



Lead Creative Schools Frequently asked questions



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales

May 2015



Noddir gan
Lywodraeth Cymru
Sponsored by
Welsh Government

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Arts Council of Wales is committed to making information available in large print, easy read, braille, audio and British Sign Language and will endeavour to provide information in languages other than Welsh or English on request.

Arts Council of Wales operates an equal opportunities policy.

The application process

1. Which schools are eligible to apply to participate in the Lead Creative Schools scheme?

All local authority maintained and voluntary-aided primary and secondary schools, including special schools, in Wales are eligible to apply to be Lead Creative Schools including specialist teaching facilities within schools.

2. How do schools apply?

Before applying schools are advised to read the Lead Creative Schools Prospectus and they apply online. There is a separate application form for groups of schools.

3. Can schools apply as a group?

Yes, schools can apply as a group. Groups of small primary schools or a secondary school and a number of their feeder primary can apply and they will receive a shared grant. Given the levels of funding available we would normally expect groups to be made up of no more than 3 schools, however there is flexibility for larger groups of schools to apply.

4. What is the deadline for applications?

The deadline for applications in the first year is **17.00 on Friday 17 July 2015**. The deadlines for future years will be announced in due course.

5. What information do schools need to provide when they apply?

Schools need to complete the application form.

The assessment and decision making process

6. How are applications assessed?

All eligible applications are assessed by Arts Council of Wales against their evidence of the following:

- the level of commitment of the senior management team and their ability to mobilise the schools community;
- the value they place on developing the creative skills of learners and their commitment to giving learners an active role in Lead Creative School activities;
- evidence of how the scheme can support their vision and deliver their school development priorities;
- an explanation of how they plan to use participation in the scheme to support improvements in any or all of the following: literacy, numeracy and in narrowing the gap; and
- the capacity of the school to deliver the programme effectively.

In selecting schools, the decision making panel will ensure that there is a balance of schools across the regions of Wales and between primary, secondary, special schools. They will also ensure that rural and Welsh medium schools are fairly represented; and give priority to schools facing significant challenges including deprivation.

7. Who makes the decisions?

The decision on the selection of Lead Creative Schools will be carried out by an expert national panel which will include representatives from the Arts Council of Wales and the regional education consortia.

8. What is the role of the regional education consortia in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme?

We encourage schools to discuss their plans to apply to be a Lead Creative School with their Challenge Advisor. The regional education consortia will have a role in making decisions on Lead Creative Schools. For those schools in the scheme we expect them to have discussions on their plans as a Lead Creative School with their Challenge Advisors.

9. If a school is unsuccessful can they complain?

Arts Council of Wales has a complaints procedure which can be found at:
http://www.artscouncilofwales.org.uk/c_governance/complaints-procedure

Funding

10. How much funding will each school receive as a Lead Creative School?

We expect that schools will be in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme for two years, receiving a grant of between £5,000 and £14,500 each year. After their first year schools will have to demonstrate they have met the requirements of the scheme and that they have a clear plan for the next phase of their involvement before they receive their grant for year two. More details about the levels of grants can be found in the Prospectus.

11. What other benefits are there for participating schools?

Alongside the funding schools also receive support from a Creative Agent who will work with them throughout their journey as a Lead Creative School. Arts Council of Wales pays for the costs of the Creative Agent.

Participating schools and their teachers will also receive free professional development and networking opportunities.

12. What can the Lead Creative Schools grant be spent on?

The grant a school receives supports the costs of their project work as a Lead Creative School. The grant can only be used to pay for professional Creative Practitioners to work in school and for the cost of materials.

13. Do schools have to contribute funds to the budget and can school staff time be included?

Schools are expected to make a minimum contribution of 25% of the grant total. This may be met by cash from the school budget and/or other grants (for example the Education Improvement Grant or, if relevant, Pupil Deprivation Grant). Schools can also include the cost of supply cover they incur when participating teachers are attending induction and networking events and for the cost of the time spent on the project by the School Coordinator. More details are provided in the Prospectus.

14. Can schools reapply if they are not successful in the first year?

There will be an annual application round for Lead Creative Schools and schools can reapply if they were not successful in the first year. During the academic year 2015/16 it is anticipated that around 80 applications from across Wales will be funded. During the life of Creative Learning through the Arts – an action plan for Wales it is envisaged that one third of all schools in Wales will have the opportunity to participate in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme.

