- Deploy cultural education more effectively as a way of achieving the city's educational priorities, including the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
- With this aim in mind, expand the skills of primary school teachers as regards integrating art and culture into their lessons.
- Set up a simplified structure for the implementation of cultural education, including a team of "cultural agents", under the City's direction.[5]

5. "Cultural agents" is a term borrowed from Paul Collard to refer to culture coaches: these are experts in a particular discipline, among others, who actively support schools in designing their cultural policies.

- Streamline the relevant funding into a single, clearly structured fund.
- Give parents a greater say in the cultural education policies of schools.

Collard's evaluation played a large part in determining the direction taken by the other important evaluation conducted by Oberon and O&S (Kieft, Van der Grinten, Donker, Gramberg & Oomen 2011). Oberon investigated how primary schools in Amsterdam assess the current system of cultural education, analysed all of Mocca's trend reports and looked at how the vouchers were spent. O&S analysed all the performance agreements that the City made with the cultural education institutions in the context of the Arts Plans. The main question was whether the shift from a supply-oriented system to a demand-driven system in 2005-2006 had been successful. Had more children come into contact with culture and the arts? (Kieft et al. 2011)

The picture that emerged was predominantly positive: the shift from a supply-oriented to a demand-driven system had been a success and schools expressed considerable appreciation for the main players in the cultural education system: Mocca, the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts (AFK) and the Amsterdam Voucher Bank. With the aid of Mocca, no less than 98% of schools had drawn up cultural education policy plans. The range of arts and cultural education activities had expanded between 2006 and 2010. Thanks to the schemes established by the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts, over 10,000 additional children were reached and the arts institutions featured in the Arts Plan also saw their audience range expand. The budget available for vouchers was almost completely utilised and the schools were positive about how this was handled. New providers also gained a strong position in the market.

Building on Collard's analysis, the researchers made a series of recommendations for further improvement:

- Ensure that cultural education is structurally integrated in the school curriculum through the development of ongoing learning pathways.
- Provide financial guarantees for cultural education in schools, including the permanent appointment of an internal culture coordinator.
- Invest in expanding the cultural education teaching competencies of primary school teachers. The deployment of an external subject-specific teacher would make a positive contribution in this regard.
- Develop a quality framework for cultural education.
- Implement the intended Basic Package in phases and differentiate where necessary.

The recommendations from both studies were incorporated when drawing up the covenant, but the first step was a pilot project that centred on the introduction of the Basic Package for music education.

Basic Package into practice: a pilot in music education

During the debates on the Arts Plan in 2008, a motion by Socialist Party Councillor Remine Alberts was adopted to investigate "how to ensure that every child in an Amsterdam primary school can receive one hour of music education and to involve the expertise of existing Amsterdam music institutions in this investigation". Conducted in 2009, this investigation resulted in an additional budget of €200,000 for a plan of action being made available and a pilot project in seven Amsterdam primary schools (Van Hemel 2009). The wish expressed by the City Council led to music being prioritised within the introduction of the Basic Package. Music education became a priority in national policy too with the 2010 launch of the campaign Music Counts! (*Muziek Telt!*,) and the programme "There is music in every child" (*Er zit muziek in ieder kind*, Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie).

In day to day school practice, however, most primary school teachers find it difficult to teach music classes, and the days when every school had a teacher who was specialised in music are long gone. In the training of future teachers, too, the focus in teacher training colleges is more on core school subjects such as language and arithmetic and less on cultural subjects, such as music. For the city of Amsterdam all the more reason to explore how to go about realising one hour of music education at all primary schools.
The Music Education pilot project, coordinated by Mocca, was intended to generate information on the conditions (substantive, organisational and financial) for the implementation of the Basic Package for music and other art disciplines. What do schools need, how should the introduction be organised and what will it cost? An important aspect of the pilot project was the development of an ongoing learning pathway in the field of music. This learning pathway was developed in collaboration with fifteen music and music education organisations in Amsterdam, which came together to produce the Framework Curriculum for Music.[6] Next, with the help of a music education expert, the practical implementation of an ongoing learning pathway was established in each pilot school. Working on the basis of demand and the context of the school, a customised plan of activities was drawn up at each school.

