

# Arts and Cultural Education in the Faroe Islands

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By  
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## Executive Summary

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Commencing in April 2012, with field research in August/September 2012, an evaluative research was undertaken in the Faroe Islands to gather comprehensive data about the extent and quality of arts and cultural education. The research analyses the implementation framework of arts and cultural education and identifies factors that influence the adoption of best practice in arts and cultural education. The evaluation focused on the following questions:

1. What is being done in arts education and how is it being done?
2. What is the quality of arts education in the Faroe Islands?
3. What are the possibilities and challenges currently and into the future?

The study looked at both formal and informal arts education that occurred in school and in a range of outside school programmes. The research used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. In particular, a survey was sent to schools, kindergartens, colleges (gymnasiums), music schools, amateur theatre organizations and youth clubs. This was followed by ten days of in country research that included interviews, schools visits, visits to cultural organisations and focus groups.

Faroese parents generally have high aspirations for their children and in many ways they are in a relatively fortunate position; by international standards, the schools are well-equipped and effectively organized. The only concern is that the standard of facilities varies considerably from one school to the next. The Faroese school system is relatively expensive and while overall funds for education have steadily increased, the percentage of national budget spent on education has slightly fallen over recent years.

Within arts education there is a mismatch between the ambitious aims expressed in policy and the limitations of practice in the implementation within schools. Although the *Visión 2015, Mál og Vegir* states that the Ministry of Culture shall prepare a cultural policy for children and young people, this has largely to date not been implemented. Implementation has been hampered by vague and often conflicting views of what constitutes good practice in arts education. There is a lack of distinction made between arts education, creative education and cultural education. There is a similar lack of awareness of the difference between, what can be termed, education in the arts (e.g. teaching in visual arts, music, drama, crafts, etc.) and education through the arts (e.g. the use of the arts and creativity as a pedagogical tool in other subjects, such as numeracy, literacy and scientific thinking. Schools need strong programmes in the arts AND artistic and creative ways to learn in an integrated way across the curriculum.

Teachers and pedagogues are unclear about the aims and specific learning embedded in the arts and so learning is characterised by a series of largely disconnected projects and experiences where the links are not explicit for either to child or the teacher. Continuity is vital if arts education is to have an impact. Although most schools offer a mark or grade for arts and craft, strategies for assessment and evaluation within arts education are limited. Professional development is needed in this area so that teachers can track student learning and monitor the quality of programmes. In particular, it is important that all learning, but

especially learning in the arts, culminates in high quality presentations. It is vital that arts education is of a high quality. Process and product should be clearly linked and currently there is a lack of focus in Faroese education on the high quality “performance” of learning. Passive arts and cultural education (such as seeing a performance) are valuable but should not be used as a substitute for children’s active creative processes and opportunities for children to be performers and artists.

Arts and cultural education should be a compulsory and valued part of every school and kindergarten year. Children in the Faroe Islands have less time than the international averages in the arts – both as an absolute measure and as a proportion of other school time. Allocation of time to arts and cultural education is not evenly spread across the school years. Inadequate sequential time is given to the arts to enable aims to be achieved. It is vital to have arts and cultural education in all levels of secondary school as this is when the critical and performance language of the arts is developing and the impact of the arts is realised. As the school day is relatively short, there is considerable scope for school buildings to be used flexibly in the delivery of a range of after school culture offers. In this regard, individual schools and teachers have considerable flexibility in how they work but there tends to be greater levels of flexibility in smaller schools.

In terms of accessibility, the Faroe Islands has low levels of immigrant children and children with special educational needs are catered for within the general provisions. Pupils in some rural and isolated locations have less access to culture due to the cost of transport and time taken to get to venues, but a number of cultural events do occur in these more isolated areas. There is some evidence that there is social and cultural pressure against boys in some communities being encouraged to participate in some art forms, though these stereotypes are being actively challenged.

There are generally enough teachers to match demand, though it is harder to find teachers for more remote schools and for music. Most teachers in the general school (in most cases from year 1- year 9) are trained at the local Teachers’ College. The Teachers’ College has recently become a university faculty and now teachers gain a Bachelor’s degree and a diploma. While teachers in the music school and upper secondary college (gymnasium) are generally well-qualified with at least one degree and often a Master’s degree, generalist teachers generally lack sufficient training to implement quality arts education and creative learning in the compulsory school. Teacher confidence and expertise to teach arts and cultural education is low particularly in the primary school. A number of professional development opportunities are provided for teachers and are popular but tend to focus on acquisition of arts skills rather than broader cultural or creative education. More connections could be made between the various providers of professional development (including the evening school) as postgraduate education is not generally accessible to teachers that are in full-time employment with teachers tending to need to go to Denmark or further afield to undertake study in arts education. Arts and cultural education in schools need the support of a determined, passionate and inspiring school leader.

The voluntary sector including sports, churches, gymnastics, scouts local bands and others provide after school programmes that often include the arts and crafts and outdoor activity. Young people in the Faroe Islands appear to show considerable initiative in developing their own activities where none exist and to use online and other sources to 'self-teach' where programmes of artistic activities are not available. There is evidence that outside of school, children and young people are engaging in a lot of self-generated arts learning and participating in online communities and locally developed experimental approaches. In addition to the informal sector, the Faroe Islands has an extensive system of local and national government funded after school music schools. There are also a small number of private options are also available for after school including dance in gymnastics (mainly girls) and private music lessons. Attendance at music schools is comparatively low while demand for lessons is very high and there are long waiting lists to get into most instruments in the music school. The curriculum of music schools is generally based on classical music and traditional one-to-one instructional approaches.

Apart from the Listaleypurin programme that brings artists into schools, there are very limited examples of partnerships between schools and artists in the Faroe Islands. Partnerships need to be initiated between the various agencies working in arts and culture and the schools. Developing longer term partnerships takes time, sharing and resources and so more on-going partnerships between the education and school sectors need to be embedded within policy and practice. In particular, consideration should be given to partnerships with industry and the broader creative community as creative industries contribute to the economic growth, identity and appeal of the Faroe Islands.

Cultural Centres and museums provide programmes for children and there are examples of good practice in museum and gallery education. Yet the educative role of museums tends to be undervalued in comparison to other aspects of the museum's functions. Children from more isolated locations tend to come to cultural institutions once a year or less. Consideration should be given to providing subsidies from more isolated schools to attend central cultural institutions or to provide subsidies to the cultural institutions to more frequently 'tour' some element of their collections or performances. If more regular contact between the education and culture sectors is achieved, educational programmes in museums and galleries need to be regularly reviewed and revitalized so that they can inspire repeat visitors. Concurrently, teachers need more professional development in how to use museums in educational programmes so there is greater integration between the school curriculum and the programmes offered in the museums.

While the creative industries form an important and expanding part of the Faroese economy, this fact has not been taken-up in actions at all levels of education, including professional education. Data collection in this economic sector is almost non-existent. There are no figures or information available about the scope and nature of the creative industries. It is recommended that the creative industry is mapped to determine the extent of its influence in the Faroe Islands. The Faroese government needs to immediately adopt a more proactive stance to protecting the rights of Faroese producers and artists under the "Protected Designation of Origin Scheme".

The Faroe Islands is a beautiful country with a strong and unique arts and cultural heritage and contemporary creative milieu. Quality arts education can play a significant role in not only preserving and building the cultural well-being of the population but also in enhancing the overall quality of the schools. Through creative and cultural excellence, it is possible to build individuals for the future who are confident, capable and innovative. It is for achieving that purpose, that this report and its recommendations has been written.





## Chapter 1: Introduction and overview

### 1.1 Introduction

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Commencing in April 2012, with field research in August/September 2012, an evaluative research was undertaken in the Faroe Islands to gather comprehensive data about the extent and quality of arts and cultural education. The research analyses the implementation framework of arts and cultural education and identifies factors that influence the adoption of best practice in arts and cultural education. The evaluation focused on the following questions:

1. What is being done in arts education and how is it being done?
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The study looked at both formal and informal arts education that occurred in school and in a range of outside school programmes. The research used a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods. In particular, a survey was sent to schools, kindergartens, colleges (gymnasiums) and music schools. This was followed by ten days of in country research that included interviews, schools visits, visits to cultural organisations and focus groups.

This research is linked to the international evaluation of arts education conducted in 2006 for UNESCO<sup>1</sup>. To build a benchmarked set of knowledge, complementary methods have been used for these studies and the same framework has been applied to data gathering and analysis of themes to enable international comparisons to be made. The report is organised to mirror similar research studies conducted in Denmark, Norway and Iceland and to correlate with a similar study undertaken in Finland<sup>2</sup>. It is intended that in addition to the report emerging from the study in the Faroe Islands, that, in the future, all the Nordic evaluations may be combined into an overall report of the state of arts education in the Nordic countries.

The focus of the research includes both formal and non-formal provisions of arts and cultural education. A very broad and inclusive definition of the arts has been adopted in this study and includes arts and cultural education within schools and also the activities completed by children in a range of after school possibilities, including music schools, evening colleges, churches and other providers.

### 1.2 Scope and method

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The research was led by Professor Anne Bamford, Director of the International Research Agency. During the in-country study, the Norðurlandahúsið í Føroyum with Hedvig Westerlund-Kapnas and Rakul Thomsen providing logistical support, contextual leadership, translation and document and policy interpretation. The research also benefited for the

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<sup>1</sup> Bamford, A (2006) The Wow Factor: Global research compendium on the impact of arts in education. Waxmann, München.

<sup>2</sup> A study is also planned for Sweden

strong support given by the Ministry of Culture and Education (Mentamálaráðið). Nám, the resource centre for the Ministry, translated the questionnaires, as well as translating and publishing the report.

The research commenced in May 2012 with a survey to all schools, kindergartens and music schools in Faroe Islands. This was followed in August 2012 with a series of observational visits to schools and cultural organisations in the Faroe Islands. The data gathering was completed in September 2012. In total, 150 people (n= 150) were interviewed and/or participated in focus groups and 28 schools and organisations were visited. The interviews involved 82 adults and 68 pupils. A total of 64 surveys were completed, 56 from schools and kindergartens, 8 from music schools and after school centres.

The participants came from all stakeholder sectors and included local and national officials, politicians, school principals, teachers, cultural coordinators, industry representatives, professional associations, cultural institutions (museums etc.), evening colleges, students, artists and teacher educators. An internet or hard copy survey was sent to all schools – including to kindergartens and the music schools – to gather quantitative data (N = 64). A total of 64 surveys were completed. The response rate for kindergartens was 25%, for primary schools was 68% and for upper secondary schools 100% and 67% for vocational schools.

The field research was conducted in nine kommuna (municipalities) of the Faroe Islands and through a matrix it was ensured that a diversity of types of schools and institutions were covered as part of the data collection. The research used a range of methodologies including:

- Document analysis (including curriculum documents)
- Survey for quantitative data
- Interviews
- Focus groups
- Observations
- Provisions for electronic submissions by email

The scope of the study included a comprehensive sample of formal school provisions for young people between the ages of approximately 3-20 years and also incorporated non-formal cultural offerings that directly intersected with the specified target group (including a range of after school offers).

A detailed evidence-based analysis of arts and cultural education resulted in the production of this published report, an executive summary, and initiated discussions.

The appointment of two in-country researchers to work as collaborative members of the research team for the duration of the project ensured that - while the study could be conducted in an independent and unbiased manner - the methodology and analysis could benefit from local understanding. The Norðurlandahúsið í Føroyum was responsible for 'on the ground' permissions and planning, meetings, agendas, itineraries, accommodation and

visits, and to form the agreed research plan. Document translation during the research was conducted by Norðurlandahúsið í Føroyum, while the questionnaires and the final report were translated by Mentamálaráðið.

A small group (N= 10) of ‘critical friends’ were invited to comment and respond to the report in its draft state.

All research data remains protected as per international data protection protocols, though given the small size of the Faroe Islands it is not possible to assure anonymity.

The aim of the research was to highlight salient, transferable and overarching themes, not to comment on the success or otherwise of particular cases or specific schools, individuals, groups or organisations. As far as possible, actual quotations have been used to evidence the analysis made. While quotations used are exact quotations from a person, they have been included where they represent a more widely expressed view. Where contradictions of evidence occur, these have been highlighted and the range of opinion on a topic is represented.

Each section begins with a summary of the key findings of that particular topic, theme or issue. When reading the report, where points are particularly pertinent to particular levels or types of schools or institutions, these have been specified and it is clearly indicated the level or school type to which the comment refers. If a comment does not specify the type of organisation or school, it can be assumed that this comment refers as a general point to all situations or generally within the field of education and/or culture.

### 1.3 Definitions of terms

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According to official documents, the area referred to as arts education curriculum (námsætlan) includes:

- 1) Music (*tónleik*) – instrumental learning, singing and music theory and appreciation
- 2) Visual arts (*myndlist*) – mainly drawing, painting and ceramics, though printmaking and other art forms may be included
- 3) Craft (*smíð*) – wood work, metal work, glass art, plastic material
- 4) Textiles (*hondarbeiði*) - sewing, knitting, felt making, weaving, wool craft, embroidery
- 5) Cooking (*matgerð*)- and home economics (*heimkunnleiki*)

Each of these curriculum areas tend to receive dedicated timetabled time within the school day in most years of the elementary school and in the early secondary years, though the pattern of offering can vary from school to school, it is typical that around two hours per week of curriculum time is given. It is common practice to operate these arts areas on a rotational basis. For example, a pupil might do one hour per week of cooking and craft for six weeks and then move onto doing visual arts and music. Many schools divide the class in half for the arts and so class size is generally around 12-15 pupils for the arts. Some schools have specialist teachers, while in most cases, the arts teacher is a generalist teacher with some interest or skills in a various arts area (in addition to their other subjects).

At the gymnasium (senior secondary school or college) level pupils may have the offer to be able to choose an arts subject through to their final exam level. This is generally only available in music.

Drama may be included as a method in language learning. Some schools also have annual 'musicals' or seasonal 'plays' – such as Christmas plays or plays in festivals.

Dance is included in gymnastics while the traditional chain dance (*føroyskur dansur*) is generally taught in Faroese language and culture lessons.

New media, film and photography may be taught as stand-alone electives or choices for the pupils. There are also some pupil 'clubs' in film making. Festivals, circus and computer games are undertaken but usually as part of recreation. Similarly, watching movies is a common recreation. Girls may partake in knitting clubs (a traditional social knitting group involving crafts and cooking in the home called *bindiklub*).

Some schools offer 'theme' weeks (usually two to four times per year). During these weeks, the usual school timetable is suspended and pupils undertake integrated study related to a theme of inquiry. Creativity is often a key part of these theme weeks and occasionally such a week might culminate in an exhibition or performance.

#### 1.4 Historical and political context

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The following section overviews the political and policy context for arts and cultural education in the Faroe Islands. The purpose of this is to highlight the salient factors that have formed and continue to shape policy and practices in the Faroe Islands.

Located in the north Atlantic Ocean, 300km from its nearest neighbour, the Faroe Islands are comprised of 18 islands - stretching from Enniberg in the north to Sumbiar Steinur in the south - with a total land mass of 1.400 square kilometres with a population of 48.778 (according to the 2007 census). The birth-rate in the Faroe Islands is the highest in Europe. The average temperature in summer is just above 12 degrees Celsius and in winter around three degrees. There are 30 municipalities (Kommunur) in the Faroe Islands.



The first settlers are thought to have been Irish monks arriving on the islands in the middle of the seventh century (600-700AD) although possible revisions of this history suggest that perhaps there were inhabitants before this time. Around 100 years later (and more documented) Norwegians settled in the islands and brought the Viking-Age developments that led to the islands becoming a central part of the Viking settlements along the coasts of the North Atlantic and the Irish Sea. The Viking settlers established their own parliament in the Faroe Islands and the islands became part of the Norwegian Kingdom in 1035.

Christianity was the proclaimed religion for the Islands around the turn of the last millennium (1000AD). In the 16th century (1500-1600) King Christian III introduced Lutheranism to the Islands replacing Catholicism. Even today, almost everybody in the Faroe Islands is Christian. The Faroe Islands' population is 84% Lutheran.



In 1709 the islands became controlled by the Danish central government and in 1816 the Faroese parliament was abolished and replaced with a Danish judiciary in which Danish was introduced as the main language and Faroese (the original language) lost ground. The

Faroese parliament was re-established in 1852. The education law of 1912 stipulated "Danish" primary education for every child.

When Denmark got its first democratic constitution, the *Junigrundloven*, in 1849, the Faroe Islands, apparently without much deliberation, and no consultation at all, was granted the status of a Danish county despite its distinct language, history and culture<sup>3</sup>. In 1846-54, a standard written Faroese language was created by V.U.Hammershaimb. Throughout the mid to late 1800s the Faroese people gained the reputation of being adept fishermen and sailors which led to the continued growth of the fishing industry. Fishing remains the main source of income for the islands. According to official figures, fish and fish related products account for 95% of the export value of goods.

During the Second World War the Faroe Islands were under British occupation, but internally the Islands were governed by the Prefect (*Amtmand*) and the *Løgtingið*. During this time the Islands were governed by a provisional law ('midlertidig styrelsesordning' - temporary governance mechanism). At the end of the war both Copenhagen and Tórshavn agreed that the status quo ante was not viable. The Danes offered the Faroese a limited measure of home rule – known as 'the Danish proposal' to replace the pre-war status. This was seen as insufficient by the Faroese government. After a referendum in favour of full independence in 1946, a compromise was reached with Copenhagen. According to this the Faroe Islands were granted 'Home Rule' in all areas apart from defence and foreign affairs and kept its two members of the Danish Parliament<sup>4</sup>. The majority of decision making is now devolved to the Faroese parliament with the exception of defence, foreign policy and currency.

Faroese is a language spoken by around 60,000 people – mainly in the Faroe Islands and Faroese in the diaspora. Its origin is from the Old Norse language and is similar to Icelandic and Norwegian. In 1538, it lost ground as a language in schools, so the islanders maintained it through the ballads and singing as well as spoken language between Faroese people. In 1938, Faroese gained recognition as on equal footing with Danish as the language in schools but it was not until 1948 it became recognised again as the official language of the Faroe Islands. The Faroese alphabet consists of 29 letters. The passing of the *Act of Faroese Home Rule* made Faroese an official language. Danish is still taught as a second language in schools from year three and many text books for older pupils are still available only in Danish. English is taught from year four, and the prevalence of TV shows, computer games and films in English and Danish mean that these languages are used frequently and commonly understood. Children in the Faroes have excellent language skills. They hear so much Danish and English on TV and within contemporary culture. Many films are only available in English or Danish or with subtitles. Faroese subtitles occur on the national broadcasting network. Although a number of books for young children are now available in Faroese and there is a growing availability of locally produced books by Faroese writers, books for older children, such as science books and specialist books are often only available in English or Danish.

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<sup>3</sup> Lindal, S. (2003) 'Den Islandske Forfatningsprosessen', *Faroese Law Review*, Vol.3, No.3, p.184

<sup>4</sup> Thorsteinson, J and Rasmussen, S. 'Rigsfællesskabet mellem Danmark og Færøerne', in Ole Stig Andersen (Editor) *Folketinget Festskrift i anledning af Grundlovens 150 års jubilæum den 5. Juni 1999*, Folketinget, Copenhagen, p.513

Population levels have fluctuated to reflect the changing fortunes of the country. For example, during the 1980's the Faroese were enjoying one of the world's highest standards of living but by the early 1990's the Faroese National Bank was forced to ask for a financial bailout from Denmark. Unemployment peaked to 28% in Jan 1994 but fell to 10% in mid-1996 and then to 5% in April 2000. Currently unemployment stands out around 6.8%<sup>5</sup>. There is an on-going belief that oil may be found to boost the economy, but currently the Faroe Islands remain financially supported by on Denmark. The Danish Grant to the Faroese economy is around 630 million DKK yearly in direct support, and another 2-300 million DKK indirectly, to the areas which are still Danish authority, such as the police force and justice system. Counted in percentages, the direct Danish contribution represents around 4-6% of the BTI (Gross National Income).

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<sup>5</sup> CIA World Factbook 2011 [http://www.indexmundi.com/faroe\\_islands/unemployment\\_rate.html](http://www.indexmundi.com/faroe_islands/unemployment_rate.html) accessed October 2012.

## 1.5 The Faroese Arts Scene

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Music plays a key role in Faroese society. There are a number of music schools (see later sections) that focus predominantly on one-to-one instrumental tuition in classical music traditions. The Faroe Islands have a symphony orchestra, a chamber orchestra, at least ten local brass bands, hundreds of choir singers and many active pop and rock groups. One record producer interviewed had more than 39 bands to record in a six-month period this year. While contemporary music in the Faroe Islands covers all genres, traditionally the music was mainly vocal with body percussion. The first organ arrived in the Faroe Islands in 1824. Other instruments, wind and strings, arrived in the 1870s. Initially, a fiddle was sometimes used in the capital Tórshavn however over the 20<sup>th</sup> century many instruments were imported into the country and therefore the music developed with it. Communal singing and choirs are very popular and continuing to develop. The midnight sing-along on the National Day (Olavsoka) can attract a crowd of in excess of 6000 people.

There is a growing critical mass in music, several composers are performed internationally and soloists and ensembles regularly tour outside the country. A few well-known names include Sunlef Rasmussen, Tróndur Bogason, Kristian Blak as composers, singers Eivør and Teitur, metal band Týr.



Source: <http://www.roguefolk.bc.ca/gallery/season2006.html>, accessed November 2012

In recent years, contemporary Faroese music and filmmakers have created an identity within world music. Several festivals of music and the arts are held each year and attract considerable audiences. Architects and designers have also been successful with reputations in Denmark and internationally.

Another major part of the tradition in the Faroe Islands is *chain dancing* and *ballads*. These forms of dancing and singing are very important within Faroese culture and it is often referred to as '*Faroese Dance*'. The Faroese Chain dance is a medieval tradition and is still an important part of culture in the Faroe Islands. Although the chain dance was forbidden by the church, the Faroese preserved the dances and it has been a major way in which Faroese cultural and traditions were transmitted when the language was banned as an official language. The Faroese chain dance is not accompanied by instruments as the ballads themselves create the rhythm for the dances. Most of the children and young people interviewed in this study knew and had danced some Faroese dances and acknowledged that while they had learnt these in school, they were still common at social and family gatherings including weddings, festivals and other traditional days.