Lead Creative School activities

15. Do schools need to find an artists or creative practitioners and name them in their application?

No. Lead Creative Schools will begin their journey by working with a specially trained Creative Agent who will be matched to the school by Arts Council of Wales. Together the school community and the Creative Agent will diagnose and clarify the key issues, concerns or enquiry important to meeting the school's development priorities. From these conversations ideas for project activity are developed and then the process of selecting Creative Practitioners will begin.

16. What are the commitments on schools who participate in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme?

The commitments of a Lead Creative School are provided in detail in the prospectus. In summary, alongside the financial commitment, schools are expected to commit resources, time and capacity to their project work and its planning, implementation and evaluation. They should be willing to influence practice in their own school and to share this with other schools.

17. Why should schools take part?

The Lead Creative Schools Scheme allows schools to enter into a long term programme to develop new approaches to teaching and learning working alongside creative professionals in the classroom. Each Lead Creative School receives funding which allows them to plan, implement and evaluate a bespoke programme of work linked directly to their school challenges.

The programme is practical and aims to improve outcomes for learners, to nurture their creativity, to support them to achieve their potential and to prepare them with skills for life. It also provides teachers with a rich practice-based professional development opportunity which allows them to nurture their creativity and development their practice. Before their begin their work as a Lead Creative School, participating teachers will also take part in a 2 day professional development programme. Lead Creative Schools will also have a wide range of opportunities to network and share their practice.

18. What do we mean by creativity?

At the heart of the programme is an acknowledgment that all children and young people have the capacity to develop their creative skills. The success of the Lead Creative Schools Scheme depends on promoting the forms of creativity which evidence suggests has positive educational benefits. Therefore in the scheme we use a definition of creativity developed by Guy Claxton, Bill Lucas and Ellen Spencer of the Centre of Real-World Learning at Winchester University. Their work focussed on the need to develop a language around creativity which teachers and pupils recognised, valued and were comfortable to use and this was tested in classroom and found to be important in learning and easy to recognise.

In the Lead Creative Schools Scheme creativity is defined as five creative habits of mind as follows: Inquisitive, Persistent, Imaginative, Collaborative and Disciplined. More details about this is provided in the prospectus.

19. How can the programme support individual schools improvement priorities and school action plans following Estyn inspections?

The programme is specifically aimed at supporting schools to develop bespoke projects which address their individual school improvement priorities and actions plans.

20. What areas of the curriculum can projects take place in?

Projects can take place across all areas of the curriculum and can also support cross curriculum working to.

21. Can projects happen across more than one curriculum subject?

Yes, projects can happen across more than one curriculum subject providing opportunities for cross-curricular learning and can support teachers to work creativity and collaboratively across subject boundaries.

22. When will the work in Lead Creative Schools start and end?

It is anticipated that most schools will be in the scheme for two years. The work in each school will generally start with planning in the Autumn and implementation work will happen in the Spring Term. In the Summer Term the year's cycle will end with a period of reflection and evaluation which will support schools to both imbed the learning and also consider their next steps as a Lead Creative School.

23. How many pupils and teachers can be involved in the Lead Creative School projects?

This will be different in each school as each project will be bespoke. It is envisage that each Lead Creative School will identify a small number of teachers and a group of learners that will have an active role in the project across an academic year.

Participating schools are also expected to actively share learning through the establishment of a Lead Creative Schools Professional Learning Network. This approach allows other teachers in the school to have the opportunity to develop new approaches to teaching and learning.

24. Can the project activities happen after school?

The Lead Creative School Scheme focusses on working in the curriculum with activities happening during the school day. It is not an after school programme.

25. How long are schools in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme?

We expect that schools will be in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme for two years. After their first year schools will have to demonstrate they have met the requirements of the scheme and that they have a clear plan for the next phase of their involvement before they receive their grant for year two.

26. What CPD opportunities will be offered to Lead Creative Schools?

The scheme offers many CPD opportunities and at its heart is practice based learning for teachers. Over the course of an academic year participating teachers will have the opportunity to work alongside creative professionals and their learners to plan, implement and evaluate a bespoke project in the curriculum. This way of working allows teachers to focus on their own professional development needed and allows them to experiment with new approaches to teaching and learning in the own classrooms.