The monitor for the Music Education pilot showed that the independent experts in the discipline provided a major boost to the expertise in the field of music among culture coordinators, management and school teams (Herfs & Van Hoek 2012). The schools therefore greatly appreciated the experts' involvement. The pilot also highlighted the importance of coaching and training for the primary school teachers and the deployment of the subject-specific teacher *in a supporting role*: the general class teacher and the

6. Fifteen Amsterdam music organisations have come together to form a network that focuses on the educational component (Amuze network: www.amuze-amsterdam.nl).

subject teacher should stand side by side and complement each other. These experiences were also reflected in the covenant.

With the introduction of other disciplines, starting with education in the visual arts[7] and cultural heritage, independent experts in each discipline will also play a key role. Along the same lines as music education, in 2013-2014 the City has assigned Mocca to set up pilot projects in the field of visual arts education and cultural heritage for developing Framework Curriculums in collaboration with cultural institutions. For special needs education Mocca will collaborate with the Foundation Papageno.[8]

New administrative team and a covenant

In 2011, under the leadership of Executive Councillor Carolien Gehrels, the covenant talks got under way with the representatives of the urban districts (Simone Kukenheim, portfolio holder for Culture and Education in district South) and school boards (Diane Middelkoop, Chair of the Board of Directors of school association ASKO). In line with the advice of Paul Collard, the covenant partners agree "that arts and culture make a significant contribution to the development of children and young people into self-aware, critical and creative citizens" (Collard 2011, pp. 8-9). Cultural education allows children and young people in Amsterdam to become acquainted with art and culture, teaches them to enjoy these areas of life, enables them to develop their talents and contributes to citizenship and a bond with society.

The underlying principle for the covenant is a budget-neutral implementation of the Basic Package. This is in contrast to previous Art Plans which often gave rise to wishes and ambitions that required "additional funding" (Gemeente Amsterdam 1992, p. 42). Paul Collard was also convinced that the transition could be realised within existing budgets. Especially in the field of music, it is possible to arrange a more efficient use of resources. Now that the urban districts are also involved in the talks, the districts' funds have become part of the total funding.

Another important aspect is the emphasis on the structural integration of arts and cultural education in the school curriculum and working with ongoing learning pathways. In addition, in the 2013-2016 Outlines for Arts and Culture, a shift from subsidising extracurricular education to school-based education was announced. The City focuses on the financial support of cultural education within regular school hours.

7. In the Basic Package and the covenant, the term "visual arts" is used for all forms of visual education.
8. The Papageno Foundation was established in 1997 by Aaltje and Jaap van Zweden to help children with autism. (www.stichtingpapageno.nl/en/)

An independent consultant was commissioned to direct this shift from extracurricular to school-based activities in the field of music, along with the existing music education institutions (Amsterdam Music School, the Learning Orchestra and Aslan Music Centre). This was quite a departure from the past: these institutions were now involved as partners in the process.

During the ratification of the 2013-2016 Arts Plan For the City and the Arts (*Kunstenplan 2013-2016. De stad en de kunst*) in 2012, the City Council ultimately decided that this shift should be carried out in phases. An amendment was adopted to the effect that in "the next Arts Plan, further agreements would be made about the balance between school-based and extracurricular activities, with the aim of achieving a ratio of 80% school-based and 20% extracurricular in 2017" (Gemeente Amsterdam 2013b, pp. 95-96). For the first time, *all* arts institutions in the Arts Plan were required to contribute to the chain of talent development. Four distinct but complementary phases can be identified in this chain: introduction, development, competency and excellence. Introduction takes place during school hours but also in active arts pursuits during leisure time. The development phase involves the deepening of knowledge and improvement of skills, both inside and outside the school. Competency is aimed at moving on to professional arts and cultural education, while excellence relates to graduates of exceptional talent (Gemeente Amsterdam 2013b, p. 14). Institutions that focus on extracurricular cultural education (competency) can make a project application for their programmes to the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts.