Source: <http://www.heinesen.fo/faroeislandsreview/culture.htm>, accessed November 2012

The ancient heroic ballads are a unique part of Faroese culture and are preserved through the learning of the chain dances. Kvæði is the Faroese name given for the old ballads sung and danced in the Faroe Islands. Pioneers of recording the ballads were Svabo, who began writing down the words and tunes of the ballads around 1775, and later J.H. Schrøter, Jóhannes í Króki, V.U. Hammershaimb and others who captured the ballads

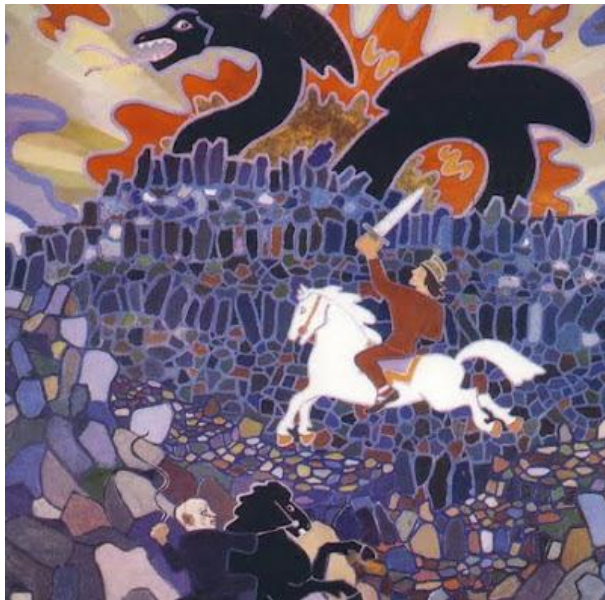
With his paintings of death and pilot whale hunts, Sámal Joensen-Mikines was the first professional painter in the Faroes from the 1930s. Ingálvur av Reyni brought Faroese visual arts to an international level with abstract compositions of landscapes and people. Nature romanticism and expressionism fill much of Faroese art history, with names such as Ruth Smith, Thomas Arge, Tróndur Patursson, but also fantasy and mythical art, with, for instance, William Heinesen and Elinborg Lutzen. Contemporary art in the Faroes encompasses minimalism, surrealism and conceptual art.



Source: <http://polarbearstale.blogspot.co.uk/2009/05/ruth-smith-danish-1913-1958.html> - Ruth Smith accessed November 2012



Source: <http://birkblog.blogspot.co.uk/> - Thomas Arge, accessed November 2012



Source: <http://polarbearstale.blogspot.co.uk/2012/07/sjurur-and-faeroese-seyabrvi.html> - William Heinesen, accessed November 2012

Poetry and literature have a strong tradition that emerged out of the oral stories passed down as a way to consolidate and maintain culture. Written literature in the islands has only really developed over the last 100 years because of the written language being relatively new. However, today around 240 titles are published annually, and there are at least 4500 books in Faroese.

Craft traditions are very strong including knitwear, woven garments, whale knives, horn carving and silver jewellery. A traditional craft of the Faroe Islands is multi-coloured patterned and lace knitting, in particular lace shawls. Some contemporary designers have taken traditional crafts and used these as a basis for fashion and home wares.



Source: <http://knitaway-one.blogspot.co.uk/2011/04/faroese-shawls-happen.html> accessed November 2012



## 1.5 Policy

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- **Although the *Visión 2015, Mál og Vegir* states that the Ministry of Culture shall prepare a cultural policy for children and young people, this has largely to date not been implemented**
- **The present governing document does not mention children and young people in relation to art and culture.**

In 1979 the transfer of the responsibility for education began to gradually move from the Danish authorities to the Faroese authorities. By 1988 the Faroese had the economic responsibility for education and by 1996 (almost 20 years after limited autonomy had been granted) education became the responsibility of the Faroese Ministry. A reorganization of the central administration led to the formation of the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture (Mentamálaráðið) in 1997. This Ministry has oversight of school education, research and culture (including ecclesiastical/church affairs). The transfer of the total responsibility for all Faroese education occurred in 2002 but there is an on-going agreement with Denmark about educational cooperation and general cooperation in education and culture with other Nordic countries.

On an international scale, the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture is relatively small having approximately 24 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff presiding over 1400 staff directly employed in education. The work of the Ministry of Education, Research and Culture is divided into three departments namely, one focused on kindergarten, primary and lower-secondary education (including special education); one department dedicated to upper secondary school and vocational education; and one department that covers culture, higher education, research and ecclesiastical affairs. There are 1339 kindergarten employees in total, of these 504 (38%) with a pedagogy diploma and 835 assistants (62%). In addition, there are 537 employees in the special needs sector, with 259 (48%) with diploma and 278 (51%) without.

The Faroese Parliament decides on the framework and goals for all types of education. This framework is set up in Government regulations. The curriculum is prepared by the Faroese Ministry of Education. Historically, local schools use national objectives for education as guidelines but could promote their own responses to the guidelines. Following

the 2006 PISA results which were very poor and highlighted the lack of clear standards and the lack of equality in knowledge and skills<sup>6</sup>, there has been a more recent movement in the Faroe Islands towards more strict central objectives and syllabuses for all subjects from 1st grade to the last grade of upper secondary education. The intention is to provide a continuous curriculum from the 1st grade to the end of upper secondary education in order to ensure coherence in the main subjects throughout the educational system, and to ensure gradual and goal oriented growth in knowledge for the individual pupil. Clear and specific assessment criteria are set up for assessment and examinations after the 9th and 10th grade.

Consequently, there have been considerable changes and challenges to policy surrounding education in the Faroe Islands. Innovations have included a new curriculum for primary through to upper secondary students and concurrent reforms of primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. There have also been reforms to both vocational and university programmes and a greater linking of the programme structure to European standards. New schools have been built and the introduction of new technology has been comprehensive.

The present governing document does not mention children and young people in relation to art and culture. Neither is there a governing policy document for culture regarding children and young people. The Vision 2015<sup>7</sup> document, *Visión 2015, Mál og Vegir* (s.190), written in 2007, covers 13 different areas of society. Among these is Culture, where the objectives includes:

- Education in art is an option for all children and young people.
- Consciousness of creative capacities and participation in artistic activities are parts of the system of upbringing and education.

*Visión 2015, Mál og Vegir* states that the Ministry of Culture shall prepare a cultural policy for children and young people. The policy shall develop the cultural and artistic consciousness and shall be implemented in cooperation with day-care centres, schools, professional art groups and cultural institutions. Artistic experience should be available for all children and young people. In day-care centres and in schools, music, acting, literature and visual arts should be part of the activities and education in artistic and aesthetic subjects should be part of an overall curriculum. This is to ensure the same basic cultural education and provisions for all children. At the point this report has been written these policy aims have not been completed.

Children in the Faroe Islands complete nine years of compulsory education, known as fólkaskúli. The fólkaskúli also offers a voluntary 10<sup>th</sup> grade, which around 50% of pupils choose to take. After these years the majority of students go onto complete either three years of upper secondary school or vocational training (usually four years). There is one University in the Faroe Islands that has courses in Faroese language and literature, history, culture, social studies, science, nursing, early years' education and teacher education. There are also nautical and engineering colleges.

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<sup>6</sup> Northern Lights on PISA 2006 p 37

<sup>7</sup> The title of the report refers to the goal of implementing the policies in 2015 at the latest.

This research focuses on the provision of arts and culture in the kindergartens, Fólkaskúli (compulsory school) and the upper secondary school. The Faroese Teacher College (Føroya Læraraskúli) is responsible for the education of pedagogues, primary and lower secondary school teachers and so teacher education is also examined in this research.

The compulsory school (for pupils aged 7-16 years of age) is governed by two authorities. The Ministry of Education, Research and Culture is responsible for legislation, policy and teachers, while the local Municipality is responsible for school buildings and learning resources and materials. The local authorities fund schools differently depending on the population of an area and the tax receipts. The Ministry of Education employs the principals, and the principals employ the teachers in the individual schools. The Ministry of Education is responsible for the salary of both principals and teachers. Schools have relatively small devolved discretionary budgets for educational resources and general education costs.

There are fewer than 7,000 pupils in compulsory education and approximately 600 full-time equivalent teachers. This gives a pupil to teacher ratio of around one teacher to 11.5 pupils. While this ratio is quite low by world standards, the figure is skewed as the Faroe Islands has a lot of very small schools. In fact 33% of schools have fewer than 24 pupils. Only 24% of schools have over 200 pupils and only three schools have more than 400 pupils. The smallest school in the Faroe Islands has just one pupil!

The vast majority of children attend their local (government run) school. There are only three private, 'free' schools in the Faroe Islands representing less than 5% of the total number of schools.

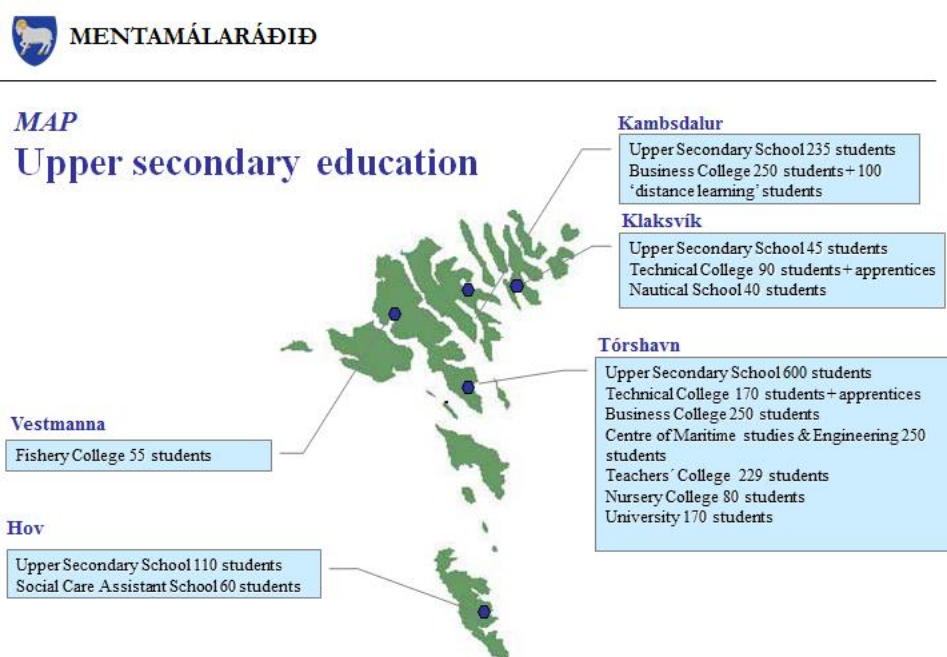
Kindergarten (preschool) education is optional in the Faroe Islands, but as it is common for both parents work, it is increasingly likely that children (under seven years of age) will attend childcare and kindergarten. Municipalities generally offer day care for young children. Day care can be created in several ways - either as a municipal day-care centre or a private day care for children aged for a few months old and up to school age. There are also after school care centres for school age children up to eight years of age. Municipality day care centres may also double as being kindergartens or nurseries. Municipalities may offer one year of free pre-school the year before compulsory school begins.

Education is compulsory in the Faroe Islands for everyone between the ages of 6-7 and 16. The compulsory (free) education is delivered in the *fólkaskúli*. The Faroese Fólkaskúli consists of six years of primary (grade 1 to 6) and three years in lower (grade 7-9/10) secondary education and a one-year (optional) 10th form. Tuition is predominantly in Faroese. In addition the municipalities are allowed to run and pay for a grade 0 (kindergarten).

Upper secondary education begins at the end of compulsory education and covers typically the 16-19-year-olds. Upper secondary education divides into either general

education qualifying for access to higher education or vocational or technical education qualifying primarily for access to the labour market. As not all areas in the Faroe Islands have access to secondary education, a number of children have to travel to access post-compulsory education. While most pupils head to the larger towns and the capital, others may travel abroad - mainly to Denmark – to access their post-compulsory education. Within upper secondary education, students can follow a number of academic and vocational pathways including the general upper secondary education provision of the *Gymnasium*, the higher preparatory examination (*HF-programme*) the higher commercial examination (*HHX-programme*) the higher technical examination (*HTX-programme*), the basic social and health training programmes or the vocational education and training programmes.

### 1.5.1 Map showing location of upper secondary and post-secondary education<sup>8</sup>



Most people in the Faroe Islands have at some time lived abroad either for schooling or for work. Every year around 500 people attend higher education in the Faroe Islands while 1000 people go abroad Denmark to study. While Denmark remains a popular choice, increasingly, students are looking to other countries.

After upper secondary education, higher education is available at the University of the Faroe Islands (*Fróðskaparsetrið*) although once again, it is common for Faroese students to go abroad to undertake their higher education. The University of the Faroe Islands offers Bachelor's, Master's and PhD programmes. There are five faculties/departments at the Faroese University: Faculty of Faroese Language and Literature, Faculty of History and Social Sciences, Faculty of Natural Sciences and Technology, the Teachers College and the Nursing College. Research is conducted in a number of topics that are being taught at the university. There is close cooperation between other research institutions and the university. Similarly there are collaborative bonds between the university and private

<sup>8</sup> Source: Ministry for Education and Culture 2011.

companies on certain research areas. The university also collaborates with several universities especially in the Nordic countries and to a lesser extent in Scotland.

Also at the higher education level, the Centre of Maritime Studies and Engineering provides four world-class programmes: Ship's Captain, Navigator, Ship's Engineer, and Ship's Mechanic. In addition, the so-called *vocational academy education* is offered at the vocational college.

The evening school structure provides an effective environment for arts education for those interested in pursuing creative and cultural activity. There are courses for those people under 14 years of age and adult classes for people over 14 years of age. Children's courses in the arts are very popular. The cost is low (c. 350 DKK per year for pupils under 14 years of age and c. 800 DKK per year for pupils over 14 years of age). Most of the courses are held on weekends or evenings, though some 'summer courses' are also available. The evening courses provide cost-effective provisions in the arts.

*Tórshavn evening school has a budget of around 5.5 million kroner. 2.2 million is from the government, 2 million from the city and the rest ((1.3 million) from the fees. We can run courses for a low cost as we have very few central costs and we try to use rooms we can get for free.*

Every Easter, Tórshavn evening school around 7,000 people attend an exhibition of work from the evening school. There is a great deal of enthusiasm amongst the Faroese population for the evening school and the classes are usually full. The evening school also attracts a range of people and actively reaches out to new participants.

*The motivation for why people come to the evening school can be quite different. For example, some come for social reasons; some to get skills; some to undertake training; some as pathways into higher education; and some to help them get a job.*

*We try to deliberately run courses to bring new groups into the evening school. For example, we ran a course on Gourmet Cooking for Men and it was very popular. But traditional courses like sewing the national dress are also popular.*

The Ministry's arts and culture policy also includes a focus on children and young people. The policy states that all children and young people should have the possibility to experience high quality arts and culture and to participate in creative processes. To this end, a major targeted investment has been given to the programme known as *Listaleyipurin*. *Listaleyipurin*<sup>9</sup> is an initiative that ensures that children have contact with professional arts and culture within the school system. It builds on the Norwegian initiative *Den Kulturelle Skolesekken*<sup>10</sup> and *Listaleyipurin* has been in force since 2008. *Listaleyipurin* is a cooperation between the Ministry, the municipalities and the Nordic House, which initiated and administers the programme (see section 3.2.1 on the *Listaleyipurin* programme).

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<sup>9</sup> More information on *Listaleyipurin* is on the website of the Nordic House at <http://www.listaleyipurin.fo> (in Faroese). Also see the later report section on *Listaleyipurin*

<sup>10</sup> *Den Kulturelle Skolesekken* <http://denkulturelleskolesekken.no/>

The Ministry also funds (in cooperation with the municipalities and funding from parents) a wide reaching group of after school Music Schools. These are available, either as a full music centre, or as an outreach programme in most parts of the Faroe Islands. In most instances, programmes run after school as one-to-one instrumental lessons, though in recent years, some music schools have started to work more closely with the compulsory schools. Within the Music School<sup>11</sup>, music theory and instrument teaching constitute the main cultural options for children and young people. The music school system develops and coordinates the music teaching across the country.

Youth activity is an important part of the Faroese cultural policy and at both the Ministerial and the municipal level a number of youth generated cultural offers are supported. There is also a wide range of volunteer and locally generated cultural activity including choirs, theatre groups, local bands, recreational clubs, evening classes and other possibilities available.

A comment was made that shows the high focus the government gives to education policy in general within the government: “You have to understand. A lot of politicians are or have been teachers. So you could say our government is run by teachers.”

## 1.6 Financing patterns and resources

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- **The Faroese school system is relatively expensive and while overall funds for education have steadily increased, the percentage of national budget spent on education has fallen slightly over recent years.**

The large percent of small schools makes the Faroese school system a somewhat expensive system. The average annual cost per child is 40,422 DKK. In the Faroe Islands, local authorities make a considerable investment in education, arts and cultural education. This occurs through direct subsidies, special programmes, infrastructure support and some of the salaries of artists and cultural agents.

Lottery funds are also used to support children’s culture. Approximately 1.5 million Kroner is allocated from a cultural fund of around six million to provide children’s programmes including culture. The MMR (Mentamálaráðið) accounts for about 15% of the total lottery funding programme and covers youth activities including cultural activities.

The Ministry has a resource centre, Nám<sup>12</sup> containing a range of materials teachers can borrow. While it generally has good material, the sections for the arts are comparatively small. As an art specialist commented, “There are not many books for inspiration so I use my own resources or go on the internet.” It was also explained that, “Creative subjects are not a priority [for resource development]”. Figure 1.6.1 shows that while the amount of money for education (DKK) has risen steadily over the years, as a percentage of the overall budget for the Faroe Islands the expenditure on education has fallen since 2007.

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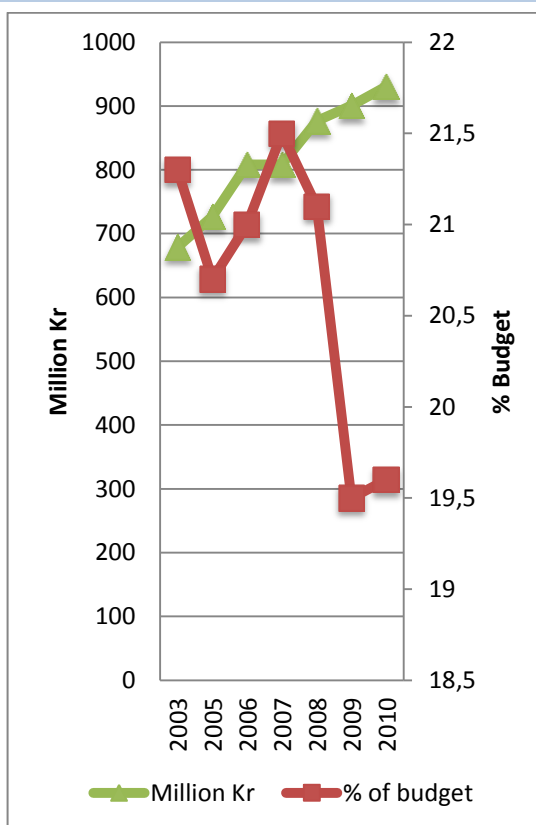
<sup>11</sup> More information on the music school system in the Faroe Islands is available at [www.musikkskulin.fo](http://www.musikkskulin.fo) (in Faroese).

<sup>12</sup> [www.nam.fo](http://www.nam.fo)





Figure 1.6.1 Patterns in education expenditure



1.5.2 Table: Percentage of budget by level of schooling

EDUCATION	17% (Total)
Pre-primary and primary education	8%
Secondary education	4%
Post-secondary non-tertiary education	1%
Tertiary education	2%
Education not definable by level	1%
Subsidiary services to education	1%
R&D education	0%
Education n.e.c.	1%

Please note, there are differences in the way educational budgets are calculated in the Faroe Islands and internationally. The following statistics are based on Faroes statistics<sup>13</sup> not including the kindergarten, but the pattern presented is similar.

Education and research, in 1000 DKK

2009: 797445

2010: 795723

2011: 847039

2012: 847939

Total expense Budget law, in 1000 DKK

2009: 4621449

2010: 4860387

2011: 4664281

2012: 4664840

<sup>13</sup> Source: The national budget, as posted on the Ministry for Finance webpage. [www.fmr.fo](http://www.fmr.fo)

## 1.7 Schools

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- **The physical resources in schools and music schools are generally of a high standard**
- **Most teachers in the general school (in most cases from year 1 to year 9) are trained at the local Teachers' College**
- **The Teachers' College has recently become a university faculty and now teachers gain a Bachelor's degree and a diploma**
- **Teachers in the music school and upper secondary college (gymnasium) are generally well-qualified with at least one degree and often a Master's degree and are generally trained in Denmark or internationally**
- **Generalist teachers generally lack sufficient training to implement quality arts education and creative learning in the compulsory school**
- **There are generally enough teachers to match demand, though it is harder to find teachers for more remote schools and for particular instruments**

Education is organised into the kindergarten phase (primarily play based), the elementary school (generally from grades 1-9), the year 10 (a transition year) and the non-compulsory upper years (either in an academic college, a technical college or a vocational college). Some children choose to go abroad (especially to Denmark) for studying the tenth grade and/or the final years.

Classes in the school tend to have around 24 pupils to one teacher though arts classes often are split into smaller groups of around 12 pupils. A number of schools have adopted innovative practice of combining class groups into larger units with several teachers working together to teach larger groups of pupils.

Young children have quite short days, with school starting at 8am and being finished before 12 noon. The school day gets gradually longer as pupils get older so by the time a child is in year 10 they may go through until about 14:30 or 15:00 in the afternoon. As long as the agreed minimum annual contact hours are met, schools have considerable autonomy to choose their own patterns of study, timetable and length of the school day.

