

National Cultural Policy Submission

1470041

Public

Organisation

Tasmanian Orff Schulwerk Association

Short submission (text box 500 words or less)

The Tasmanian Orff Schulwerk Association is a group of Music educators predominantly from primary schools (public, Catholic and Independent), dedicated to supporting professional growth and development of Music teachers, with the end goal of bringing meaningful musical experiences to all children in Tasmania.

We are a volunteer-run, not-for-profit organisation. Over the last 40 years we have provided regional monthly workshops, an annual 3 day Summer School with national and international presenters, and a Statewide single-day workshop mid-year with various local and national presenters. We have worked together with organisations like Musica Viva, TASME, TSO and Festival of Voices from time to time.

We would like to support the position paper given by Music Education: Right from the Start, in particular the need to:

1. Establish a distinct, separate Creative Arts Education Pillar in the National Cultural Policy
2. Invest in the Music Education Workforce

In Tasmania, access to quality Arts and Music education has declined sharply in the last 10 years. Only 50% (approx.) of public primary schools have a Music program, and in those schools nearly a third or more of teachers in those roles have no training in Music pedagogy. Generalist classroom teachers do not teach the Music curriculum in Tasmania.

We have been concerned about the isolation and burn-out factors many Music teachers face, when they are working alone to provide whole-of-school programs with little or no on-campus curriculum support. On average, one Music teacher has left the public school system every 6 months in the last 6 years, which is significant in a small state like Tasmania.

There has been no course to prepare teachers in Music pedagogy for early childhood or primary school at the University of Tasmania for close to 2 decades, and trained, skilled and experienced Music educators are leaving primary schools at alarming rates, which further limits opportunities for mentoring and supervision in quality Music pedagogy.

TOSA's membership is largely made up of educators working in the primary or early childhood setting, so we cannot speak authoritatively to the secondary setting, but we understand that access to Music courses is also declining as schools cut back on funded positions. Anecdotally we have heard that many secondary music educators – whilst being skilled musicians – have not been trained in Music pedagogy for secondary schools.

The neglect of and blindness to this situation by policy makers and educational leaders impacts the capacity for our students to function as learners, as human beings, and as valued members of our community who are included in making, creating and sharing in the Arts.

Without recognising Arts education as a key pillar of the National Cultural policy, we are missing a fundamental point of access and growth. Arts and Culture don't just 'happen' – they are shared, they are taught, they are learnt, they are practised.

Teachers are central to developing Music and Arts literacy and practice.

If we wish for access to Arts and Culture to be equitable, we must have education as a key pillar of our National Cultural Policy so that its role is visible, acknowledged and appropriately funded.

OFFICIAL

OFFICIAL