Cooperation agreement with teacher training institutes

To fully ensure the future of cultural education in the school curriculum, it is vital to work with teacher training programmes. It is therefore especially notable that, alongside the signing of the covenant by the school boards, a cooperation agreement was also established with Amsterdam's leading teacher training institutes: the training programme for art teachers at the Amsterdam School of the Arts and the training programmes for primary school teachers at the University of Amsterdam, Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences and iPABO Teacher Training Institute. The cooperation agreement states the intention "of ensuring that the curriculums of the teacher training programmes correspond more effectively with the input of well-trained primary school teachers and subject-specific teachers required to deliver the Basic Package" (Gemeente Amsterdam 2013a, pp. 21-22). In collaboration with the training programmes a practical agenda for future cooperation will be worked out, centring on the alignment between the curriculum for professional arts training and the teacher training programme. From the Music Education pilot project, it emerged that the majority of schools opt for a teacher support model in which the music teacher works with the class teacher. The knowledge and skills gained

during training by subject-specific teachers on the one hand and general class teachers on the other hand are complementary and both sides are necessary for providing good cultural education. The Amsterdam-based training institutes therefore make every effort to achieve better coordination between the curriculums. The expertise of arts institutions can be utilised in this respect.

Basic package for arts and cultural education

In the covenant, the city's central administration, the urban districts and the school boards set out their collective ambitions and agreements regarding the introduction of the Basic Package for Arts and Cultural Education in primary schools and schools for children with special needs in Amsterdam. By extension, the City offers three free general services:

- The development of Framework Curriculums and global ongoing learning pathways for music, visual arts education and cultural heritage.
- The deployment of independent experts to assist schools in setting up their own ongoing learning pathway in one of the arts disciplines or in cultural heritage.
- Free transportation to arts institutions, with six trips for each pupil during their time at primary school. These visits should fit within the ongoing learning pathway and the school's activity plan.[9]

For music, the City of Amsterdam also offers training and coaching (an average of 10 hours per year per school) and the deployment of a music teacher (13 hours per class per year, phased in from 2013-2014 and starting in classes 3-4). These facilities are mainly financed by the City and the urban districts. School boards are required to use the €10.90 they receive from central government (see note 4) entirely for cultural education and to make enough work hours available to coordinate the cultural education at their school. Schools can decide for themselves whether or not to join in with the Basic Package and are also free in their choice of arts disciplines. In line with the Basic Package, the City opted to offer free facilities primarily in the fields of music, the visual arts and cultural heritage. As a condition for participation in the Basic Package, schools are required to provide at least two hours of cultural education in an ongoing learning pathway. The threshold has deliberately been kept low and has been adjusted downwards, with two instead of three hours of cultural education in the first five years of the covenant period. Furthermore, in consultation with the school boards, scope

9. The City wants all pupils to become acquainted with Amsterdam's major cultural institutions. Especially for the youngest age groups, safe transportation is a problematic aspect. Judging by the reactions received from schools, the free culture bus and culture boat services could well be the answer to the transport issue. In particular, the lower grades (1 to 3) and the middle grades (4 to 6) make use of the boat (www.cultuurbusamsterdam.nl).

has been granted for a free hour, to be spent on a discipline of the school's choice. This acknowledges the request for the chance to devote time to other disciplines such as theatre and dance within school hours.

The Mocca expertise centre has been assigned the new tasks of developing Framework Curriculums, supporting schools in the development of ongoing learning pathways and coordinating the deployment of independent experts in artistic and cultural disciplines. These are to be carried out in consultation with arts institutions and academies. To ensure the best possible alignment between the supply side and the wishes of the school, Mocca will work closely with arts institutions within and beyond the context of the 2013-2016 Arts Plan. Mocca also coordinates school transportation to arts institutions. The city's central administration subsidises Mocca and the transportation to arts institutions for the sum of €1.2 million.