Specialist teachers with degrees in their art forms are generally employed to teach the arts in the upper secondary school. In the elementary school, in most cases, generalist teachers with a 'line' (a major in an area) or some personal skill and/or interest in an area teach visual arts, textiles, wood craft and music and – where available – dance. In the upper secondary school, teachers with specialist training teach all the arts, craft, design and cultural subjects. Specialist teachers are generally very well qualified having either a first degree in their chosen art form and a post-graduate diploma or degree in education; or a general education degree with a major specialization in their chosen art form. Staffing of positions in the arts may be more difficult in rural or remote schools because of the challenge to attract suitably qualified teachers or because the small size of the schools means that there are insufficient hours to employ arts teachers. While in most instances, principals felt they were able to recruit the staff they needed, there appears to be a shortage of music teachers trained and confident to teach certain instruments, especially in

more remote areas. Teaching in the Music schools is preferred to teaching in the general school as teaching is generally on a one-to-one basis and with more favourable 'physical' and cultural environments for music education in the music schools. In recent years, the salary differential between teaching in music schools and the general school has reduced or the music school teacher may even earn more (as most have a degree), meaning that there is a general drain away of qualified teachers from the general school sector to the after school music school.

Faroese parents generally have high aspirations for their children. By international standards, the schools are well-equipped and effectively organized though the standard of facilities varies considerably from one school to the next. Computers and other technology are readily available. The schools visited had good-sized halls, or similar spaces suitable for holding performances and exhibitions. Most schools have specialist art rooms, including wet areas for painting, music spaces or flexible project spaces. Most schools have well-equipped specialist rooms for textile, woodcraft and computer studies, in addition to specialist facilities for cooking and science. There appears to be readily available arts resources such as paint and paper and musical instruments. None of the schools visited felt that they lacked adequate resources to deliver quality arts programmes, though some concern was expressed that this situation might change in the future. Interestingly, some of the more recently built schools, while attractive in design, lacked classrooms of sufficient size and were less able to be configured to create places for arts learning. For example, many lacked spaces for display and performance. On the other hand, some creative teachers working in small rural schools were able to effectively adapt the learning spaces to make very suitable locations for arts learning.

The upper secondary colleges generally had specialist rooms and materials. Music schools were also very well-equipped with high quality teaching spaces and resources.

*We have a new music room and a new drama suite so I am going to get a specialist teacher. I really look for creative teachers. The important question is how they will be with the children. (Principal)*

While it could be argued that the timing of the research (near the start of the school year) may have influenced the lack of displays around the school, very few schools had students' art displayed in the classroom and in publicly accessible parts of the school. Even where such displays existed, the range and standard of these displays varied considerably. While some schools have well labelled and carefully presented, dynamic displays of pupils' work, there is a general lack of emphasis given to public presentation of the arts created by children in Faroese schools. Ironically, considerable expenditure has gone into supplying art by Faroese artists (adults) in schools. While these provide an attractive learning environment and introduce children to the work of professional artists, it should be equally, if not more important, that children see their own work presented. Public presentation of work is important as research suggests that pupils should be encouraged to produce more 'resolved', quality artworks and performances for public presentation. The lack of displays may have been influenced by the timing of the research, with some schools commenting that work was removed over the holiday period, but this seems to not fully explain the lack of presentation of pupils' work.

There appears to be a trend in more recently built schools towards making very flexible use of the school facilities. For example, schools may be designed around large shared spaces instead of classrooms. Similarly, classes might be grouped to enable flexible and 'team' teaching. Multi-age classes were also apparent. Teachers appeared to enjoy working flexibility. Some teachers felt that more 'open' classes may have actually decreased the arts as teachers working in more open rooms were concerned by "disturbing other teachers" and felt "desk work" was "easier to manage" than creative work. Also, combined learning spaces, may have reduced specialist facilities and also reduced spaces for displaying students' work.

A few newly built schools are multi-function community centres that are used more generally beyond the times of a school day. Some schools contain (or are close to) the music school, library, kindergarten, after school club, sports fields and/or other community services. Schools with the music school embedded within the school or in very close proximity appeared to be able to provide services for a higher numbers of pupils and have greater flexibility of space, time and teaching personnel. Conversely, some teachers – especially from the Music schools – were against the trend towards embedding the music school within the regular school, claiming that this negatively impacted on the special "ethos" and "feel" possible in a separate music school facility.

In the Faroe Islands, the vast majority of parents send their children to the nearest local school, especially up to Year Nine. Some schools also offer Year Ten and in the larger towns some choice of schools may be possible post Year Nine. While recent results in international testing (PISA)<sup>14</sup> show that the overall results in mathematics, science and literacy are below comparable countries ("When we saw the PISA results we thought how can our teachers be so rotten?" – Comment from a school principal), there appears to be generally a high level of satisfaction with – and support of – the local school by parents and the community. It has to be noted though that in the Faroe Islands, it is only in the largest municipality of Torshavn that personal choice can to some extent be exercised.

## 1.8 Arts Education

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- **Music, visual arts and poetry tend to receive the strongest focus at all levels**
- **Limited views of arts education fails to recognize a whole range of contemporary practice evident in the Faroe Islands and being actively practiced by young people**

There is a general congruence between what is viewed as arts within the general community and what is included within the curriculum. The definition of the arts is relatively coherent between policy and practice given that teachers and pupils can easily list what may be included (i.e. music, painting/drawing, cooking, woodwork and textiles). There is less clarity about dance, drama and contemporary art forms such as film making, graphic design and festivals. Pupils tend to define the arts in terms of experiences that are timetabled in the school day. It could be argued though, that by being quite specific in the

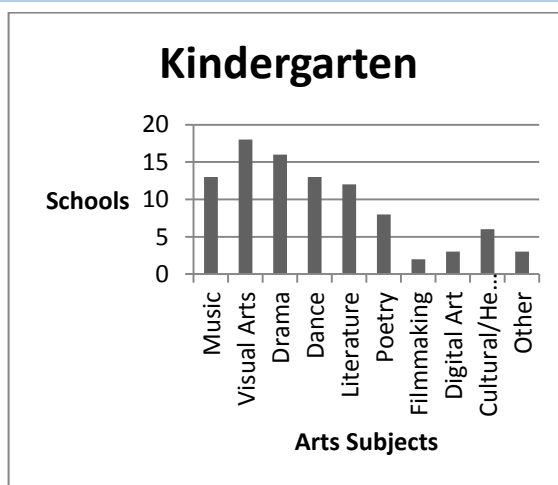
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<sup>14</sup> Finland scores highest in all subject areas and the Faroe Islands scores the lowest.

art forms covered, that the curriculum has a sharper focus but on the other hand, the quite limited view of arts education fails to recognize a whole range of contemporary practice evident in the Faroe Islands and being actively practiced by young people. So, for example, when in the research focus groups of pupils were asked to define the arts they would give a quite closed list, but if asked to describe what they do in the arts outside of school they gave a quite wide definition of the arts.

Music, visual arts and poetry tend to receive the strongest focus at all levels. Figure 1.8.1 shows the distribution and frequency of arts types at the kindergarten. Figure 1.8.2 shows the distribution and frequency of arts types at the compulsory school while Figure 1.8.3 shows the distribution and frequency of arts types at the upper secondary level.

*Figure 1.8.1 Distribution and frequency of arts types at the kindergarten*



*Figure 1.8.2 Distribution and frequency of arts types at the primary school*

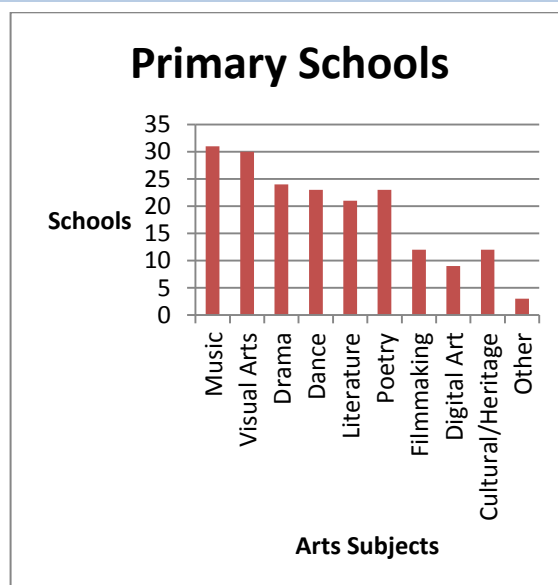
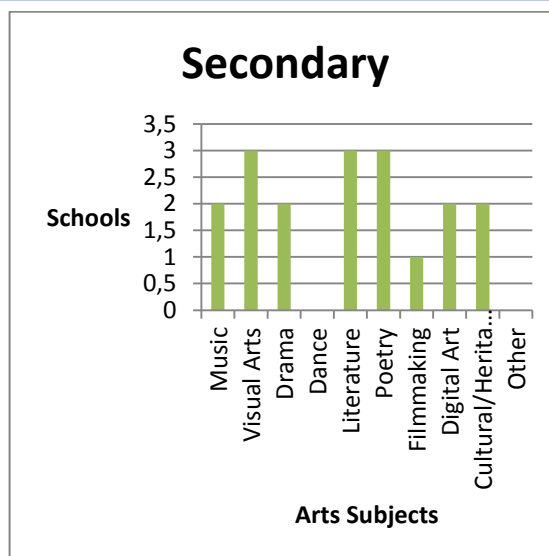


Figure 1.8.3 Distribution and frequency of arts types at the upper secondary school



Outside the school context there were a number of community and youth-generated activities (in addition to the Music school, which will be described in a later section). Most communities provide a range of community offers specifically targeting youth. For example, church groups, youth centres, local brass bands, 'garage' bands, evening schools, camps, summer festivals and a number of other local offers add considerably to the cultural possibilities for young people. While sporting activities remain a key focus, there are 'youth-led' groups in many towns that provide creative opportunities for young people. 'Ground up' initiatives seem to be particularly popular and are well resourced with purpose built facilities and high quality equipment (such as recording equipment, graphics and computers). It is unclear from the available evidence of the per cent of young people who make use of these facilities within the community.

The presence of other art forms related to the creative industries (such as fashion, film making, and animation) and those described internationally as urban arts (such as rap, beat box, hip pop) is not common in Faroese general schools, though they may some experience of these art forms at some special events or school visits. These alternative art forms tend to be more common in youth centres or in experiences generated by individual children or informal groups of young people.

## 1.9 Cultural, creative and heritage education

- **There is a lack of distinction made between arts education, creative education and cultural education**
- **Arts education and the study of Faroese culture tend to get greater focus than creative learning methods**

Culture is generally used as the overarching term to describe the identity of people including languages, art, relationships, people, and food. Arguably, Faroese culture has historically been somewhat suppressed. As a result there is now a strong focus on Faroese culture in the current school curriculum. Considerable resources are allocated to the

translation of books into Faroese and the production of children's literature and TV in the Faroese language. Faroese dance is taught to all children and the children learn many Faroese songs. Many schools visited start the day with group singing of Faroese songs. The 'blue song book' (Songbók Føroya folks) is still common.



### *Vignette 1.9.1 The teacher is singing the lines and the children are repeating*

The teacher is singing the lines and the children are repeating these lines. The other teachers know the songs and are joining in enthusiastically. The girls in the class seem eager to sing, but the boys are not singing and tending to misbehave or joke about the singing (aged 8 years). The song is by Jensina Olsen, a well-known Faroese musician who makes content for children (the songs are known from radio and television). The children learnt a song yesterday. The teacher accompanies the children on a guitar. The song is in Faroese. Only around one third of the class is joining in, though the teachers sing enthusiastically. The boys are not singing.

The main aims for arts education according to world studies includes cultural transmission or understanding, transmission of artistic skills, personal, social and cultural outcomes. Out of a group of young teenagers, all the children can do the Faroese dance and two of the group can knit. One is learning an instrument (the piano, but he is self-taught). No one in the group has done any drama or performance.

*We all know the Faroese dance because people do it at weddings and things like that.*



## 1.10 In school provisions

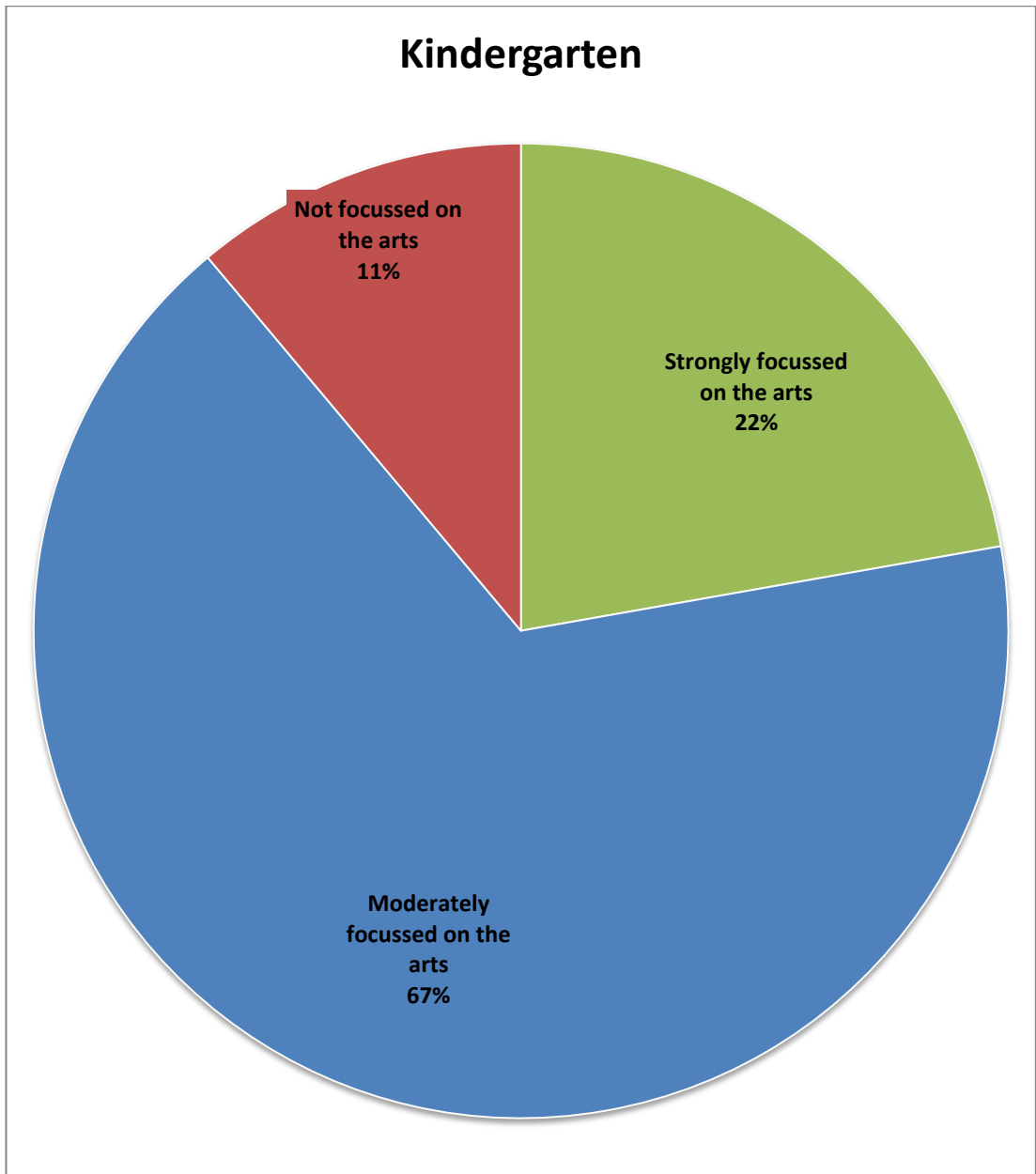
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- **There is a mismatch between the ambitious aims for arts education as expressed in policy and the limitations of practice in the implementation of arts education in schools**
- **Inadequate sequential time is given to the arts to enable aims to be achieved**
- **The views of the teachers or the children do not match the aims espoused in the curriculum**

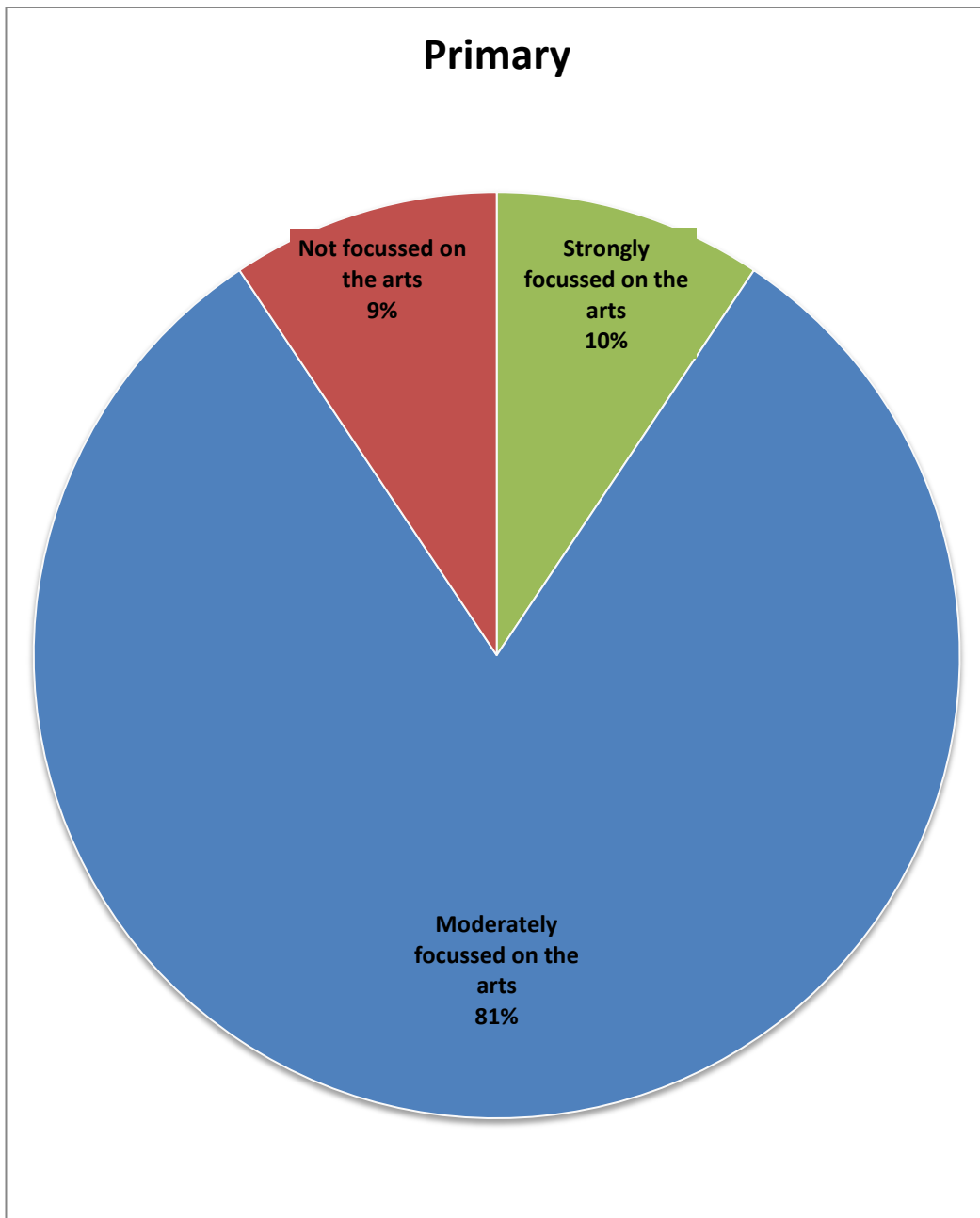
The compulsory school curriculum specifies the aims and amount of time that should be spent on the arts in school. In education policy, four hours per week is specified for most years between grades 1-9, though it is only required to have this time in 4 out of the 7 years, meaning that in practice, most schools stop delivering the arts by the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. The UNESCO world average for arts and cultural education in the compulsory school years is 2 hours and 40 minutes per week, so it could be argued that, in the years pupils receive the arts, they get more than a global average. If though, the time is averaged across all the compulsory school years (as the arts need to occur in a consistent way across all the years), then the Faroe Islands has less than the international average of time spent on arts and cultural education as it has on average less than 114 minutes per week, or 1 hour 54 minutes (nearly an hour less than the international average). This calculation does not include the upper secondary school as this would in most cases make the figure much worse. The amount of time given to the arts is also very low when taken as a per cent of the overall curriculum time for a typical child in grade 6 receiving 4 hours of the arts. This calculation shows that the arts represent less than 2% of the curriculum time, compared to sport, for example, that represents 8% of school time or religion that represents 7.5% of school time. These figures become even more concerning, when it is noted that cooking is under the creative subjects, so if you were to exclude the time cooking from the arts, the children would receive would receive 25% less time on the arts than the already low figures. According to the survey results, the majority of schools consider themselves to be 'moderately art focused' (Figures 1.10.1 to 1.10.3).

