



## MAKE Learn: A partnership between Craft Scotland and Panel Scottish Parliament Briefing 20 April 2023

MAKE Learn is championing the value of craft to ensure it is recognised as an art form and a creative industry, which is included, and appropriately prioritised, within Scotland's education curriculum.

### Specifically, we are calling for:

- \* An entitlement for every primary school child of 10 hours of craft and making in the classroom a year. This is equivalent to 1% of the school year.
- \* The inclusion of craft in the Expressive Art curriculum as an addition to the Art and Design Experiences and Outcomes Benchmarks.

### To realise the full potential of craft and making skills we believe:

- \* Makers and craft professionals must be employed to work in classrooms to support pupils' and teachers' creativity and skills development.
- \* The assessment model needs to be changed or expanded to facilitate measurement of the learning and development achieved through arts activity.

### This would be achieved by:

- \* Developing a national Craft and Making Teachers' CLPL network to provide high quality craft learning opportunities for teachers working across age, stage, and discipline.
- \* Developing a central resource for schools with free craft education resources to support the delivery of craft in the classroom: curated craft guides, 'how to' videos, and Scottish makers' profiles and contact information.
- \* Creating time for creative enjoyment and play within the curriculum, essential for developing resilience and building confidence.
- \* Equitable access to arts participation for all, ensured through committed time within the curriculum, funding for materials, learning resources, and professional artists engagement.
- \* A move to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Maths) focus within the curriculum.
- \* An approach to arts learning that supports individuality and originality, supported through teacher development (CLPL) and professional practitioner engagement and new assessment models.
- \* The delivery of equalities, diversity and inclusion targets through participation in the arts.

# The wider benefits of craft and making in education

## Craft Skills to support Learning and Attainment

The loss of peripatetic arts specialists at primary school level has contributed to a loss of craft learning opportunities in the BGE phase, with both makers and secondary teachers acknowledging that by the time pupils choose subjects for their higher phase it is almost 'too late' to introduce basic craft techniques. Makers visiting schools have witnessed poor hand skills, children aged 12–13 unable to sew on a button, tie shoelaces or cut in a straight line.

## Learning for Sustainability

Craft and making are in a unique position to support learners to develop the skills for life, learning, and work in a future that demands we respond to the climate emergency and shift our values relating to the way we use, reuse, repurpose, recycle, and upcycle materials.

## Interdisciplinary Learning

Craft education needs to be supported as it will drive employability in a range of sectors, build transferable life skills and contribute to learning and attainment across the curriculum. With the capacity to combine physical skill and cognitive ability, and be expressive and useful, craft and making can unlock new, unexpected connections across the curriculum.

## Resilience and Recovery

Children and young people require support to recover from the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, with focus on their wellbeing, on their educational attainment

and development of life skills. Craft is internationally recognised as having a positive influence on mental health and wellbeing for those who practise it.

## Assessment

The education system must ensure that careers or interest in arts, culture and creative industries are highly valued for the contribution they make to the individual and wider society by allowing adequate space within the curriculum and investment in resources (materials, equipment, specialist expertise), and by developing suitable ways to measure and celebrate pupil attainment and success in these areas.

## Key priorities for a future Scottish education system

1. Equitable access to arts participation for all, ensured through committed time within the curriculum, funding for materials, learning resources, and professional artists' engagement.
2. A move to STEAM focus in the curriculum.
3. An approach to arts learning that supports individuality and originality, supported through teacher development (CLPL), professional practitioner engagement and new assessment models.
4. The delivery of equalities, diversity and inclusion targets through participation in arts.
5. Learning for Sustainability.

### Value of craft to physical and mental wellbeing

Creating time for creative enjoyment and play within the curriculum is essential for developing resilience and building confidence. The benefits are numerous:

- \* Craft and making education incorporates both hands-on learning (learning by doing) and expert-oriented learning (learning the right way to do things) and so builds transferable life skills, contributing to attainment and employability.
- \* Craft and making has been shown to provide respite from digital overload.
- \* Craft and making skills provide a fundamental means of preserving Scotland's material heritage and of supporting the next generation to respond to the climate emergency.
- \* Craft and making provides space in the curriculum and in the classroom for arts activity, supporting young people's mental health and wellbeing, building resilience and confidence.

Craft has the capacity to unlock learning across the curriculum. Every child and young person's individual needs could be supported and addressed through development of the following actions:

1. A national Craft and Making Teachers' CLPL network providing high quality craft learning opportunities for teachers working across age, stage, and discipline.
2. A central resource to host school-focused free craft education resources supporting the delivery of craft in the classroom: curated craft guides, 'how to' videos, and Scottish makers' profiles and contact information.

Ensuring arts activity is adequately resourced within schools is fundamental to ensuring equity of access and developing an appreciation of the value of arts within the curriculum, and is vital for instilling confidence in pupils with abilities and talent. Funding pupil engagement with professional artists and makers will also support diversity and inclusion, by giving them the opportunity to hear about different lived experiences.

# The role of craft in creating a workforce fit for the future



Bringing the craft and education sectors together to learn from each other, share best practice and resources, and develop ambitious collaborative projects requires national coordination, dedicated resources, and strategy. By increasing awareness and appreciation for craft and making education's contribution to learning, attainment, and employability, the sector will be supported to find a stronger position within the curriculum – ensuring a more equitable distribution of craft and making which has known benefits to all learners in Scotland.

Providing more connections between and across sectors – arts, education, healthcare – would facilitate positive programming or interventions that would support children and young people on an equal basis. Significant investment could reverse the decline in craft and making in Scotland's schools, and raise the perception of craft as a positive contributor to learning, attainment, and employability.

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**“Craft activities engage children who might otherwise not be engaged in other areas of the curriculum.”**

**Primary School Teacher**

**“Problem solving, group work, communication skills, independence, learning to regulate challenging behaviours, learning new transferable technical skills, manual dexterity, interdisciplinary learning – the full range of curriculum subjects can be incorporated into craft education projects.”**

**Autism Spectrum Disorder Specialist**

This publication is informed by the research study, *Craft and Making Education in Scotland Today*, the *MAKE Learn Pilot Schools Project* and MAKE Learn's submission to the National Discussion on Education. Visit the MAKE website to learn more and to download the full report.