For the coordination of the facilities for music the Mosa foundation was established (*Music at School in Amsterdam*).[10] The free deployment of a music teacher for 13 hours a year is the most costly part of introducing the Basic Package. This is financed by funds freed up by the budgetary shift from extracurricular to school-based education. The majority of the activities carried out by the Amsterdam Music School will now take place within the schools. In this regard, the Amsterdam Music School collaborates with other partners within Mosa to produce a location plan and timetable that covers the entire city. Within the budget for subsidised music education, there is still a limited amount available for extracurricular activities and the progression of talent. The deployment of the experts and the coaching are funded by the provisions of the urban districts (see note 2 on the "consensus facilities": art appreciation and music education; approximate budget €1 million). The City's system of culture vouchers will be maintained with a budget of €1.5 million. Schools receive €20 per pupil which they can spend as they wish on cultural education.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Basic Package was introduced in the 2013-2014 school year. At the end of this school year, interviews will have been held with approximately 180 schools about their ongoing learning pathways in two arts disciplines. Ultimately, the aim is for grades 1 to 8 to receive at least two hours of cultural education in approximately 80% of all 236 schools in the school year 2017-2018. That amounts to a total of 50,000 pupils. The extent to which these plans are realised in practice will be monitored by the City and in Mocca's

10. This is a collaborative venture by the institutions within the "music education section" of the 2013-2016 Arts Plan (Amsterdam Music School, the Learning Orchestra, Aslan Music Centre), which work with The Concertgebouw, Amsterdam Noord Music School and Zuidoost Music Centre under the umbrella of Mosa.

trend reports. In addition, performance agreements will be made with all of the institutions in the 2013-2016 Arts Plan about their educational activities. The arts institutions are required to give an annual account of these activities.

The establishment of an independent Quality Council, with wide-ranging expertise in the field of cultural education, is an important part of the covenant. This Quality Council will monitor the introduction of the Basic Package, assess the quality of the education provided and identify trends in the field of cultural education in Amsterdam. It will also assess the information provided by Mocca and arts institutions, and carry out school visits. The Quality Council can also commission independent research into aspects of quality, such as the impact of cultural education on the school, the teachers, the subject matter and pupils' learning outcomes. The covenant partners discuss the Quality Council report at their annual meeting.

For the development of a quality framework for cultural education, Oberon recommends building on the experience gained through the Quality Strategy for Primary Education (*Kwaliteitsaanpak voor het Basisonderwijs*, KBA) (Kieft et al. 2011, p. 9). This programme was launched by former Executive Councillor for Education, Lodewijk Asscher in 2009, in collaboration with the school boards. The outlook for primary education in Amsterdam was relatively grim at that point: in 2008, 42 of the 200 primary schools had been evaluated as weak or very weak by the national Inspectorate of Education. The programme proved to be successful: in 2012, only 12 schools remained in these negative evaluation categories (Gemeente Amsterdam 2012, pp. 248-249). Several tools were developed, including a thorough quality analysis of the school, the drawing up of an improvement plan and the deployment of independent education experts. The Quality Strategy for Primary Education will enter a new phase with the launch of the Quality Office on 1 January 2014. Under this new set-up, school boards will themselves arrange for an independent party to provide an independent view of the quality of education they provide. The challenge is to forge a meaningful link between the assessment of quality of cultural education and the Strategy's expertise in assessing the quality of education.

Looking to the future

The City of Amsterdam, working with the three other major cities of Rotterdam, The Hague and Utrecht (G4), has made a major commitment to preserving the priority status accorded to cultural education, despite the cutbacks in the national culture budget since 2011. In 2013, together with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the G4 has drawn up a ten-year administrative framework for Culture and Education (2013-2023), signed by 35 municipalities. The joint advisory report *Cultuureducatie:*

Leren, creëren, inspireren! (Cultural Education: Learn, create, inspire!) by the Education Council of the Netherlands and the Council for Culture has determined the substantive direction of the administrative framework. At its core is the assertion that "culture must be reinstated at the heart of education and is more than just an introductory encounter" (Onderwijsraad & Raad voor Cultuur 2012).

The administrative framework for Culture and Education lays down the activities for the longer term, both financially and in terms of content. The national Quality Cultural Education programme, which was launched in 2013, is the starting point. Its aim is to guarantee the quality of cultural education in primary schools by means of a consistent approach nationwide. In view of this, a matching scheme with municipalities, carried out by the Cultural Participation Fund, has become an important component of the programme. As advocated by the municipalities in their administrative consultations in 2011 and 2012, good cultural education should be accessible to everyone and the domains of Education and Culture have a shared responsibility to realise this objective. These two priorities are what the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Netherlands' 35 largest municipalities (G35) are aiming for in the long term. The municipalities have the means to make this happen in the form of local cooperation agreements with school boards and other educational institutions. Amsterdam has set an example in this regard with its covenant on the implementation of the Basic Package for Arts and Cultural Education.