*Figure 1.10.1 Generally speaking, would you describe your school as being...  
(Kindergarten)*

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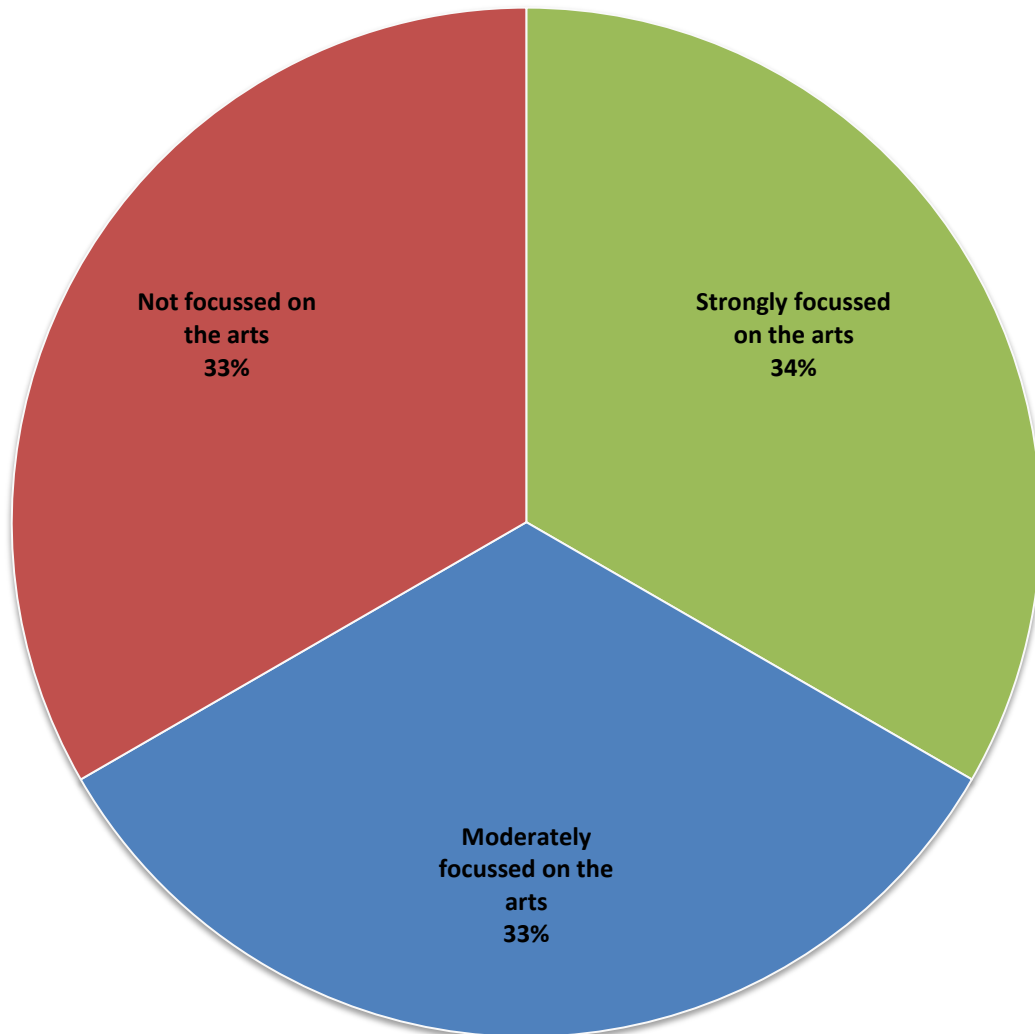
*Figure 1.10.2 Generally speaking, would you describe your school as being... (Primary)*



*Figure 1.10.3 Generally speaking, would you describe your school as being... (Upper secondary)*

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## Secondary



It was not the view of the children interviewed that the schools were moderately arts focused. Most believed there was very little arts focus in the school. The children and young people interviewed also expressed the desire for both **more** arts and also **more choice** within the arts offered during school, as these quotes exemplify:

*I wish we had more of the arts. I draw at home. We did a bit of music at school, but only six weeks. I learnt a little piano.*

*I remembered doing some music. We listened to some songs. Sometimes we sing. I wanted to do music at school but I think you have to be good at it.*

*We did not learn anything in music at school. We just listened to music. I taught myself piano and guitar from the internet. I also taught myself to compose music on "garage band"*

*School is OK. I like my teachers and we don't have many tests. But I wish things were more creative.*

*I love the arts, but there is nowhere near enough in schools. I want more drawing.*

*More music. More drama. We did a Christmas concert and it was so good, but that is only once per year.*

*I want to do more drama. We never do any plays. There is not much displaying of things and we don't do performances.*

*Sport is better because you get more choices. In the arts you can never get into what you want.*

There are two possible ways the lack of time could be rectified. The first would be to extend the school day. Children in the Faroe Islands currently have a very short day. Extending the school day could either be through increasing the number of hours spent in schools, or - as the Netherlands, China and Germany amongst other countries do - have a substantial programme of what are referred to as 'broad' schools – providing good quality after school provisions in culture and creative activity to **all children** after the formal school day has finished. The other possibility is to look at the per cent of the school day given to different subjects and to determine if these needs to be reviewed to more closely reflect international trends and the core competencies (i.e. mathematics, languages, sciences, social and cultural studies, physical education, and aesthetics (arts) education).

Despite the lack of time given to arts education, the aims in the curriculum appear to be very ambitious. The aims are clearly delineated for the stages kindergarten to the second grade; the third and fourth grade; the fifth and sixth grade; and the seventh to ninth grade. There are also delineated aims for pupils in the tenth grade taking either the visual arts or music lines. The aims for the other art forms such as dance, drama and new media are less clearly articulated.

The aims for music include contemporary music, traditional music and classical music. It is suggested that special attention should be given to Faroese music. At the secondary level, the curriculum suggests that there should be more of a focus on music theory and the study of music itself, while at the primary level it is more related to the role of music in society. The areas that should be covered in the music curriculum include practice of music, theory of music and understanding of music.

The aims for music in the curriculum at school are organised under the general headings of practice, theory and appreciation. While these three elements are present at all stages, there is a general shift in emphasis from more practice in the early years to more theory and appreciation in the latter years. The content is quite clearly specified and it is unclear how these stages can be altered to cater for individual needs. For example, how might a teacher of school curriculum music differentiate the staged aims to cater for a child

who does a lot of out of school music, compared to a child who may do no music at all apart from the music covered during school time?

The aims and presumed outcomes for music include:

- Singing songs and psalms (on average knowing at least 50 songs), including canons and songs for multiple voices
- Knowing a range of Faroese rhymes (*skjaldur*)
- Singing and performing the Faroese Ballads
- Knowing the Faroese dances
- Playing rhythmical instruments
- Playing tuned percussion instruments
- Reading musical notation (including major and minor keys, pentatonic and other keys and intervals)
- Understanding scores and melodies, including dynamic indications
- Knowing the names of instruments in the orchestra
- Being able to distinguish volume, tone and pitch variations
- Playing a chosen musical instrument
- Understanding musical literacy
- Ensemble playing
- Writing music and composition
- Recognise and describe a range of styles and genres of music
- Know about “serious” and commercial music
- Learning melodies from scores and ciphering (chord notation)
- Performing on stage to an audience
- Recording and editing music
- Can describe accidentals in major and minor
- Can describe youth culture and music culture and place them in a social and global context
- Can work independently with themes and assignments in music

If in total, a child is likely to receive less than 200 hours of music lessons in their entire time in compulsory education, it seems highly unlikely that the average pupil could achieve the ambitious aims outlined.

The picture is quite similar within visual arts, though perhaps the aims are slightly more realistic and achievable. The curriculum also balances making art and appreciating art and tries to expose the children to a range of media and experiences. The curriculum appears to take an approach to art based equally on an understanding of formal properties and the expressive quality of the arts, with a movement generally from expressive art in the younger grades, to more formal understanding in the older grades. Once again, assuming that a child is likely to receive less than 200 hours of visual arts lessons in their compulsory school years, the following list are the aims and presumed outcomes for visual arts:

- Create pictures based on emotions, fantasy and stories
- Use his/her own senses to respond to the immediate natural environment by creating pictures

- Gain experience and techniques at working with drawing, graphic art, painting, collage
- Create 3D forms and installations
- Create computer graphics
- Name and understand shape, colour and composition
- Recognize different themes and motives in the artwork of others
- Know about different image media such as cartoons, posters, postcards, digital media, homepages and others
- Understand visual communication
- Use pictures as a personal way of communication
- Combine text and images
- Hold exhibitions of their artworks
- Work with light, shadows, movement and depth in pictures
- Work with sculpture, with focus on basic spatial visual language
- Work with lines, surfaces, shapes, composition, rhythm, tension and movement
- Experiment with techniques, material and tools
- Find inspiration from exhibitions, film, museums and different social environments
- Use the terminology of visual analysis
- Analyse, categorize and evaluate own art and that of others
- Categorize different motives, fields and types of pictures
- Use computer graphics for layout
- Work with and combine different techniques and genres in drawing, painting, collage, graphics, digital photography and editing
- Use colours to create contrast, depth and atmospheres in images
- Be awareness of different historical art periods
- Choose between and use different visual forms of presentation and display, and use different visual media when communicating
- Express observations through visual means, as well as fantasy, emotions and opinions, personal life, socio-realism, social and global trends and utopia
- Critically choose between materials, modes and techniques as inspiration and means of expressing the theme, which is being worked with
- Combine still and moving images, texts and sound and independently record, edit and make small videos
- Work critically with certain processes in building and design
- See that visual arts can reflect social trends/paradigms
- Be conscious of the power of visual communication, including the positive and negative influence images can have as means of communication
- Show awareness of basic theories of visual communication, among these to mount an exhibition respecting basic aesthetic concepts

Despite these lofty aims and intended outcomes, there is a lack of assessment practices in the arts to be able to determine if any of these aims are actually met. In practice, the disjointed time given to the arts means that rather than any systematic addressing of these aims, there tends to be a series of 'project based' activities aimed primarily at encouraging the children to 'like' the arts subject and to produce some outcome or product at the end

of the project. The teachers and the pupils understanding of the aims of the arts curricula seem to be quite different from those aims espoused in the written documentation.

In response to interview questions about the aims, it is clear that the views of the teachers or the children do not match the aims espoused in the curriculum. The responses from the interviews tend to suggest a major focus on the expressive use of the arts, recreation and cultural development. For example, it is suggested by respondents that the arts:

- Build imagination
- Make children free to use their abilities
- Allow children to play
- Encourage children to be independent
- Develop the total child
- Allow the child to have a good experience
- Build collaboration and togetherness
- Help children to learn to concentrate
- Build community cohesion
- Make connections in the community
- Community pride
- So the children have fun
- To encourage children to express themselves
- To learn responsibility

Unlike the curriculum aims that stress develop artistic skills, knowledge and competencies, the teachers do not see that the curriculum 'arts' can achieve this aim, as is summed up in this quote.

*It is not about being artists. They are happy when they make something and they can give it to their mothers. It is an achievement.*

Some teachers were less concerned with the impact on the pupils and more focused on the enjoyment the arts bring to teachers. For example, the arts "Make teaching more fun." These ideas are also evident in the qualitative comments made by teachers about the purpose of the arts:

*Creative subjects give students a new experience. It opens their eyes to other things and other ways of looking at things. The arts work practically together.*

*It is important that children know their own culture and tradition. We need to know our society and the foundations that it is built upon. It is about developing knowledge and values. We teach the children to know the festivals and celebrations. We take them to visit historic places. We read them books about the Faroese culture and teach them the Ballads, songs and dances. We want them to know their local areas and its history.*

Started in 2008, the Ministry for Education and Culture has instigated a process of creating new and up to date education plans for all school grades. The new curriculum plan was introduced to the primary school in 2011 and will be introduced into the upper



secondary school and vocational school in 2013. It requires that all subjects in the school have a written curriculum plan. While it encourages adaptation to the pupils and the local context, it also prescribes key approaches and aims to be achieved. It argues that it should stimulate the "cognitive, creative and social development of every child." The basic skills in the curriculum are "to respect, to communicate, to explore and to create". It is argued that these are fundamental skills that should be strengthened in every subject. Furthermore, the document stipulates that every child should have the "right to know why a teacher chooses a method of teaching." According to the curriculum, teachers and pupils should "discuss and agree on what is best done and why". Concurrently, both the teacher and the child should be able to clearly communicate the learning goals to be achieved. The curriculum plans should all use the same structure and general language so that learning is clear to all stakeholders. In theory, the new curriculum is compulsory. The structure of the new curriculum stipulates that all subjects have an aim allotted hours, core competencies, goals for learning, core skills and subject skills. Lessons need to be clearly outlined and evaluation must be specified. Evaluation can include formative assessment and exams. Evaluation should reflect the broader didactic principals of the subjects. It should be noted that the core competencies should be apparent in all subject areas.

In 2011, a significant change occurred in the curriculum for elementary schools. This change should have been adopted in all schools, though the results of the field work suggest that only a few schools are fully implementing this curriculum. The general view is that it takes time to integrate the new policy and most schools are at the stage of just reading the document. The new compulsory school curriculum focuses on a spiral development and encourages subjects to be integrated. This form of integrated practice was only observed in one school visited (a small rural school). The curriculum suggests that a team of teachers work together to deliver an integrated core of subjects, based around key competencies. To date, the majority of primary schools visited are not yet implementing the new curriculum, as these quotes typify:

*I am not sure about the curriculum. I haven't tried anything from it yet. We have to work to our routine. We did have one meeting about it, but really I don't know much about it.*

*I think the situation for the arts is divided. In some ways it is broader, so you can do different things, but we have lost some of the skills and specialisms from before.*

*I have looked at the new curriculum and I think it will make my lessons more structured. I am learning a new method where we always start with the text.*

*We do a cut and paste from the Danish system. We copy their mistakes also.*

*I don't think it is really much of a change. It has made my lessons a bit more structured. We haven't really implemented it though as it is up to the school leaders. I think we are doing three days about the special methods.*

*We have started to have a look at it. The teachers have to do more planning. There is also more of a focus on assessment. The teachers understand it. They are working*

*together and planning. The templates are not a problem. It is not a problem. Everything has to change. Nothing is perfect. I think the planning for the curriculum was a thorough process.*

*I am not sure about the new curriculum. On paper it looks good. The question is we don't have enough time. I would like more time, but there has never been talk of a longer school day.*

*No I am not familiar with the new curriculum. I think it will be OK but everyone will need to get involved. You can't do everything in one year. Getting new curriculum in schools takes time.*

### 1.11 Out of school arts education

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- **As most families have both parents working, there is strong demand for out of school care and activities**
- **Subsidised after school care is available for children from 6-8 years of age**
- **Locally funded youth clubs exist in some areas to provide a range of activities for teenagers and young adults**
- **The voluntary sector including sports, churches, gymnastics, scouts local bands and others provide after school programmes that often include the arts and crafts and outdoor activity**
- **Young people appear to show considerable initiative in developing their own activities where none exist and to use online and other sources to 'self-teach' where programmes of activities are not available**

There are two main types of out of school provisions: the informal/voluntary arts sector and the formal after school music schools (see section 1.12). The 'informal sector'<sup>15</sup> is a collective description for a whole host of services and provisions run by church groups, youth groups, community groups, and local authorities. Free youth centres are provided for children aged 12 years and older. The younger ones come in the afternoon and the older pupils come at night. As one municipality commented, "We rely on a lot of voluntary activity to occupy the children... scouts, churches, sports clubs. I like the cities in Sweden as volunteers take care of a lot of the community activities. That is a good model."

Within the informal arts provisions there are some interesting youth-led initiatives and initiatives operated by volunteers at the very local level. The young people interviewed were engaged in a considerable amount of self-generated arts activities, especially using resources available in the online world. The following quote was typical of the overall response received from most young people interviewed: "I am constantly online. Facebook, games. I made games. I taught myself the code." On average, the young people interviewed spent more than four hours per day online, while some admitted to be "online all the time". Movies are popular, but these are most popular in English. The following comments exemplify the high level of online activity amongst young people:

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<sup>15</sup> Sometimes also referred to as the "non-formal" or the voluntary arts sector.

*Internet connections are fast and efficient and the young people interviewed are very active in online gaming, social media and the development of games and websites.*

*I am into gaming. We have a 'lan' party. We take our computers to each others' place and then link up and do online gaming.*

*The Faroe Islands is kind of dull. I don't know why we don't stop the whale kill and then more people will like us. I really live my life online. I have friends all over the world. I make games and share them. Even in Japan and stuff.*

*Could we have an artists' exchange programme? There are a lot of Faroese kids doing interesting thing online, through you-tube and stuff. It would be great if we could do this for real.*

In addition to these self-generated activities, there is a network of around a number of other private providers offering a range of different programmes. Ung I Foroyum occurs every second year and it is a youth arts festival hosted by the Nordic House for young people, and co-developed with young people<sup>16</sup>. Around 60 young people take part (but 120 apply to be included). Unfortunately boys make up less than a third of participants. It provides an opportunity for young people to really "show what they can do". They do a performance and exhibition. The programme is designed to reach out to 13-18. The event has led to a number of bands being 'discovered'. The young people interviewed feel they have a lack of choice in terms of what is offered in school or through official after school programmes (such as the music school).

*I wish we had more choices. Especially in the arts. It is good that we try everything when we are young, but then we should be allowed to choose to do the ones we are interested in.*

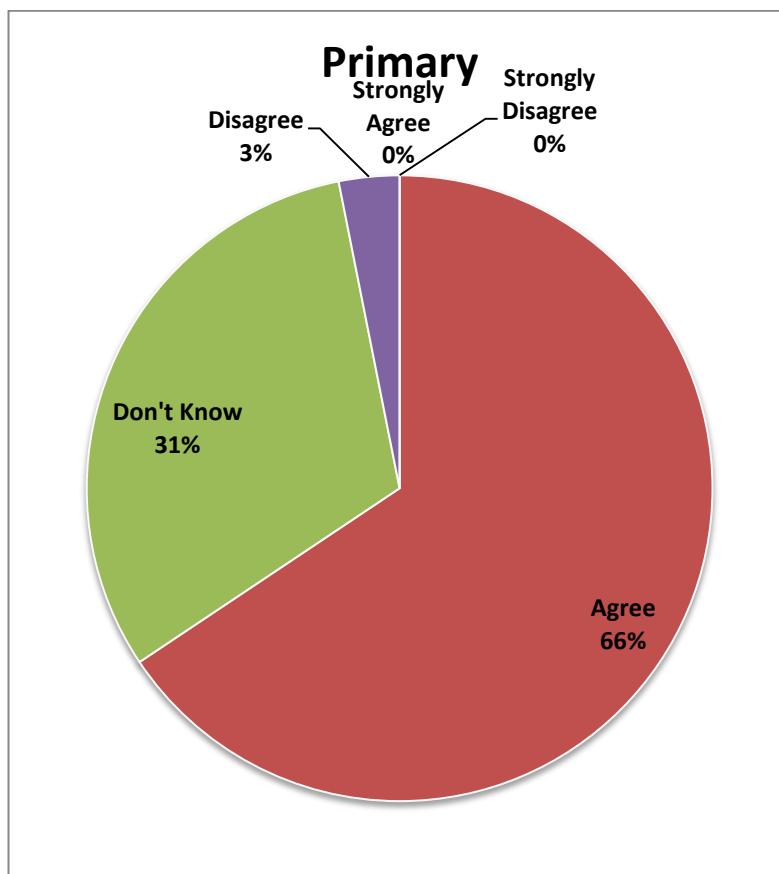
*I wish we had more choice.*

Interestingly, while the young people themselves felt they had little choice or decision making in relation to their learning, the respondents to the survey (school leaders) felt that young people were involved in decision making, though it has to be said that the very high 'don't know' response would suggest that this topic may not have been fully discussed.

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<sup>16</sup> The framework is provided by the Nordic Culture House and the content is developed in collaboration with youth leaders and other young people and participants.

Figure 1.11.1 Pupils' views are *listened to* in arts/cultural lessons



There was the overwhelming view expressed by the young people that they wanted much more creative learning in their school day.

*I really want to do more singing and dancing. Things you can do with your mind and your body. At this school, we stopped doing anything creative in the 5th grade. I am so bored now. We need it. Don't rip the creative things away from us! We need more creative stuff. There is nothing to do. We all just spend hours on the computer. The teachers could try to reach us. We need drama.*

*I would really like to do a play. I would like to do more of that stuff.*

In some interesting examples, the lack of provisions had led to the young people creating their own arts education experiences either connected with school or after school.

*We have a Student Council and the pupils discuss activities like concerts, student parties. The students are elected and we arrange things.*

*It is really up to the teachers. Some schools are very good. There has not been a performance, but I am organising one. I have had to do everything.*

*There was nothing in this school so I started a short film club.*

## 1.12 The music school

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- **The Faroe Islands has an extensive system of local and national government funded after school music schools**
- **A small number of private options are also available for after school including dance in gymnastics (mainly girls) and private music lessons**
- **Other activities operate at the local level including amateur theatre groups, bands and choirs**
- **Attendance at music schools is comparatively low while demand for lessons is very high**
- **The curriculum of music schools is generally based on classical music and traditional one-to-one instructional approaches**
- **There are long waiting lists to get into most instruments in the music school**

The first are formal music schools established in 1984 offering substantial training in instrumental music.

*When the first music schools started there were very few instruments. An Englishman, Hugh Watkins, started it all really. The first music schools started in 1985. He collected every instrument he could find and started people playing in groups. He was very influential and most of his students are still playing. (Musician)*

The music schools receive direct funding from the national Ministry of Education, local municipal governments and parents. The total yearly budget for the Music schools is 20.000.000 DKK. The Ministry pays 11.000.000 and the municipalities 9.000.000 DKK. . The municipalities get the full tuition fee from pupils. On average parents pay around 1600 DKK per year in Tórshavn and a little less in the rest of the country for their children to attend. Parents may also need to buy materials or musical instruments, but provisions are available to hire or borrow these.

