

## PRESS RELEASE

### Minister O’Gorman announces consultation on new Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Childcare.

15 Feb 2023

**Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O’Gorman, today announced a public consultation process inviting artists, early years educators, school-age childcare practitioners and all stakeholders in the arts, early learning and care and school-age childcare sectors to participate in the further development of the recently published *Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Care*.**

Under the Creative Youth Plan, a key pillar of the Creative Ireland Programme, work began in 2019 to develop key principles to underpin young children’s quality engagement with the arts in early learning and care settings. Research was commissioned, a steering group was established and a consultation event with artists and early years educators was held. While the Covid-19 pandemic caused some disruption to original timelines, the *Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Care* were published in October 2022 for the purpose of public consultation and testing.

While the draft principles were conceived from an early learning and care perspective, this consultation also aims to explore their relevance to school-age childcare and the ways in which they may be adapted to better support engagement with the arts in school-age childcare.

The Principles will purposefully remain in draft form to allow artists, early years educators and school-age practitioners the opportunity to use and explore the validity of the principles in practice.

Welcoming the public consultation, Minister O’Gorman said:

“Participation in cultural and creative activities promotes the wellbeing of the individual, the community and the nation. It is the aim of Government that every baby, child and young person in Ireland will have access to creative activities. I welcome this consultation, on the *Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Care*, as part of our commitment to the Creative Ireland Programme, and look forward to your feedback so that collectively we can nurture and enhance the creative experiences of babies and children.”

The Draft Principles, and full details of the submission process, can be found here:

<https://www.gov.ie/en/consultation/e80be-consultation-on-draft-principles-for-engaging-with-the-arts-in-early-learning-and-care>

The closing date for receipt of submissions is **Wednesday, 31 May 2023**.

**ENDS**

#### Notes to Editors:

The Creative Ireland Programme is a whole of Government initiative which places creativity at the centre of public policy. It is built around five pillars including Creative Youth. The Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY), as a key partner in the implementation of Creative Youth, is responsible for a number of actions contained within the Creative Youth Plan.

In addition to this consultation the DCEDIY are partnering with The Arts Council to pilot an *Arts in Early learning and Care and School Age Childcare* scheme. The pilot aims to support professional artists and arts organisations to work with early learning and care and school-age childcare settings, and will incorporate the exploration and development of the *Draft Principles for Engaging with the Arts in Early Learning and Care*. The pilot aims to include children aged Birth-3, 4-6 and 7+ across a variety of settings in different parts of the country. It is anticipated that a total of eight settings, and up to four artists/arts organisations, will participate in the pilot.

Further information can be found at: <https://www.artscouncil.ie/Arts-in-Ireland/Young-people--children-and-education/Early-childhood-arts/>

Findings from both the consultation and the pilot *Arts in Early learning and Care and School Age Childcare scheme* will inform the finalised publication of the principles, the development of practice resources materials and accompanying CPD training.