Over the past twenty years, various courses of action have been taken in Amsterdam with the aim of achieving an improvement in the quality of cultural education. A number of developments have already been mentioned in the description of the shift from a supply-oriented to a demand-driven system of cultural education: the focus on primary education and the central position given to the needs of the schools. This focus on primary education, both at central government level and in the City of Amsterdam, has been reinforced over the last five years. As a result, the collaboration between the departments of culture, education and youth has also become more intensive. The strong correlation between national policy and the policy pursued in Amsterdam relates both to the availability of government funds and the shared vision of how these funds can best be used.
Pride of place has consistently been given to research, pilots and the critical gaze of the outsider as a catalyst for change. The deployment of arts advisors is nowadays an integral part of the Arts Plan system (Gemeente Amsterdam 2009a). The justification for providing cultural education within schools has not changed substantially over the last twenty years. All of the critical external observers to date have pointed to the changing composition of the population as an important motivation for providing cultural education within regular school hours. The objectives in the field of cultural education are becoming increasingly well defined in practical terms. In the latest

period, continuous monitoring has taken place to check whether the objectives are actually being achieved.

Last but not least, broad support within the City Council and the inclusion of specific targets in the programme agreement have led to breakthroughs being made in recent times. The development of the covenant with the urban districts – involving the portfolios of both education and culture – and the school boards has united all ranks. The premise that the introduction had to be budget neutral meant that difficult choices had to be made. A firm coordinating hand was required, but all parties shared a common mission. There was great support from the main implementing parties, i.e. Mocca and music education institutions. They face a tremendous challenge in the period ahead. The shared focus on primary schools and special schools means that all Amsterdam's children are being reached, with the diversity of the population and the city as the starting point. All those involved are keeping their finger on the pulse during implementation and are thinking hard about what comes next. In the words of Paul Collard: "Amsterdam is changing".

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Quality Now!
Arts and cultural education to the next level

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The National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA) collects, develops and circulates knowledge on arts and cultural education and amateur arts. This knowledge is shared through numerous forums such as websites, newsletters, publications, knowledge communities, presentations and meetings. The LKCA works jointly or for policy makers, board members and directors, researchers, professionals and volunteers in arts and cultural education and participation

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science works to create a smart, skilled and creative environment in the Netherlands. Its mission is to ensure that everyone gets a good education and is prepared for responsibility and independence. The Ministry also wants people to enjoy the arts, and aims to create the right conditions for teachers, artists and researchers to do their work.

The Cultural Participation Fund (FCP) aims to promote participation in the arts and culture by encouraging people to take an active part in artistic and cultural activities. In achieving this, we work closely with governments, (private) funds, private partners and research institutions. We provide funding to institutions, stimulate debate, initiate research, and facilitate knowledge-sharing in the field of cultural education, the amateur arts, and popular culture.

Amsterdam is an international city of culture, offering a diverse selection of arts. The covenant of the Standard Package for Art and Cultural Education in primary and special education is considered to be unique to Amsterdam's cultural life. It is a joint long-term investment (10 years) by the central municipality, the city districts and almost every school board. It is designed to invest in good quality cultural education; its goal is to provide up to three hours cultural education per week at every school. With the covenant Amsterdam is focusing on a diverse audience and artists of tomorrow, and aiming for a world standard in cultural education.

In a tradition of European conferences focusing on cultural education, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the National Centre of Expertise for Cultural Education and Amateur Arts (LKCA), the Cultural Participation Fund (FCP) and the City of Amsterdam are organising the conference Quality Now! Arts and Cultural Education to the Next Level (Amsterdam, 12-14 February 2014).

As an introduction to the conference LKCA has issued this special edition of their Dutch-language journal Cultuur+Educatie, on research into learning, teaching and arts and cultural transfer. Central to this special edition is the commitment to quality enhancement of cultural education in primary schools in policy and practice.

Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap

Gemeente Amsterdam