According to a focus group of people working within the music schools, the main aims of the music schools include:

- Saving the world through music
- Identifying and nurturing talent
- Improving the quality of life
- Sharing the joy of music
- Musical expression
- Musical literacy
- Musical analysis
- Historical, social and cultural dimension of musical studies

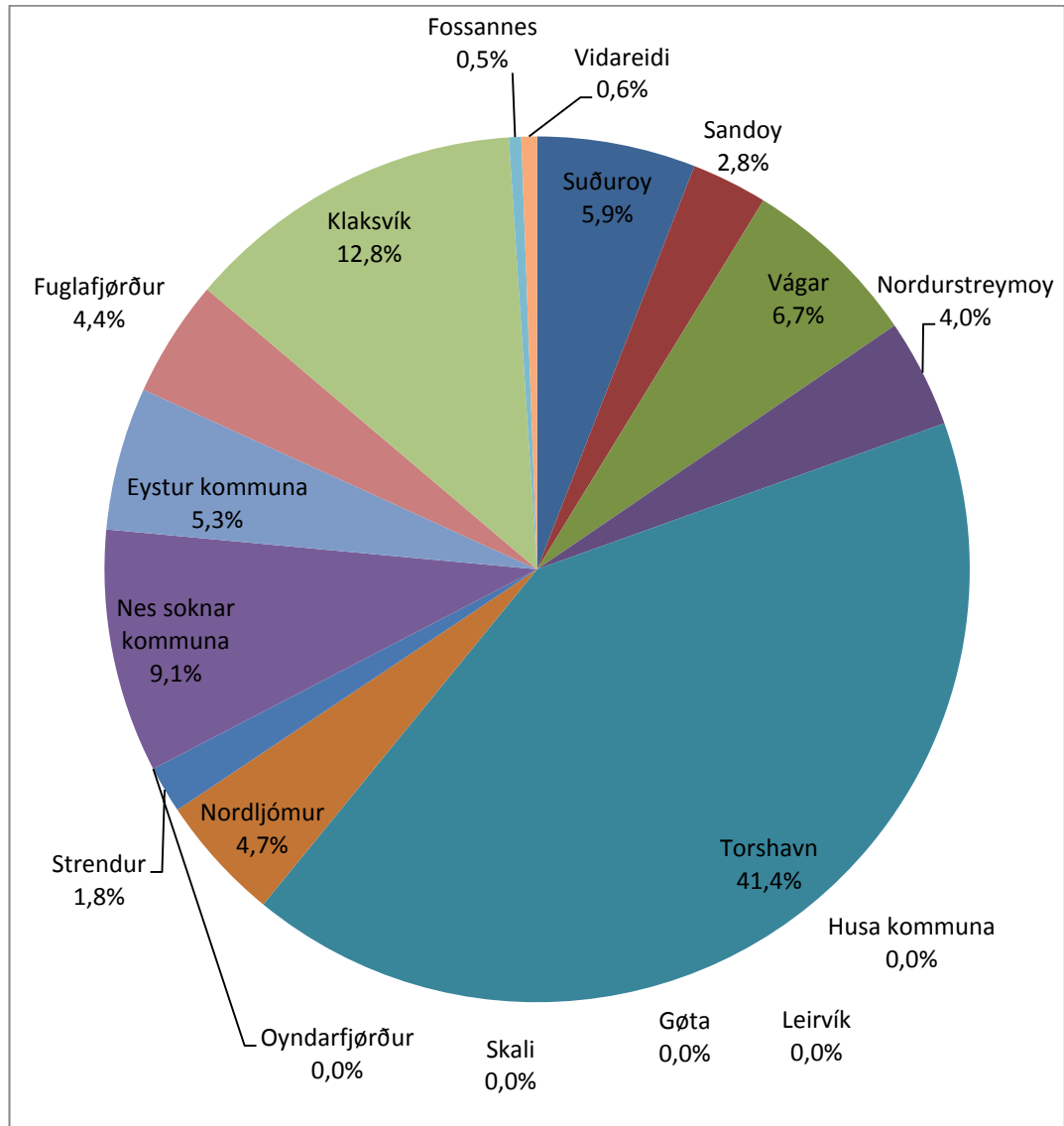
There are 2397 “activity pupils” and 1622 individual pupils (as one pupil may do two or more activities). This means that the cost per activity per pupil is 8343.76 DKK and the cost per pupil is 12,500 DKK, so the programme is currently just under 13% paid for by parents and 87% (or more) subsidised by the public. As the majority of pupils are between the ages of 8 and 16 years, around 22% of the Faroese population between 8 and 16 years of age attend the music school.

There are 48.5 full-time teaching positions in the music schools and this is divided over 63 music teachers. The Ministry pays 50% of the teachers' salaries while (according to a law from 1984) the remaining 50% is paid by the Municipalities. The salaries in the music school used to be lower than for teachers in the general school, but now they are about 10% higher. The average monthly cost for parents for pupils attending the Music school is 200 DKK.

The majority of lessons are one-to-one lessons, though in around 60% of cases, there is also provision for group playing. The main aims are for enjoyment and to develop some musical skills. Only around 130 candidates undertook music exams last year (less than 8% of pupils). There is a criticism that insufficient numbers of pupils are progressing to higher levels of musical achievement as this comment from a music school exemplifies: "We are doing our best. We get criticised because the children aren't learning enough."

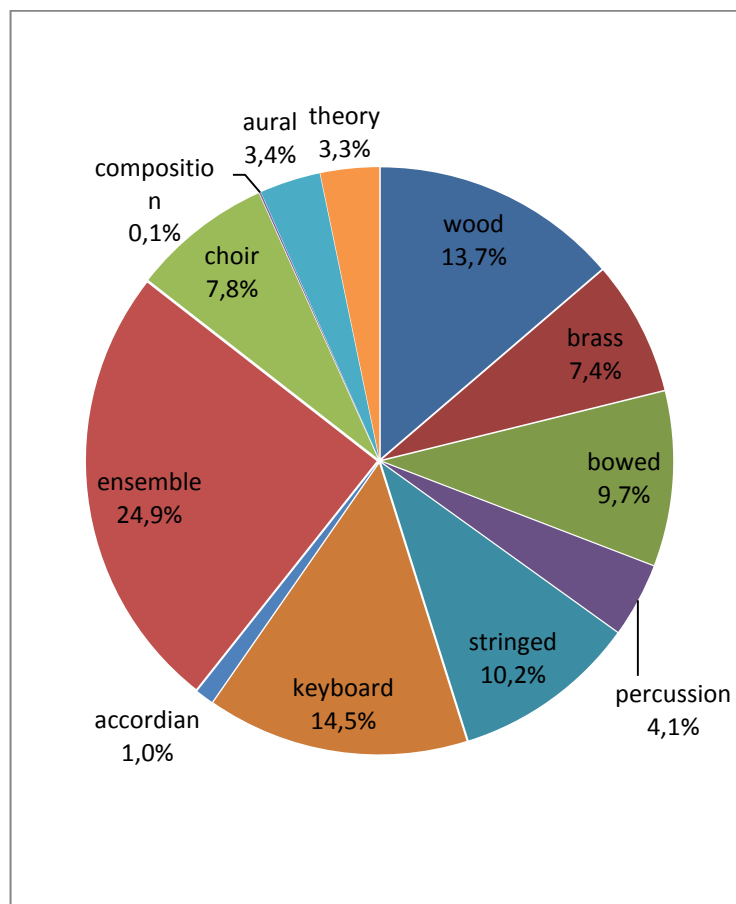
The Faroe Islands has an extensive network of after school music schools. These are spread across the country and even small towns, islands and villages are likely to have access to a music school. Figure 1.12.1 shows the percentage location of music schools by municipality.

Figure 1.12.1 Location of the music schools



The main purpose of the music school is for the child to learn an instrument. They may also study musicology and musical theory. Excluding ensemble playing, the most popular instruments appear to be the keyboard, woodwind and stringed instruments (guitar) but this can vary from one music school to the next.

Figure 1.12.1 Percentages of instrument types in the music school



In most instances, children begin in the music school at around 8 years of age. However, as many music schools have very long waiting lists, children wishing to start music lessons may not get into music lessons until they are 10-12 years old. Many children in fact give up waiting and instead either teach themselves music, learn the instrument as part of a community band, get lessons at evening school, learn at church or with a private teacher or family friend. A story that was often told during the study as a sort of joke was that when a mother gives birth the first thing she does is put an announcement in the newspaper and the second thing is to register the child on the waiting list for the music school! The waiting lists are a problem as it means that many children miss out or cannot study the instrument they would like to do. Similarly, some children continue in the music school even though they have lost interest purely because their parents know how hard it is to get another place in the Music school were their child to take a break from going to Music school. Despite the very long waiting lists, very little has been done to address this situation. Some possible solutions that could be tried include having group lessons in the first few years or for teachers to teach music during school time as well as after school time. There have been limited examples of these ideas or other ideas being tested to address the waiting lists.

The most common pattern of attendance for children studying music is to attend 1 x30 minute one-to-one lessons per week. Children may also be encouraged to do ensemble playing. The music taught is generally European music from a classical tradition, with some jazz or folk music being introduced in some schools in recent years. Children tend to learn



traditional instruments such as piano, violin or other string, brass or woodwind instruments. Guitar and percussion are also popular. The availability of certain instrument choices is governed by a combination of interest from pupils and teaching staff available. The content of the programmes tend to be based on models of the 'master' and the pupil and taught in private, one-to-one lessons. The music teachers in Music schools tend to have considerable expertise. Music teachers are encouraged to continue their own music profession. In practice though, the majority of teachers teach music as their main source of income, though they may concurrently be active in a range of local professional and amateur musical activities including church choirs, playing the organ, in ensembles, in local bands and the Faroese symphony orchestra, appearing in local performances, running local festivals and so on.

While historically, music schools have had little direct contact with schools, this pattern is changing. A small number of music schools are now working in collaboration with the general school and pupils are able to attend the music school during school time. Staff from the music school may also teacher group music classes and/or pre-instrumental lessons within the general school. This is particularly the case for younger students.

In a small number of examples, the music school may be physically located within the general school building or in very close proximity to the general school. In some cases, lessons occur throughout the day in the music school and pupils are able to move freely to their instrumental lessons in the music school. While this pattern has generally been well-received by all, some music school teachers have expressed concern that there is a lack of genuine integration with the general school context and staff. There is a desire for collaborations between regular schools and after schools with the intention that closer links would be mutually beneficial but there is also concern that the unique atmosphere of the music school may be compromised by more direct contact with schools. Some music schools have made good links with the after school care centres for younger pupils and pupils can go directly from the after school centre to their music lessons.

Although less common, there are also visual arts schools, drama schools and dance schools. The dance and visual arts schools are generally privately run and do not receive direct government subsidy or are a part of the evening school programme.

The demand for the music schools is very strong and in almost all places and for most instruments there is a long waiting list. The length of the waiting lists can vary but the longest waits are for piano and guitar. The shortest waiting list is for the Bassoon or the oboe. There are 600 children on the waiting list at one music school alone.

*I wanted to get into music school. The waiting list was so long, I gave up and my mum found a private guitar teacher, but it costs 150 per hour. (Pupil)*

*It takes many years to get into Music School. You have to be put on the list when you are very young. (Pupil)*

*The waiting list is a large problem, especially for guitar and piano and especially in Torshavn. People joke, but as they write the names on the baby's label, they also sign them onto the music school list. (Music teacher)*

*Some children have been on the guitar waiting list for 4 years. They tend to give up and just go somewhere else. (Music teacher)*

A lack of money and qualified teachers is blamed for the long waiting lists.

*If we had more money we could get rid of the waiting list. Another idea is to renew the list every year. If we move some of the music outside the music school and into the regular school that would help too. Politically, they want more for less. (Music school head)*

*The waiting lists are caused because we don't have enough money and also there is a lack of qualified teachers. 30-40% of our music school teachers are from abroad. (Music school head)*

In one innovative programme to try to reduce the waiting list and increase the take-up of places, the music school has linked with the compulsory school and all the children in one parallel class in years one to four get music in school time. While one of the classes is getting music, the other classes have a special focus on visual arts.

*The "Colour Strings" programme has been effective at involving all the children in a school year. It was funded by the Ministry of Culture. (Principal)*

*The music school teachers should go out into the schools. There are enough qualified teachers and it could really improve things if we could go out into the schools. (Music teacher)*

*The after school music school works inside the school and almost every child learns something. When it is onsite, it is very easy for the children to go. (Principal)*

The other criticism from pupils was that the type of programme offered by the music schools was quite limited and restrictive. For example, the pupils of the music schools felt that generally the pieces they played were chosen by the teachers. Some had chosen their instrument but others were playing an instrument their parents selected or where there were available spaces in the music school. The pupils said they practice between 10-60 minutes per day. Although the majority of the lessons were individual, the preference of the pupils was for group lessons of 4-8 pupils. They also wanted more time to play together after the formal music lessons.

*The music school has a limited offer. I wanted to do hip pop dancing. There was no where I could do this. I had to get a private teacher and go to Torshavn. But then it cost too much so I had to stop.*

Despite the music schools having the freedom to choose whatever method they like and the preference from both the pupils and their schools for group lessons, the music teachers and music school directors do not feel group lessons are as effective.

*I don't think there can be quality in a group lesson. If you have 10 students and two teachers there will be a lack of quality. We want musical creativity not just copying.*

*We have considered group teaching but we have not done it as there is a kind of conservatism. I think we could work more for the same money, but we would need more understanding of group lessons. We have a very small per cent of pupils who drop out, but I think that because it is so hard to get in, their mothers won't let them drop out.*

There was also the view that to promote excellence, children should be given the opportunity to start music lessons at a younger age.

*Ideally we would take more of the very smallest children. It is important that they get a good start in their music.*

### 1.13 Museums and Cultural Centres

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- **Cultural Centres and museums provide programmes for children**
- **There are examples of good practice in museum and gallery education**
- **This tends to be undervalued in comparison to other aspects of the museum's functions**
- **Consideration should be given to providing subsidies from more isolated schools to attend central cultural institutions or to provide subsidies to the cultural institutions to more frequently 'tour' some element of their collections or performances.**
- **Educational programmes in museums and galleries need to be regularly reviewed and revitalized as children are inclined to be repeat visitors**
- **Teachers need more professional development in how to use museums in educational programmes so there is greater integration between the school curriculum and the programmes offered in the museums**
- **Some small local museums are popular with children as their collections are eclectic and the volunteer guides passionate about local history**

Museums in the Faroe Islands receive subsidies from the government. Attending museums is free of charge up to the age of 16, including school groups. From the age of 16 up, the cost per adult is 30 DKK, and for groups of a minimum of 20 people the cost is 20 DKK per person. These costs apply to the Art Museum, the Historical Museum and the Natural History Museum. The cost to attend these museums is relatively inexpensive but often the cost of transport to and from the museum can be quite costly. This cost of transport tends to discourage schools from attending.

*We go to the Nordic House and to the art gallery. They offer free drawing sessions. The session is free, but the cost of transport is high. We try to encourage the children to go to the free museum week in the holidays, but some parents don't go. <Principal at an isolated island school>*

Some isolated schools have developed innovative ways to bring a 'museum experience' to children where the costs of going to the museum are too high.

*We are quite isolated here, but we do take the children to the museums and art galleries. But this is only about once a year, but what we also do is set up our own museums and art galleries. We put out a table and that becomes a museum and then we put special old things on that table. We also set up an art gallery and display the children's artworks alongside prints of famous artworks. We can't get to performances so once again, we do our own. The teachers put on costumes and act out a performance and the children love it. We do puppet shows as well and make the puppets out of recycled materials. We have become really creative, because there are also alternatives.*

Concurrently, some small local museums are popular with children as their collections are eclectic and the volunteer guides passionate about local history. Consideration should be given to providing subsidies from more isolated schools to attend central cultural institutions or to provide subsidies to the cultural institutions to more frequently 'tour' some element of their collections or performances.

The major museums have both on-going 'core' collections and a range of temporary exhibitions. The major four museums make a number of outreach programmes to both schools and the broader community. If this occurs more attention needs to be paid to quality assurance within museums as the young people are likely to be repeat visitors and the museum needs to provide a renewed and exciting experience on each visit. Pupils, even from remote parts of the Island tend to attend the museums on an annual or even more regular basis, yet the pupils interviewed (as exemplified in the following quotes) were not particularly keen on the programmes offered by the museums.

*We used to go to the museum every year. It was very boring, but I liked to go because of Burger King and we would go to the movies. The problem is that the museum is always the same.*

*The museum was not very creative. We just sort of walked around.*

The museums offer a number of services to assist arts and cultural education but these are largely under resourced and under-utilized. From the perspective of the museum, education programmes are run by a small staff receiving only a fraction of the global budget of the museum. Similarly, schools see the museum as being a very marginal resource within their general curriculum. Despite this, there was evidence, especially from the Art Museum of efforts to make the experience more relevant to the needs of the schools and their pupils and a more child centred (rather than collection centred) approach.

*I always contact the school first. I try to understand what they want and develop a programme to suit them. We have tried to do longer projects, but the schools are not interested as it takes too much time. We want to reach out to the child's imagination. That is very important.*

The museums and galleries should be more proactive in providing teacher development activities especially providing introductions and enrichment orientations for trainee or beginning teachers. The museum sector plays an important role in encouraging teachers – especially trainee teachers – to see the museum (and culture more generally) as a resource for learning. There are some examples of the museums taking an active role in the

development of learning resources but this aspect of the museums work could be further developed. For several years, the museums have had a 'school week' with activities and interactive programmes. These museums weeks are popular with schools.

The Nordic House is a multi-purpose venue that hosts both performances and exhibitions. Its operations are supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers. It was officially opened in 1983 and its architecture, while reflecting traditional Faroese buildings, also embodies features from the other Nordic countries and has a flexible design to enable it to be used in a number of ways. It can host events for up to 350 seated or 800 standing people at a time and it welcomes over 50,000 people per year. In the foyer, there is a cafe that is also popular with visitors.



Source: <http://www.tripadvisor.co.uk/LocationPhotos-g190334-Streymoy.html> accessed November 2012

The Nordic House is supported by the various ministries of the Nordic countries. It is intended to be a showcase space for professional artists and Nordic art and culture. It also promotes Faroese arts abroad. Film is becoming more highlighted. The local people really support the arts, and the halls tend to be full for the Symphonic Orchestra. The Nordic House also runs outreach days such as "The day of Dance" and the "Story Telling day, as well as Ung í Føroyum. The Nordic House administers Listaleyppurin.

While all cultural centres play a major role in the delivery of arts education, there is a lack of interest from some centres in the important role they play. It could be argued that the role has been so institutionalised in the delivery of local cultural programmes that in some instances apathy has set in.



## Chapter 2: World Standards - Benchmarking

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### 2.1 Introduction

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For the positive impacts of arts education to become apparent, children must experience high quality arts education. The results from the global study of arts education suggest that in around ¼ of all instances of arts education, the quality is so low as to negatively affect a child's artistic and creative development<sup>17</sup>. Given this, it is imperative that the arts education within the Faroe Islands reaches certain levels of quality. This chapter outlines the basic components that together form high quality arts education.

### 2.2 World standards: Defining the alpha of quality arts education

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Art education - like health - is not a mono-causal phenomenon but one which hinges on many variables pointing in the same direction. Statisticians have developed a measure of this. The so-called *Cronbach's Alpha* (Bogt, 1993) measures the consistency between factors in a compound phenomenon. The higher consistency there is between the qualities, the higher the *Cronbach Score*. Statistically speaking, total consistency equals 1, whereas no consistency at all equals 0 (Bogt, 1993).

Related to arts education, we know that quality programmes have a number of measurable characteristics in common, such as inclusion of partnerships, performances and approaches to learning but equally they depend on attitudes of risk taking, collaboration, sharing and other abstract constructs. These together form the baseline *alpha* that needs to be considered prior to the measurement of impact.

### 2.3 The nature of quality

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'Quality' here is being defined as those arts education provisions that are of recognised high value and worth in terms of the skills, attitudes and performativity engendered. Quality arts education is the result of interplay of structure and method. It should be noted, that *alpha* does not specify content. This is deliberate, as content should be derived in relation to local environments, culture and resources. In this way content and context can operate independently of the quality *alpha*. Similarly, these indicators of quality hold true for both *education through the arts* and *education in the arts*. In both these complementary ways in which the arts contribute to education, the indicators of quality remain quite stable and consistent. These quality indicators are:

1. Active partnerships between schools and arts organizations and between teachers, artists and the community
2. Shared responsibility for planning, implementation and assessment and evaluation
3. Opportunities for public performance, exhibition and/or presentation;
4. A combination of development within the specific art forms (education in the arts) with artistic and creative approaches to learning (education through the arts)
5. Provision for critical reflection, problem solving and risk taking

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<sup>17</sup> Bamford, A (2006) *The Wow Factor: Global research compendium on the impact of arts in education*. Waxmann, München.

6. Emphasis on collaboration
7. Flexible school structures and permeable boundaries between schools and the community
8. Accessibility to all children
9. Detailed strategies for assessing and reporting on children's learning, experiences and development
10. On-going professional learning for teachers, artists and the community

These alphas of effective arts education will be used to organise this report and the quality of arts education in schools in Faroe Islands will be discussed in reference to these world standard quality alphas.





## Chapter 3: Responses to quality

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### 3.1 Introduction – Overall statements about quality

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In the Faroe Islands all children receive **some** arts education in **some** years of school. During the years when a child might have arts education, it is typical that a child receives around two hours per week. In addition to this timetabled time, a child may also participate in morning group singing, thematic weeks and school performances. Based on these figures, it would seem that the Faroe Islands has more arts education than the global average of 1:40 per week. But these figures do not accurately describe the situation in practice in the schools. Importantly, a child's arts experiences are not continuous. In the early years of school and the later years of school, a child is unlikely to have any specifically timetabled arts education. This means that any arts they receive will be largely at the discretion, interest and expertise of their teacher(s). Even within the two hours of timetabled experience, children may experience a stopping and starting of arts instruction. For example, a child might experience a few weeks of music, followed by a few weeks of cooking then a few weeks of wood work and so on. As almost all arts stop when a child is in year eight or earlier, the reality shows that Faroese children get far less arts education than the international average and that the experience may not meet basic quality requirements. Importantly, the UNESCO Road Map for Arts Education<sup>18</sup> stresses the importance of continuity of provision of arts education. With a few notable exceptions, this is not happening in most Faroese schools.

The provision of music schools is enshrined in law but, as previously stated, the lack of places in music schools and the long waiting lists means that this robust musical education is only being received by small per cent of Faroese students. Concurrently, while some attempts have been made to ensure equality of provision across the country, children growing up in larger towns have far greater access to culture. Children with special educational needs and disabilities may also not be able to access suitable music lessons.

In the general school, the arts are generally taught by generalist teachers with some skill and interest in the arts. Some have completed a 'line' of study in the arts during their training but others have timetable availability and become the arts teachers. In the kindergarten, the arts are mediated by the general kindergarten staff. In the gymnasium, generally specialist teachers take arts classes. These specialists tend to have a first degree in the arts (most commonly music or visual arts, with some drama specialists) and either a masters level or diploma level educational qualification.

In most schools, there are well-equipped and effectively resourced specialised arts studios (rooms), including workshops for woodcraft, sewing, music and special areas for computers and even in some cases ceramics, photography spaces, recording studios and theatres. All the schools visited had sufficient space and resources to teach the arts and resources were not considered to be something that prevents arts education.