Participating teachers and the School Coordinator will also take part in an inspiring and practical two-day induction to support their understanding of the scheme, of creative learning and the development of creative skills. Schools are also expected to actively share learning through the establishment of a Lead Creative Schools Professional Learning Network. This approach allows other teachers in the school to have the opportunity to develop new approaches to teaching and learning.

Roles in the Lead Creative Schools Scheme

27. What is the role of the School Coordinator, Creative Agent and Creative Practitioner?

Information on all the roles in Lead Creative Schools is included in the Lead Creative Schools prospectus and is also available at www.artscouncilofwales.org.uk/what-we-do/creative-learning/the-lead-creative-schools-scheme

Each Lead Creative School will select a School Coordinator who will be responsible for driving the work in school forward. Their role will be to ensure that the work meets the development needs of the school, for managing its successful implementation and for working closely with the school's Creative Agent and the school staff involved. The School Coordinator will be responsible for advocacy and dissemination and for ensuring that the monitoring and evaluation requirements of the scheme are fulfilled.

Arts Council of Wales will appoint and pay for a Creative Agent for each school or a group of schools in the scheme. Their role is to act as a kind of critical friend supporting schools to analyse their needs and to consider how the work can be most effectively introduced and owned by them. They work with schools at the planning phase ensuring that projects meet the schools development priorities and help them to identify and select Creative Practitioners. Creative Agents continue to work with schools throughout the project work and beyond supporting them to reflect, evaluate, to share the learning and to consider how work can be sustained.

Creative Practitioners are selected by the school. Their role is to support the detailed planning of the project work, to work with the teachers and learners to implement the plans in school and to reflect on the learning on an ongoing basis.

They effectively facilitate creative learning activities and support teachers to develop new approaches to teaching and learning.

28. Who decides which Creative Agent and Creative Practitioners will work in a school?

Arts Council of Wales selects and matches Creative Agents to schools, they also pay the Creative Agents.

Individual schools, working with their Creative Agents select and appoint Creative Practitioners.

29. Will the Creative Agents and Creative Practitioners have enhanced Disclosure and Baring Service (DBS) checks?

All creative professionals will have enhanced DBS service checks. Arts Council of Wales will be responsible for carrying out DBS checks for Creative Agents. Individual Schools will be responsible for carrying out DBS checks on Creative Practitioners.

30. What role will teachers have in the projects in school?

Participating teachers will be involved as active partners, supporting the detailed planning of the project work alongside the creative professionals and the pupils to ensure that it is imbedded in the curriculum and supports learners to develop their creative skills and achieve their learning goals. They will continue to have an active role during the implementation stage using it as an opportunity to experiment with new approaches to teaching and learning and to supporting its ongoing sustainability. Like the other partners in the process, teachers will support ongoing reflection, evaluation and dissemination of the work as a Lead Creative School.

31. What role will pupils have in the projects in schools?

Lead Creative Schools and the creative professionals they will work with are all expected to give participating pupils an active role in planning, implementation and reflection on the project work. As co-constructors of learning the pupils should have the opportunity to influence the project work, to be supported to challenge themselves in new ways and to have an active role in learning.

Monitoring and evaluation

32. How will schools in the scheme be monitored and evaluated?

Schools will be expected to engage in project and programme monitoring and evaluation using the Lead Creative Schools Scheme Planning and Evaluation Framework. The primary aim of this framework is to support effective planning, implementation and evaluation in participating schools. This information is also sent to Arts Council of Wales and will support them to monitor individual schools and the scheme as a whole. Arts Council of Wales will also visit schools in the scheme as part of an ongoing programme of monitoring and quality assurance.

33. How will schools have to report on the project spending?

During the planning stages participating schools will have to develop a budget for their project work and this has to be sent to Arts Council of Wales. After the project work is complete schools will have to report on the actual spending to Arts Council of Wales.

34. How will the Lead Creative School Scheme be evaluated?

The Lead Creative Schools Scheme will be independently evaluated and participating schools will be expected to engage with, and support this process through providing data, helping to generate case studies or participating in research.

Further information

35. Who can you contact for more information?

Further information on the Lead Creative Schools Scheme is available from

Email: info@artscouncilofwales.org.uk or
creative.learning@artscouncilofwales.org.uk

Telephone: 0845 873 4900

Website: www.artscouncilofwales.org.uk/what-we-do/creative-learning/the-lead-creative-schools-scheme