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[http://www.unesco.org/pv\\_obj\\_cache/pv\\_obj\\_id\\_C91049AAF6FFE04A47C31E022B50803BC6630300/filename/Arts\\_Edu\\_RoadMap\\_en.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/pv_obj_cache/pv_obj_id_C91049AAF6FFE04A47C31E022B50803BC6630300/filename/Arts_Edu_RoadMap_en.pdf)

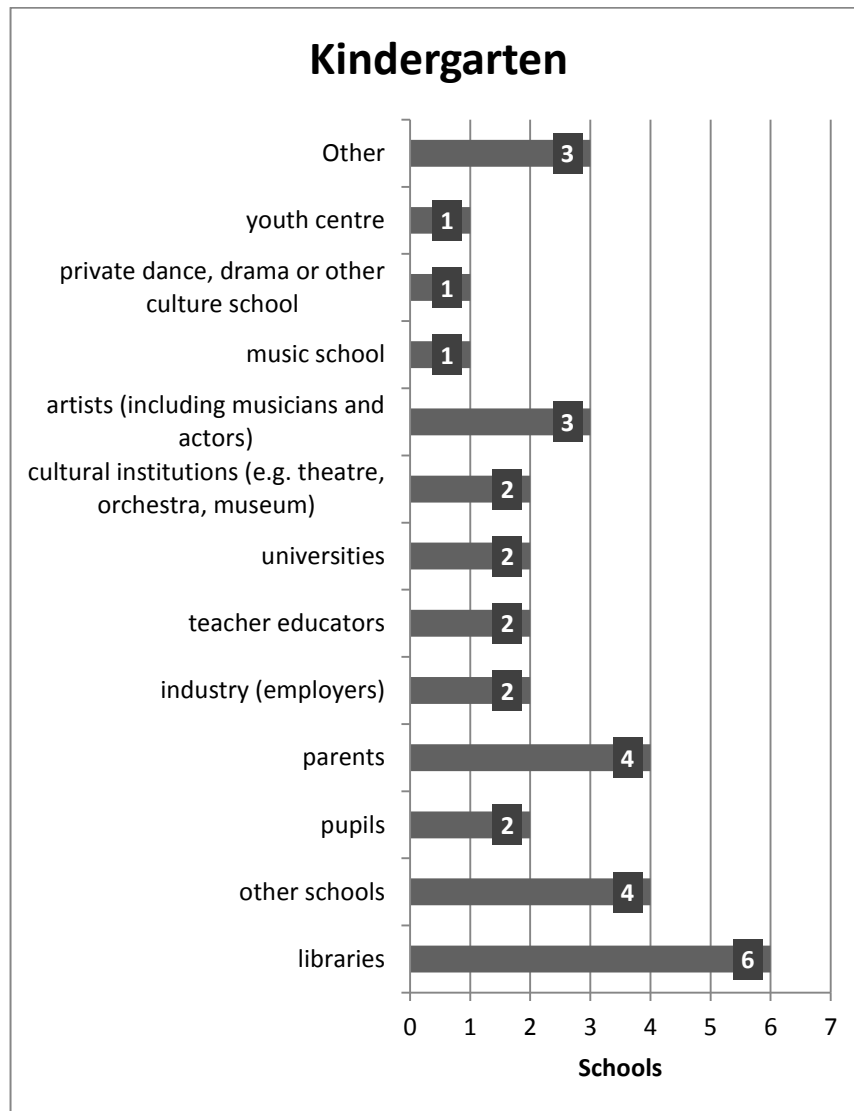
### 3.2. Active partnerships

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- **There are very limited examples of partnerships between schools and artists in the Faroe Islands**
- **Partnerships need to be initiated between the various agencies working in arts and culture and the schools**
- **On-going partnerships between the education and school sectors need to be embedded within policy and practice**
- **Developing longer term partnerships takes time, sharing and resources**
- **Consideration should be given to partnerships with industry and the broader creative community as creative industries contribute to the economic growth, identity and appeal of the Faroe Islands**

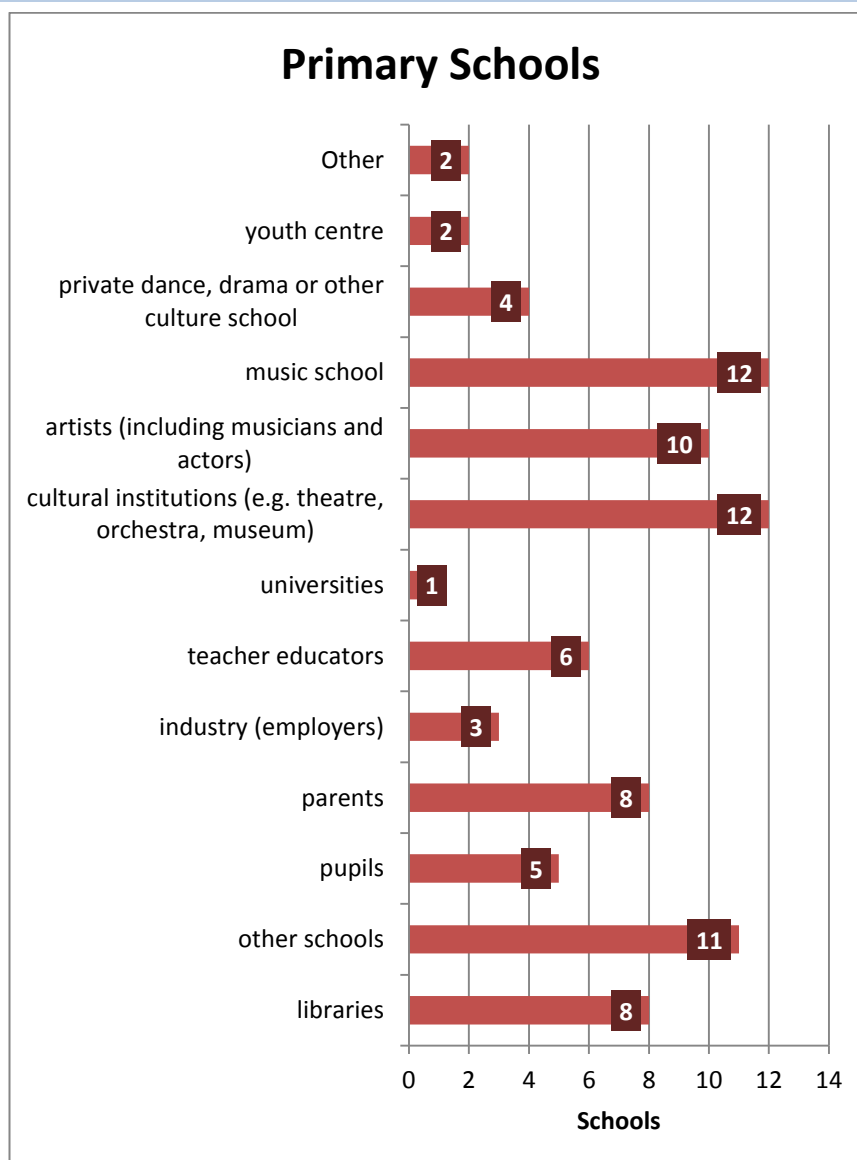
Active partnership involves the direct inclusion of a range of cultural and artistic organisations in the planning and delivery of arts education programmes. The most effective programmes have managed to build sustainable, long-term and reciprocal associations with cultural agencies and industries. Active partnerships include shared responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating a programme. At the kindergarten level, the library was the most likely source of partnerships (Figure 3.2.1)

Figure 3.2.1 Partnerships in the kindergarten



In the primary school (Figure 3.2.2) partnerships with the other schools, music schools, artists and cultural institutions were most likely.

Figure 3.2.2 Partnerships in the primary school



In the upper secondary school it was surprising but no schools mentioned partnerships with industry, universities or the music school.

### 3.2.1 Listaleyapurin

The international research suggests that successful partnerships are sustained and involve shared responsibility for planning and evaluation. This is generally not the case in the Faroe Islands, as professional artists rarely if ever work in schools and even under current programmes to bring artists into schools, they tend to only come into the school for short-term for school based performances. Within these offers, there is a strong focus on the performing arts, with theatre and music being the most common art forms. These creative encounters called *Listaleyapurin* tend to be 'one-off' experiences where a performance or other arts group will come into the school for a single performance. The aim of *Listaleyapurin* is to give primary school pupils and preschool pupils the opportunity to experience art on a high level, representing a wide range of artistic expression. The focus is put on reaching all age categories and for the artists' visits to reach out across the country.

The visits and exhibitions Listaleyapurin offers are without cost to the schools in the participating municipalities. Artists apply to be included in the programme, and a selection committee with representatives from the school authorities and the artists' unions assess the quality and recommend the target age group. It was felt that this selection process along with the choice made by schools acted as a quality assurance measure.

*The schools choose the Listaleyapurin acts so if they don't like something it does not get picked. (Artist)*

*We choose professional people who know what they are doing. They need a good connection with the children (Programme coordinator)*

*Sometimes we know what is good just by reputation. The Faroe Islands is a small place We like to include a mix of art forms. Demand is really high and we have to think of the different age groups of the children. It is very important that the artists have really "seen" the child. Can this work together with the children? (Programme coordinator)*

*We balance artistic quality and teaching quality, on other words, 'can the school connect with the experience and take it further?' (Artist)*

Since the Listaleyapurin began in 2008, it has brought more than 52 different performances/arts workshops to schools (344 school visits in total). Of these, 39% have been predominantly in music, 25% in visual arts, 13% in both theatre and dance, 8% in authors/writing and 2% in film/new media. Each year there are about 12-13 different offers made available to schools. This number has increased since the programme began, but remained quite constant for the last four years. Generally, the view of the schools was quite positive to the Listaleyapurin.

*It was OK. The children seemed to like it*

*It is a big gift to the schools. Children get to experience something professional. It is quality but the children only get one or two experiences a year. Some schools don't have any. Some schools don't want it. They don't see the relevance.*

The schools get to choose the experiences they want from the menu of choices. Quality assurance occurs both through an experts group who meets each year to decide from the applications which experiences will be included in the 'menu' and more directly, quality assurance occurs through the school's making the choices.

*The school has a choice. They can select what they want to do from a catalogue. In our school we liked the music and puppets the best.*

*We take up the offer 3 or 4 times per year. We all look up the list and we take anything we think will be good and we have not seen already. It is very easy.*

*We take everything that is on offer. Anything suitable for an age group we take. We also try to find things nearby. We do ceramics.*

The success of the programme in a school seems to depend largely on the preparation and follow-up from the schools. In most cases, artists report that little is actually done, despite materials being sent to the school. In other times, it is argued that there is a lack of communication between the artists and the schools, as these comments suggest:

*It is not always good. Sometimes there are problems with the work. The communication with the school and the children is not good. (Principal)*

*I was talking to a child and she said, the rest of the class did not find it interesting but it was interesting for her. This might be because she has more experience of meeting the arts? (Artist)*

*I can't remember anyone visiting the school. Oh yes we had the police and a hairdresser. I don't think we have had any performers. (Pupil)*

*The success depends on the teacher. Some get very enthusiastic and do the preparation and follow-up, but others don't connect at all. They find the programme really weird or bad. You know if that was the case, because the artist won't be asked to come again. (Artist)*

The same argument was made by some of the artists involved in the programme, who felt that it may be better to do fewer experiences but to aim for a deeper and longer engagement with the schools.

*I think we have a real challenge to narrow down what we do, but to go deeper. (Artist)*

*We want longer time in the schools and a longer experience (2 or 3 weeks would be good). We try to have a partnership with the school. We send out materials and suggest things the schools can do. I try to really connect to the teachers before I arrive. I send emails out. But for some teachers it is a foreign role and they really don't know what to do. (Artist)*

Some schools and local areas do not choose to take up the Listaleyipurin programme. The general view in these schools and area is that they are able to run a more relevant programme themselves or that there is simply not the interest from schools.

*We did have the school sack but there was a lot going on and we felt it was too restrictive. The heads of the schools can plan for themselves. We can't force them to take it. (Local politician)*

*I don't want it. I want to do things ourselves and choose what we want to choose. In the listaleyipurin you have to choose from a menu. I also want the children creating more. I like to take them to things. You get a different experience if they GO to the theatre. But it is not easy. It is very expensive for the bus. The offer might be free but the bus can cost 3-4,000 DKK for a class. Every second year we work to do a big musical. We stop doing usual schools and we all work together. (Principal)*

The criticism was made that, despite artists often making attempts to send both pre and post-performance activities, the Listaleyipurin experiences are generally disconnected

from general school experiences. Projects are often formulated and run by artists without connection to the children's other learning or the needs of the school (or the teacher's plans). Criticisms made from the cultural industry sector and expressed by artists working closely with schools, were that the teachers lacked the sensibility to adequately prepare for, engage in, or evaluate the impact of the arts interventions or performances in schools. These comments from a selection of artists arguably demonstrate the perceived lack of knowledge and expertise of arts and culture within the teachers.

In the kindergarten, it was very unusual for an artist or performer to visit the school (Figure 3.2.1.1) or for the children to be taken to museums or performances (Figure 3.2.1.2). In 44% of kindergartens, they never have visiting artists and 10% have never been to a performance or exhibition.

*Figure 3.2.1.1 Frequency of **artists'** (e.g. musicians, dancers, painters, writers etc) visits (Kindergarten)*

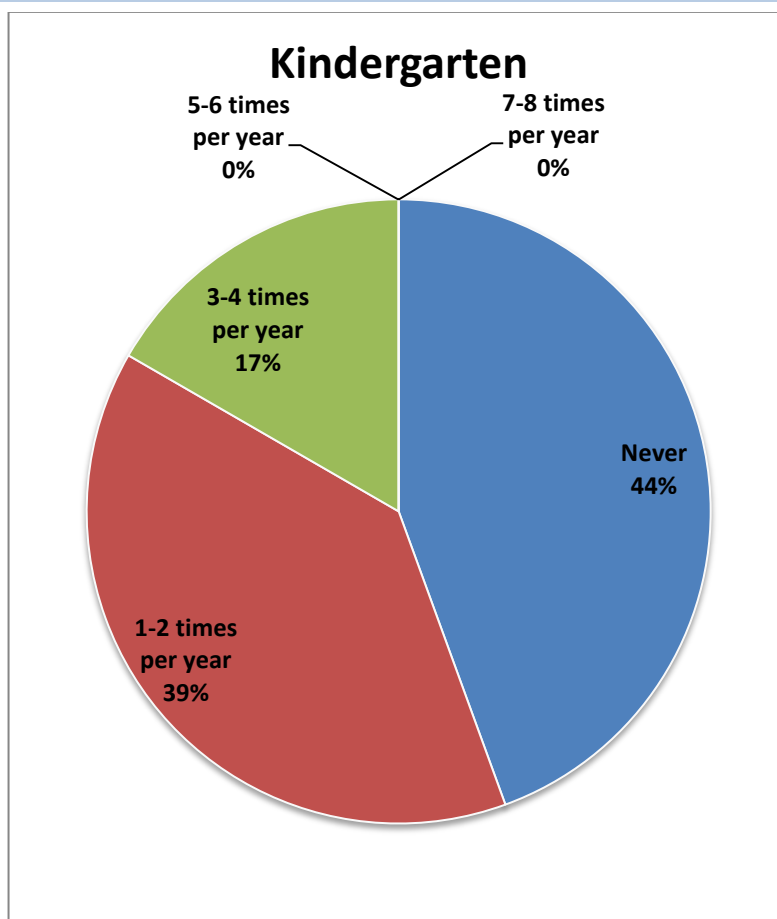
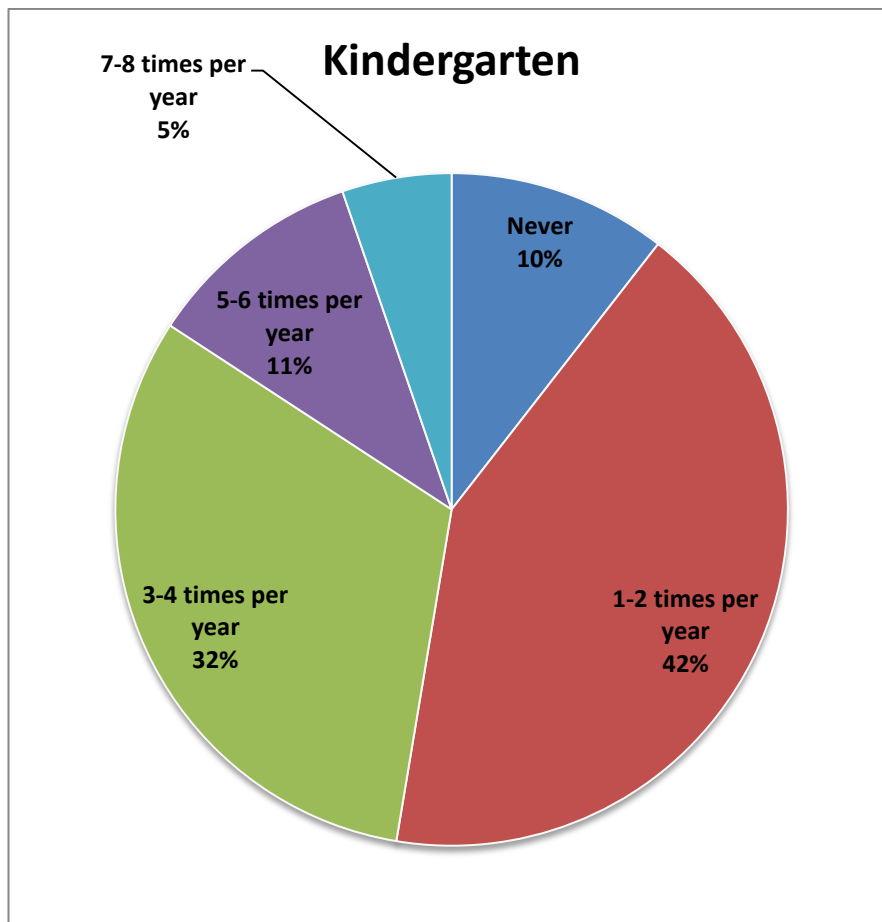


Figure 3.2.1.2 Frequency of times per year children visit museums or see performances (Kindergarten)



The situation is slightly better in the compulsory school (primary school) where only 6% of schools never have visits from artists (Figure 3.2.1.3) although in 42% of cases this is only once or twice per year. Similarly, a quite small 3% of primary schools have never visited performances or museums but 69% only attend once or twice per year (Figure 3.2.1.4). Around 7-10% of schools have very regular partnerships with artists and cultural providers with at least 7 experiences per year. These figures would suggest the continued importance of structural programmes such as Listaleypurin that encourage schools to expose young people to the work of professional artists.



Figure 3.2.1.3 Frequency of **artists'** (e.g. musicians, dancers, painters, writers etc) visits (Primary)

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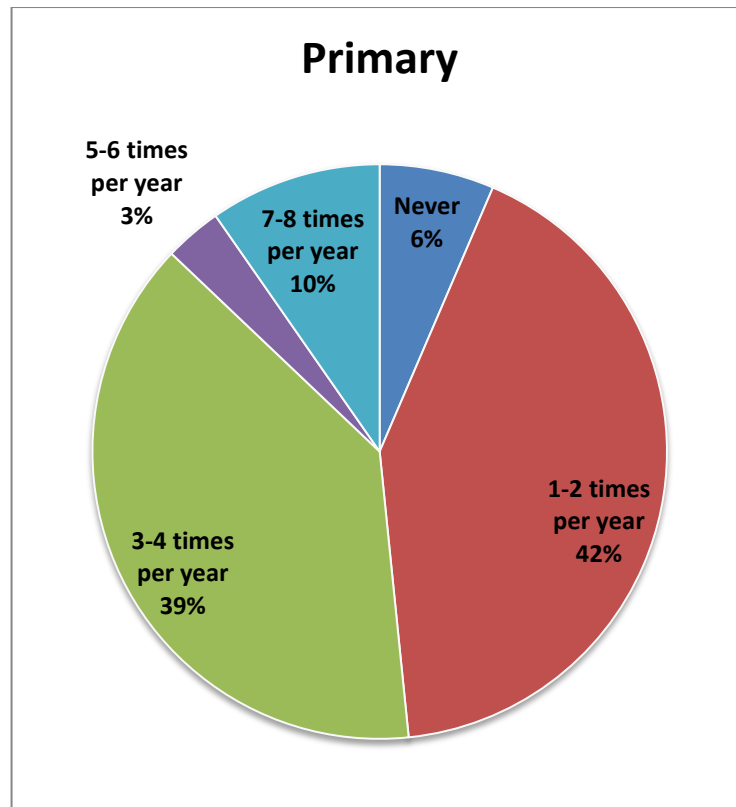
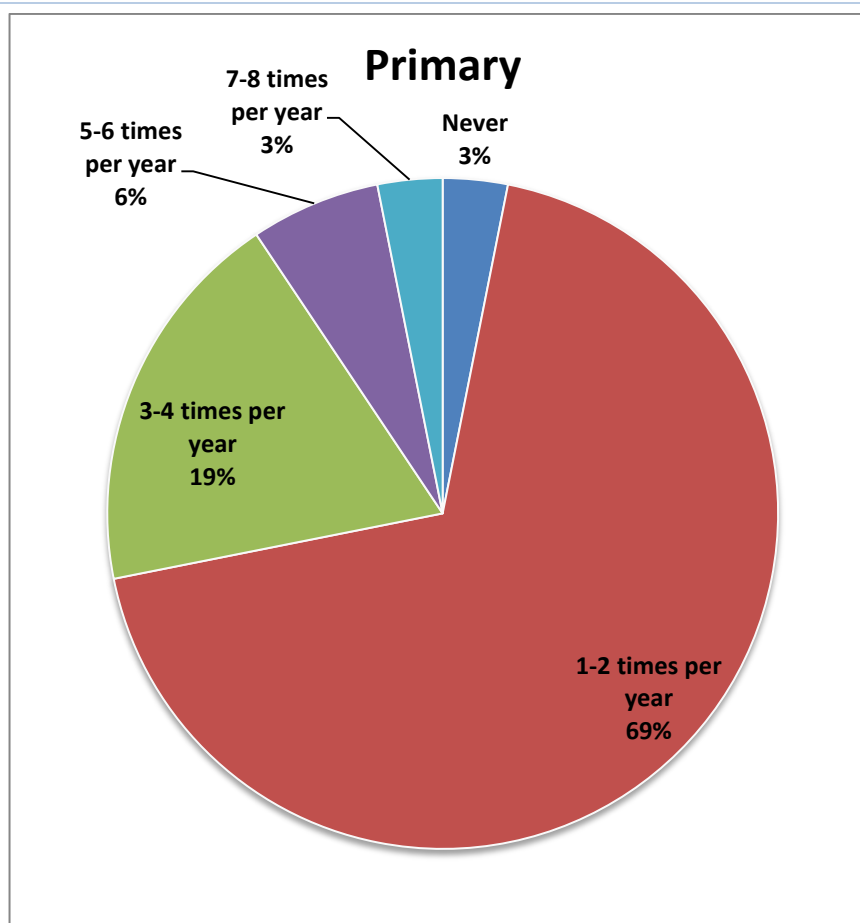


Figure 3.2.1.4 Frequency of times per year children visit museums or see performances (Primary)



To encourage more successful models for partnerships, an artists' focus group suggested that closer relationships between the schools and the cultural institutions was vital. Countries that have effective arts and cultural education generally have active partnerships across sectors, disciplines and organisations. The notion of an active partnership involves the direct inclusion of a range of cultural and artistic organizations in all aspects of the planning and delivery. The best of these provide sustainable, long-term and reciprocal associations. These sustained associations are centred on shared responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating programmes.

There are very few examples of industry partnership in education in the Faroe Islands. For example, the LISA - Faroese Council of Artists<sup>19</sup> could coordinate visits to schools from professionals working in architecture, fashion, design, furniture making and other creative industries. LISA could play a key role in raising awareness about creative industry careers as there is a general lack of awareness by teachers and pupils of the opportunities available.

Some of the schools visited during the study are frequent and active visitors to museums, performances and galleries. In the most successful examples of these, schools work very closely with local cultural providers. While the most frequent visitors tend to be schools based close to the cultural facilities, in other examples, children attending quite

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.lisa.fo/>

remote schools also visit the major museums and cultural facilities on an annual or more frequent basis. The children tended to enjoy this experience as the visit may have been conducted by elderly people from the community or volunteers with a passion for the collection they presented. The stories from these people were popular with the children.

In other schools, the involvement with cultural partners (including museums and live theatre) tended to be somewhat marginal. While the school might visit an exhibition, do a workshop or attend a performance, these are seen more as 'one off' experiences than part of the general programmes of the schools. The teachers (and the cultural partners) may put very little time into preparing the pupils for the experience and reflecting about the experience after the event.

Pupils tended to be more positive towards the fishing museum and the art museum and less positive towards the history and nature museums. Pupils seemed to enjoy the museum experience more if it contained active engagement and was not repetitive (a number of pupils reported going to the museums each year with school and experiencing a similar set of experiences on subsequent visits).

Visits to museums or performances tended to be of a very short duration with a lack any connection or follow-up within the arts or across other disciplines. While the use of museums and cultural performances seemed to be more effectively integrated into learning in the Gymnasium, both the teachers and the children in the general school reported that it was difficult to connect the experiences from their cultural visits into their core learning. While schools in generally followed quite traditional and similar organisation, it could be argued that the galleries, museums and cultural institutions are also quite traditional in their approaches to reaching out to schools.

Despite the lack of connection, both pupils and teachers still felt the experiences were quite valuable, especially for children living in more isolated who may not otherwise get to see cultural provisions in a 'first hand' way.

### 3.3 Flexible organizational structures and permeable boundaries

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- **Schools and cultural institutions tend to follow quite traditional approaches to learning and curriculum**
- **Individual schools and teachers have considerable flexibility in how they work.**
- **There is greater levels of flexibility in smaller schools**
- **As the school day is relatively short, there is considerable scope for school buildings to be used flexibly in the delivery of a range of after school culture offers**

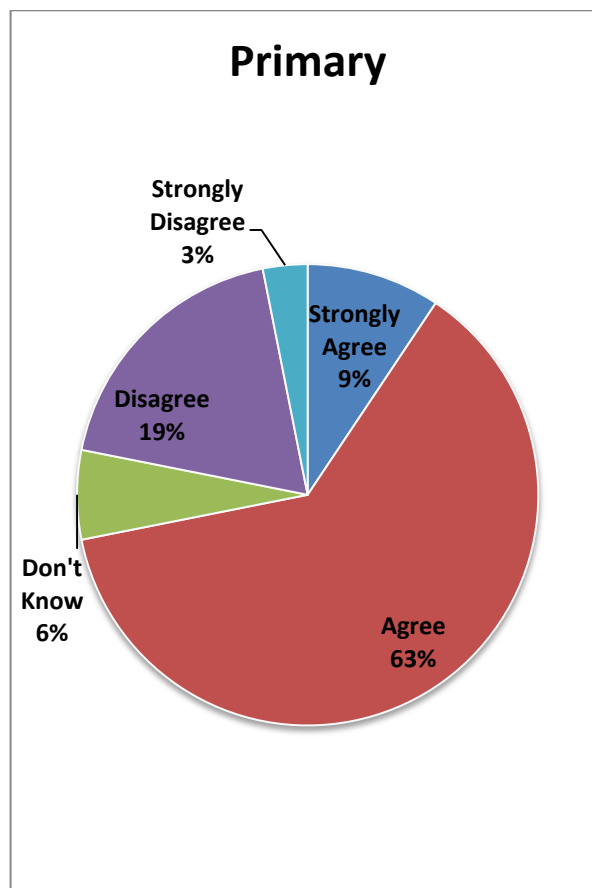
In general it was acknowledged that the arts and cultural activity provide a valuable opportunity for children to go beyond their direct environment and to be more creative and to expand their horizons. While lip service was given to these ideals, the realisation of this aim was generally less successful.

Within general education it was considered that the pupils (and arguably also their teachers) lacked sufficient skills in the 'artistic' languages to really extend their practice and get to a stage of risk taking. It was suggested that having artists within the school enhanced the likelihood of more innovative arts practice within the schools. Equally, the greater involvement of parents and the community in school life could contribute more broadly to a fuller life within the town.

After school care is available for 7-8 year olds. It costs around 1,060 DKK per month and around 70% of all the eligible children attend after school care. Most children attend every day. The after school centre ensures that children attend their arts or sports commitments. In the after school provisions for young children there were generally more opportunities for creative expression. As after school care is only funded for young children, many pupils leave just at the point where their personal art making might be stretched, extended or challenged. There appears to be a gap in provision, as there is opportunity for children up to around 8 years of age and again 'youth' offers for teenagers, but only limited range of offers for children between 8 and 13 years of age.

In response to the survey question regarding the level of flexibility in schools, 72% agree or strongly agree that the Faroese primary school is quite flexible in terms of its organisation (see Figure 3.3.1)

*Figure 3.3.1 The school day is timetabled in a flexible way*



Quality arts programmes flourish in situations where there is scope for organizational flexibility, as is shown in this comment, Faroese schools tend to offer a lot of scope for flexibility: "It is no problem inside the system as we can really be as flexible as we like." While the vast majority of schools in the Faroese system are government schools, a small number of 'free schools' offer flexible choices for parents. In the following example for a free school, quite flexible approaches to curriculum organisation have been adopted:

*We operate a system of mixed aged classes, based on children's development. We have to fulfil certain obligations to remain recognised as a school. We run a longer school day (from 8am-3pm) and parents have to pay on top of the money we receive. Teachers get the same pay but they work a longer day. After school care is not separated, but is part of the day. It is an integrated day centred around the arts. For example, music is used as part of classroom management. The children make food together to eat and also have at least one hour per day of outside play and learning in the natural environment. Artists come in and work with the children. There are only three free schools in the Faroes, and there is a long waiting list to get into the free school. The school operates a very active learning process that is learner centred. The focus is on teaching the children how to learn. Free schools have only been possible since 2001 with the change of laws. The State covers 85% of the wages and the town covers 80% of material costs, so the difference is paid by the parents. The cost to parents is 1700 DKK per month. Unlike other schools, free schools also have to pay VAT.*

Increasing the permeability between arts, cultural and educational organizations are likely to benefit all these organizations. Both schools and arts and cultural organizations need to be prepared to open their boundaries, both actual and metaphoric to the influences of the community within which they exist. In such cases, flexible organizational structures and permeable boundaries maximise learning.

It is reasonable to say that there is a range in Faroese schools in the way learning is organised. It is possible for schools to be quite individual and autonomous in their offerings. Despite this, the majority of schools offer a quite traditional approach, where the children sit in rows and undertake learning within defined subjects to a set timetable. Teaching approaches are also quite traditional, with many lessons observed using a didactic approach of the teacher giving a lecture and the children listening. Electronic white boards are commonly used, but once again, to supplement the lecture approach rather than provide a range of ways for pupils to be actively engaged in learning.

At the other end of the scale, some schools are highly flexible in their approaches and try innovative approaches to learning. In general, parents send their child to the nearest available school and as many smaller towns have only one school, this is the only practical option. In larger towns, parents can choose the particular school they want for their children although in practice more popular schools are harder to get inscribed into.

Some schools offer programmes up to year 7 or year 9 or year 10. Others are Year 10 only or college level gymnasium or other technical and vocational schools. In some areas, schools have offered innovative curriculum choices to match the local context, such as practice based learning courses in fishing, farming or outdoor education. Some Year 10

programmes are quite arts-rich. For example, in the Tórshavn 10th grade, there are 170 pupils, and of these 20 have visual arts, 30 have music, 16 have drama and 27 have media. In addition, there is a line of handwork, with 20 pupils, but this is vocational preparation.

In a general sense, Faroese schools are very open. Children appear to have considerable freedom and the design and location of the schools makes them very open to parents and the community (at least in terms of the physical layout). As members of a research team it was relatively easy to gain access to schools and we were greeted with genuine warmth and given access to teachers and classrooms. Similarly, parents seem to be generally very welcome.

Criticism was also levelled at the out of school music schools that while the quality of tuition was often excellent, they worked in much the same way as they had always worked and there was a lack of outreach to schools. In particular there was criticism that for the most part, the music schools had not tried more innovative and flexible approaches in the way they organize lessons to try to reduce the waiting lists and provide more flexibility for children keen to study a range of musical instruments. In a more general sense, it could be argued that compared to other Nordic countries, the “music school” has remained just that and has not tried to become a “culture school” offering other art forms such as drama, dance or visual arts. This latter point was not seen within the Faroe Islands to be a preferred model as it was generally felt that the music schools had a history built on music tradition more than adaptability. Yet as society and education changes, the challenge is for the music schools to respond to these changes in a reflective way.

A particular aspect is the manner in which education and culture can accommodate the needs of people from differing background. The next section examines the degree of accessibility within Faroese arts and cultural education.

### 3.4. Accessibility for all

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- **In terms of accessibility, the Faroe Islands has low levels of immigrant children and children with special educational needs are catered for within the general provisions**
- **Pupils in some rural and isolated locations have less access to culture due to the cost of transport and time taken to get to venues, but a number of cultural events do occur in more isolated areas**
- **There is some evidence that there is social and cultural pressure against boys in some communities being encouraged to participate in some art forms, though these stereotypes are being actively challenged**
- **Out of school arts and cultural education do not in practice give equitable access to marginalised and disadvantaged pupil despite policy and intention that runs counter to this practice**

In primary school (especially in grades 4-7) it is typical for a child to receive around two hours of arts education per week. In secondary school, the provisions can vary considerably. So in terms of general accessibility, there is at least structural accessibility up until a child is around 14 years of age. Quality programmes are built around inclusivity. All

pupils should receive high standard arts provisions across the various art forms - using a range of creative and artistic approaches.

Issues of cultural diversity are less pressing in the Faroese context as children of immigrant backgrounds are in quite small numbers and tend to be readily integrated into schools. By international standards, the Faroe Islands are a quite mono-cultural society. According to 2009 figures, 91.7% of the population are Faroese, 5.8% Danish, 0.4% Icelandic, 0.2% Norwegian and 0.2% poles. So it could be argued, that ethnic diversity is not an issue.

In terms of accessibility, there are a number of groups within Faroese education to be considered. These include children with special education needs, children with behaviour problems, boys and girls, and children from rural and remote locations.

There is evidence that suggests that social and cultural pressure against boys in some communities being encouraged to participate in some art forms, though these stereotypes are being actively challenged.

*One boy said he would not sew because his father and his grandfather said "boys do not sew." I told him the famous designers and artists are men. It is funny, the girls don't mind doing wood, but the boys do not like having to do handicraft. (Female arts teacher)*

*I had a problem with boys not wanting to do handiwork. Their fathers did not want them to do it. Then I pointed out that these skills are used on the boats. I also said, "I am the Captain of this ship, and I say all boys do this" and now there are not any problems. (Male Principal)*

*I am very strict as I always have mixed groups for the arts. I don't give the pupils any choice and actually some boys are very good. (Male Principal)*

Conversely, education at the upper secondary level is dominated by girls (62% female to 38% male).

For children coming with special education needs, accessibility to arts education within schools varies considerably from school to school. While there is an overall approach of accessibility in all situations, there appears to be limited specific training in arts education for special needs children. It is argued that the lack of specialist training may be particularly apparent in the Music School.

*I think all of our teachers should be educated to teach children with special education needs, but in reality we have no special provisions. (Music School teacher)*

*Music schools should be accessible to all students and if they are not, then they need to be re-educated. (Regional politician)*

In only around one third of cases did schools feel that the children with special educational needs had arts programmes that met their need. A number of schools did not know

whether children with special educational needs were being catered for, and equally others felt that they were not being catered for (Figures 3.4.1 and 3.4.2).

*Figure 3.4.1 Arts lessons meet the needs of children with special educational needs (Kindergarten)*

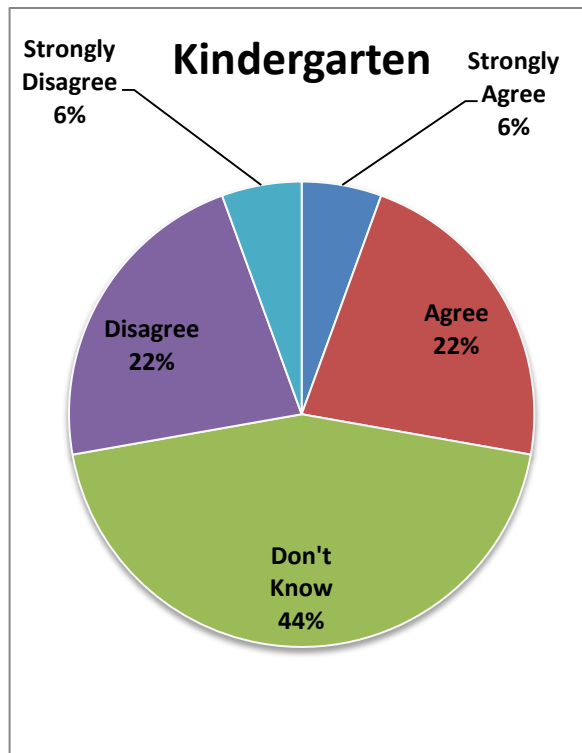
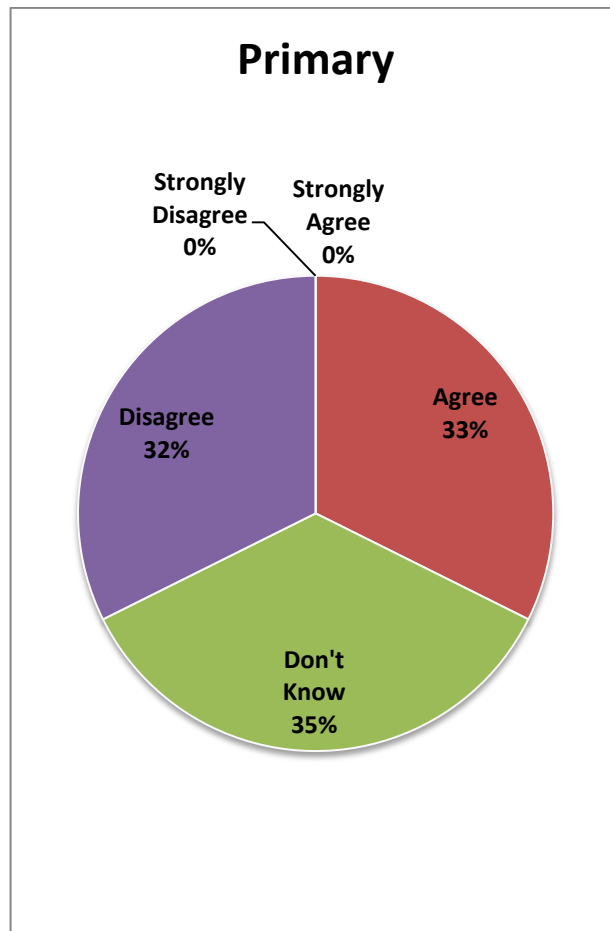




Figure 3.4.3 Arts lessons meet the needs of children with special educational needs (Primary)



As can be seen in Figures 3.4.3 and 3.4.4, a number of respondents felt that the children with lower ability in the arts are not being fully catered for in the system. Of particular concern is the number of respondents who did not know if the art lessons met individual needs.

Figure 3.4.3 Arts lessons meet the needs of pupils of lower ability in the arts (Kindergarten)

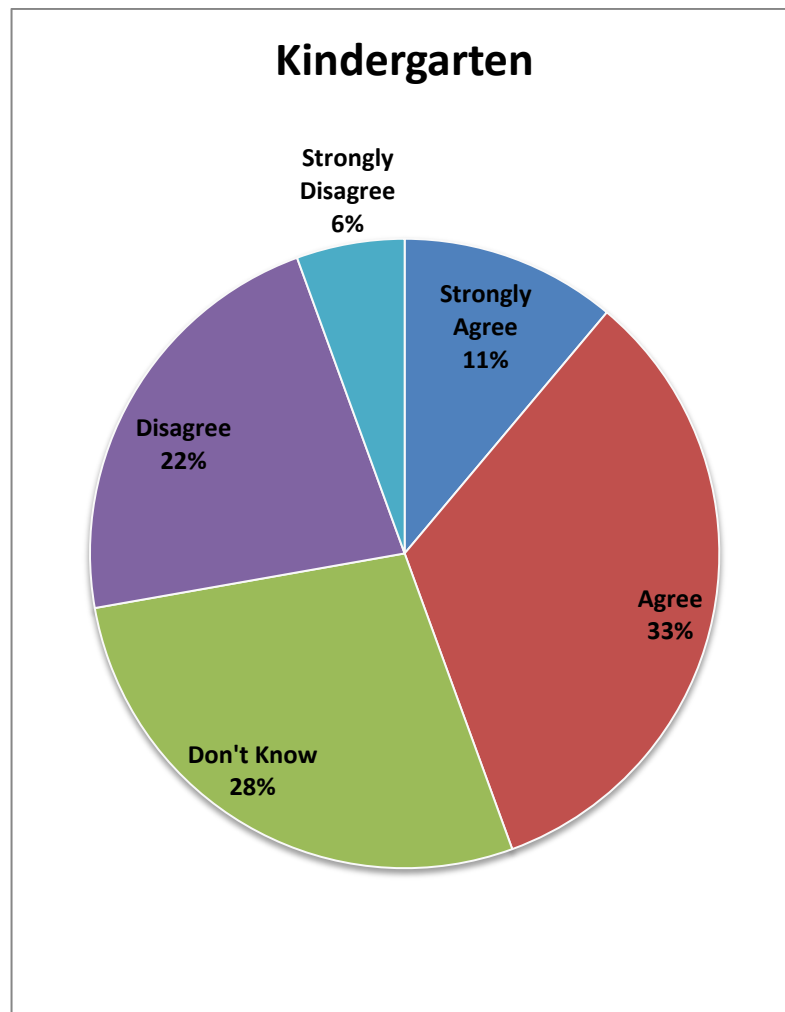
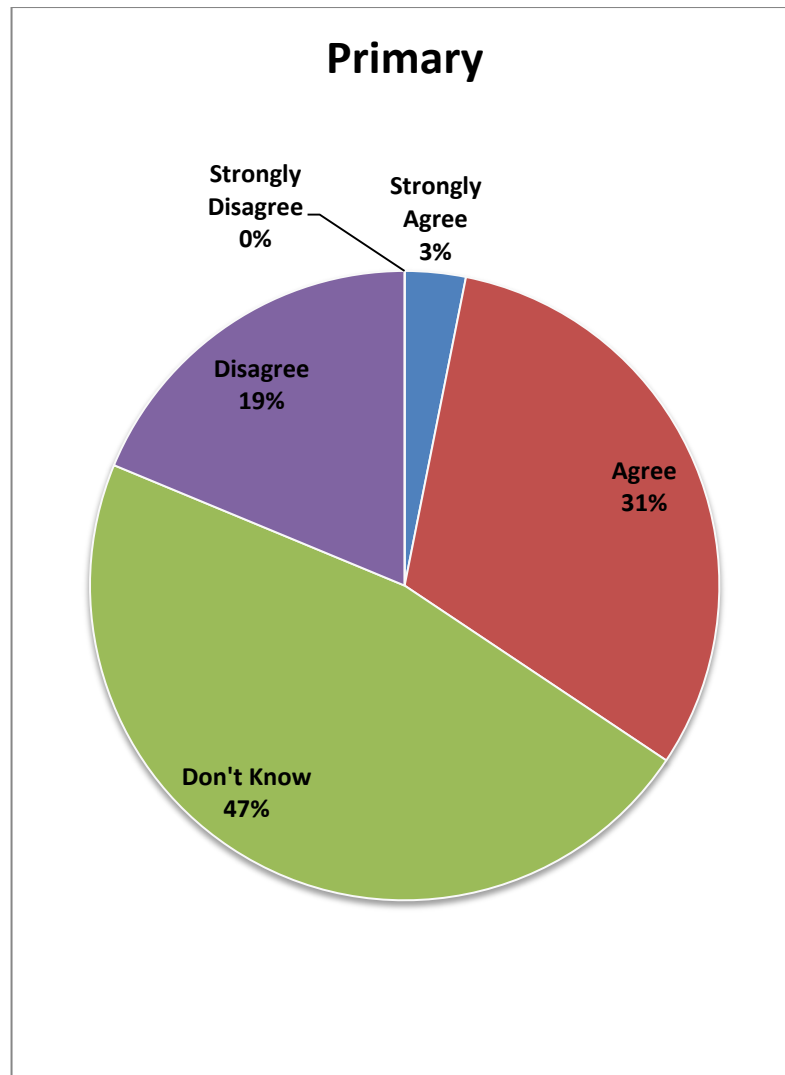


Figure 3.4.4 Arts lessons meet the needs of pupils of lower ability in the arts (Primary)



While children of lower ability did not appear to receive art lessons appropriate to their level of development, the problem was even more pronounced in the higher ability groups where it appears that most programmes fail to extend higher ability pupils (Figures 3.4.5 and 3.4.6).

Figure 3.4.5 Arts lessons meet the needs of pupils of high ability in the arts (Kindergarten)

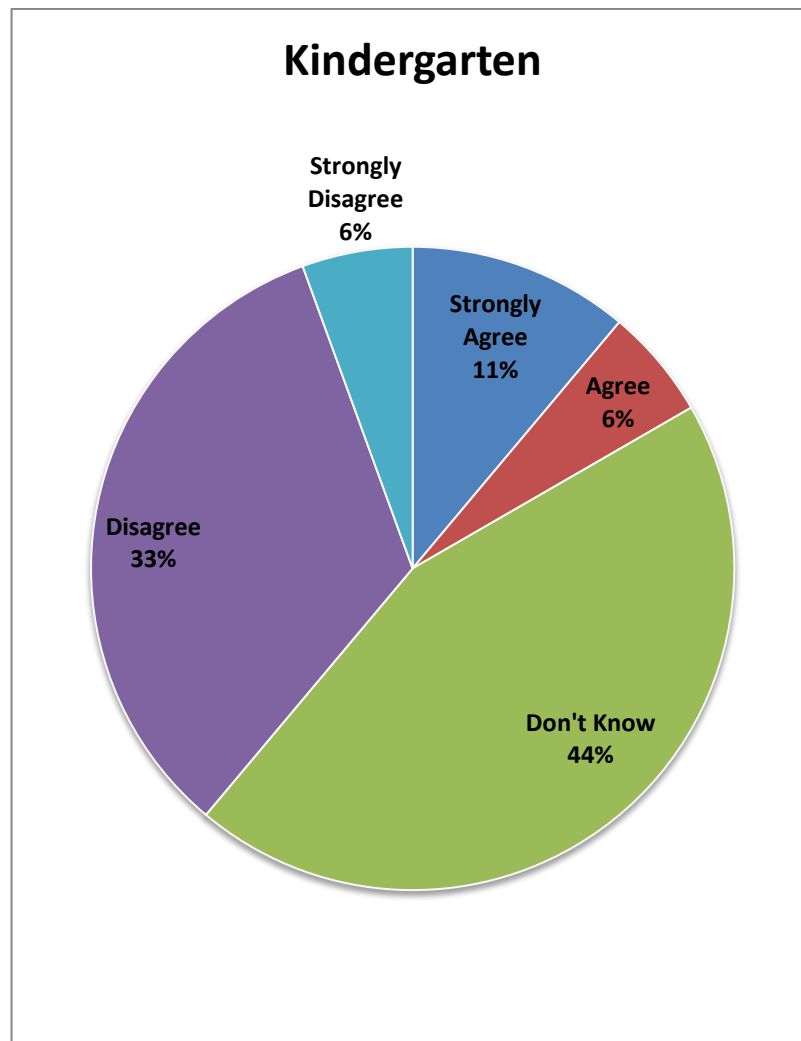
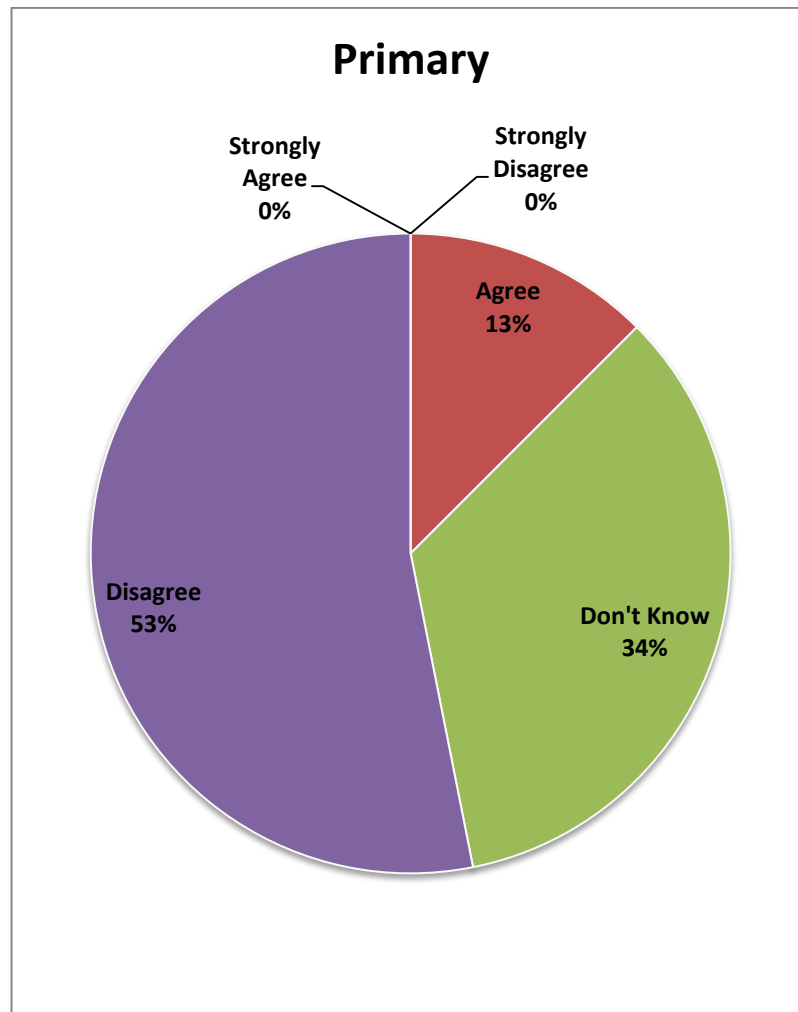


Figure 3.4.6 Arts lessons meet the needs of pupils of **high ability in the arts** (Primary)



Geographic isolation is a keen issue in the Faroe Islands. This should be seen as both as strength and as a hindrance. On the positive side, isolation has encouraged more connections at the local level and built a degree of resilience and specificity to arts practice that makes it highly appealing. Local practice is strong and is generally well connected to notions of 'place' and tradition.

*It is an important thing to be on an island. There are a lot of traditions and it is a beautiful environment. We need to hold onto those traditions. We can still be in 2012 and hold onto traditions. For example, hunting is part of life here. We need to hold into these skills. We take the kindergarten children to see the sheep being killed. We use their wool, the horns the bones. We do weaving. We use everything. We make things from the skins. These are our traditions.*

As previously mentioned in section 1.12, the physical isolation of some schools means that the cost of transport to the free museums and other cultural institutions results in these children being far less likely to be exposed to professional level performances. This is particularly the case for children attending small schools.

*We are a small school and we try to go to at least three performances a year. The bus is the expensive part. We try to get parents to drive and then it is cheaper. We have lots of wishes, but we don't always get them. (Principal)*

*Transport is a problem for our children. We have no free buses and it is very expensive to take buses. (Teacher)*

### 3.5 On-going professional development

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- **Teacher confidence and expertise to teach arts and cultural education is low particularly in the primary school**
- **A number of professional development opportunities are provided for teachers and are popular but tend to focus on acquisition of arts skills rather than broader cultural or creative education**
- **Postgraduate education is not generally accessible to teachers that are in full-time employment with teachers tending to need to go to Denmark or further afield to undertake study in arts education**
- **More connections are needed between the various providers of professional development (including the evening school)**

Arts and cultural education in the primary school (up to year 10) and the kindergarten are taught by 3-year trained generalist teachers. In the secondary school, the arts education (primarily music and some visual arts) are generally taught by specialists with at least 4 years of training. By contrast, cultural education (if taught at all) may be taught in Faroese, religion and/or English. Some dance may be taught in Physical Education.

Arts education is a mandated part of a primary teacher's role according to the curriculum. Despite this being the case, there is a pattern of falling levels of confidence to teach the arts and widespread reporting of lack of skill, experience and expertise. Kindergarten and primary teachers are required to have some experience in teaching each of the arts disciplines (visual arts, music, craft and some drama, movement/dance. In recent years, there has been some reorganisation of the Teachers' College programme to bring the course more closely in line with the Bologna system<sup>20</sup> of Bachelor degrees. There was the concern expressed by a focus group meeting of teacher education that these changes had resulted in a considerable reduction in arts and creative provisions in the course. Most students will only receive a three-week module combining all the arts. Therefore, primary teachers have limited understanding and skills in teaching arts education and limited comprehension of the aims, vision and structure of arts learning.

The lack of pre-service training in the arts means that teachers lack the confidence to effectively teach art and the demand for professional development is high. The Ministry offers 25 courses. Of these courses, 33% of courses are in language and literacy; 21%

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<sup>20</sup> The purpose of the Bologna process is to create a system of academic degree standards and quality assurance standards that are more comparable and compatible throughout Europe. The process began in 1999, but has been more broadly instituted throughout Europe since the Berlin meeting held in 2003. For the Faroe Islands, this has required a review of their degree structures to try to make them more harmonious with general European standards.

Religious Education and ethics; 12.5 % for both pedagogy and art. The evaluation of the arts courses on offer show that these are popular options, but their popularity means that places are somewhat scarce.

*I wanted to go to some CPD<sup>21</sup>, but I was too late. You have to be quick to get the good courses. (Teacher)*

*Courses are the most valuable way to learn, but we have too few of them. (Teacher)*

On average teachers had between 1-2 days per year of professional development. At times there were whole school activities, but at most times teachers are free to choose their own options from the booklet of presented offers. Schools generally subsidise the time for teachers to attend professional development. The cost of professional development is quite low and affordable within most school budgets. Teachers were quite pleased with the standard of professional development and arts offers seemed to be particularly popular (though often more because of the personal experiences of the participants than necessarily its applicability to improved learning outcomes). In general, the school principals interviewed were supportive of the value of their teachers undertaking professional development and the teachers themselves found it useful.

*We have used the training we have received, but we only had a bit. (Teacher)*

*We do give the teachers a chance to do professional development if they want to. We have one pot and they can apply. Last year the visual arts teacher did a course about graphics and the music teacher did a course on music technology. (Principal)*

*We try to do as much as we can. I try to always say yes. I send two people at a time so they will talk about it together and also share it with the other staff. (Principal)*

A number of the teachers interviewed wanted to use more of the arts, especially drama, in their teaching but their lack of skill and confidence prevented them from trying this.

*I would like to do more drama with the children but I don't trust myself. If I had even a little bit of training I would feel more confident. Perhaps courses could be available through the theatre association? (Teacher)*

*I would like to implement more drama in language learning, but it is not easy as I do not have the skills. I don't really trust myself. Perhaps if I could do a little bit of training? (Teacher)*

All of the types of professional development described by the respondents tended to be short-term (one or two days or less) and aim to develop the teacher's own experience. Some of the staff running the professional development courses commented that often for the teachers, it was less about developing ideas with their pupils and more about allowing the teachers to find their own creativity. Comments such as this, "I have run some CPD courses for teachers, but it is more about the teachers' creativity than the children's." highlight that many of the teachers come to the professional development courses with little or no experience themselves of the arts. Widely reported was a lack of understanding

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<sup>21</sup> Continuing Professional Development

of the creative or artistic process and almost complete absence of awareness to the aims or benefits of artistic education. This lack of training highlights the need for considerable professional development. This is a crucial consideration as in other systems around the world support might come from artists or cultural agencies working in partnership with teachers, but in the Faroe Islands, sustainable partnerships are uncommon. For example, the following comment from an artist; “The best CPD in the arts is when the teachers can meet face to face with the artists. Listaleyipurin is great CPD but not all teachers see it this way.”

The Teachers’ College offers some courses in specialist areas of arts education and also provides a small number of workshops throughout the year. In recent years, these options (except for music) have been reduced and experience falling student numbers. This is particularly true for the lack of offerings for general primary teachers wanting to gain greater expertise in the arts and creative areas.

The level of skill, even among some of the so-called specialist teachers in the school was often quite low. They may have become a specialist by default (because it worked with the timetable) or by interest rather than specialist training (they had an interest so took on the arts subject) as the following comments demonstrate:

*I am not really what you could call a specialist teacher, but I do teach lots of music. I went to evening school to learn music, so I try to do music with the children. But we have no resources. There are no percussion instruments, no music room. I think I am the only person on the staff with an interest in the arts. There is no drama and a little drawing - making pictures on the song sheets and things like that. I try to bring the arts into other subjects like reading and language. My last school was more creative, but this school does not work in that way.*

*I could not play any instruments. Someone in my family could play the accordion, but I taught myself the guitar and I like to sing and play with the children.*

Training within the youth work arena is less developed. More training programmes could be offered to enhance the arts education knowledge and skills of youth workers. Despite this, there is a lot of evidence of people working in this field being ‘self-taught’ but very well connected to people in the professional field and so able to offer both an effective role model and skilled instruction to young people in their programmes.

### 3.6 Detailed assessment, reflection and evaluation strategies

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- **Although most schools offer a mark or grade for arts and craft, strategies for assessment and evaluation within arts education are limited**
- **Professional development is needed in this area so that teachers can track student learning and monitor the quality of programmes**

Formal and informal contemplative practices encourage people to view their work more critically and reflectively. Within the Faroe Islands there has generally not been a culture of assessment and reporting. In a review conducted by PISA they examined the



Faroese education system and concluded that there was an inadequate focus on evaluation. While this point is applicable across the system, the lack of evaluation is even more exaggerated within the arts area, as these comments suggest:

*I am a parent and I have never received a report. Some teachers use Facebook or email us. (Parent)*

*I don't really do any assessment in the arts. I focus on each child and just try to give them some experience. (Teacher)*

*Our evaluation is really just if the children can express what they have seen. (Principal)*

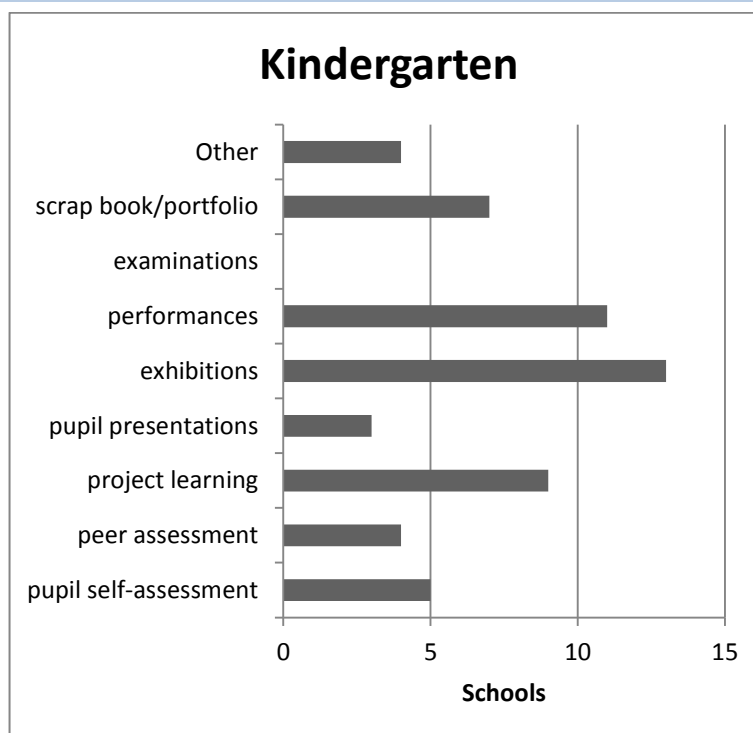
In some schools, there are assessment practices but these are limited. On average, in 66% of schools, parents receive some feedback on their child's performance in the arts. This is generally by way of work samples (20% of assessment) or a verbal comment (35% of assessment), though in the primary school and the upper secondary school, grades (28%) may be given. Parents appear to appreciate receiving information about their child's progress in the arts.

*We do a report card and we also have an interview with parents. Parents are happy to be informed and to keep up with what is happening. (Principal)*

*We only do a report once the children are in the 6th or 7th grade. Art is included. There is one report per year. Apart from that we hold a lot of discussions about pupils' progress with parents and with other teachers. (Principal)*

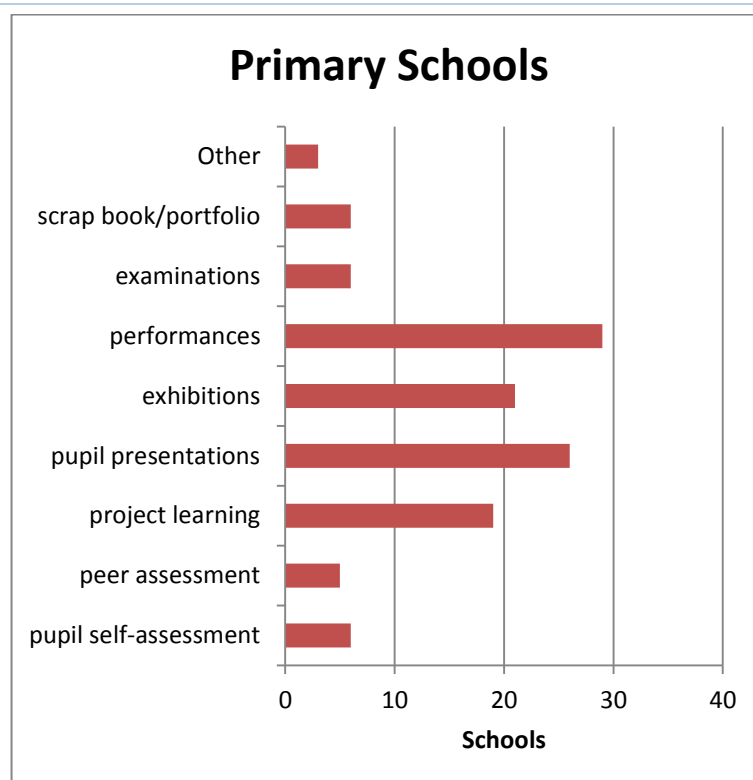
In response to the surveys, the following assessment procedures claim to be used, but in practice, only one of the kindergartens visited appeared to have portfolio assessment in place.

Figure 3.6.1 Assessment types in kindergartens



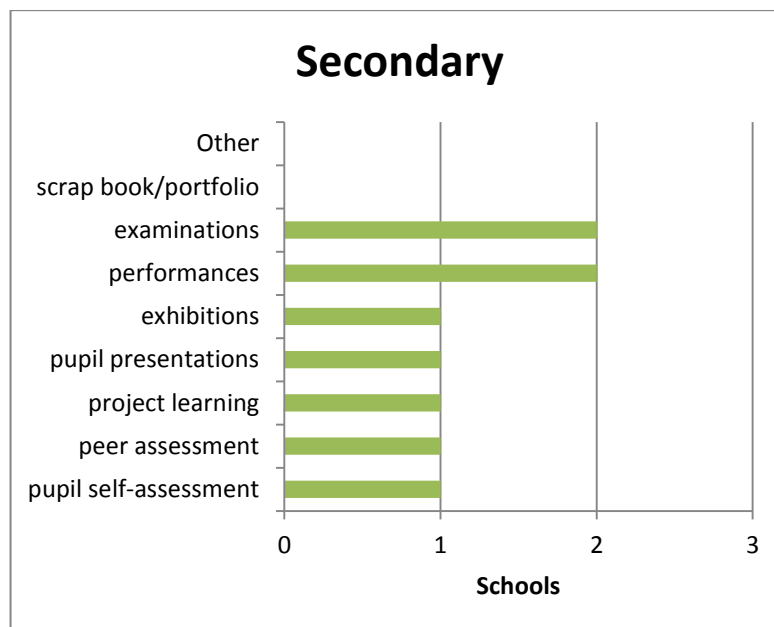
Similarly, while performance based and exhibition assessment was claimed to be used at the primary level, there was very little evidence of this in practice and primary teachers generally did not have a clear understanding of aims and learning outcomes for the arts.

Figure 3.6.2 Assessment types in primary schools



At the upper secondary level, assessment practices are well-defined and effective. Assessment involves composition, theoretical test, practical test, performance and is externally moderated. The new proposed upper secondary school curriculum has been written by a group of Faroese teachers.

*Figure 3.6.3 Assessment types in upper secondary schools*



The challenge in the cultural sector is the dilemma of having to have both artistic and educational quality. While within professional art there was an awareness of the need for quality, this seemed less well developed within the school arts sector. Tools need be developed to assure the quality of arts and cultural education in the schools. Such quality assurance measures have to encompass both educational and artistic quality as it is important that these two elements are in balance. Currently, it appears that teachers lack the specialised skills and training to be able to effectively design assessment tasks in the arts and cultural education and to monitor a child's growth and achievement.

### 3.7 Centred around active creation, performance and exhibition

- **It is important that all learning, but especially learning in the arts, culminates in high quality presentations**
- **Process and product should be clearly linked**
- **Passive arts and cultural education (such as seeing a performance) are valuable but should not be used as a substitute for children's active creative processes and opportunities for children to be performers and artists**

Engagement in active arts creation and performance engenders particular learning and achievement embedded within active practice. The positive benefits of performance and exhibition are evident in quality arts programmes. Exhibition and performance brings kudos to the participants and promotes the benefits of the arts to a wider audience.

While a number of schools had performances to coincide with festivals, the religious calendar (especially Christmas) or events such as grandparents' day, it is important that projects and learning lines culminate in a high quality presentation of the learning process. In a few schools this was evident.

*We have a retired teacher living nearby who loves drama. We do big performances at Christmas and spring. We do after school drama. (Principal)*

In only limited examples were the children's art work well-presented and labelled and framed in such a way as to position the child as an artist: "I think display is a really important part of the process." In the performing arts, several schools visited had regular opportunities for pupils to perform in a professional or community environment. Performance and exhibition as part of a high quality arts programme build a child's confidence, dedication and commitment to the arts and are - for most pupils - memorable highlights of their school life.

In general though, there was a lack of opportunities for children to present and display their work. Most schools visited, had some art by professional artists on the wall, but did not display children's art (or other learning, either in the classrooms or in the public areas of the school. In part, this could have been due to the timing of the research - the research was conducted quite early in the new school year so some schools explained that the lack of display was due to the time of the year. Other teachers said that new school buildings lacked areas where children's work could easily be displayed and so there was less opportunity to display their work. In particular, while generally praising the programmes that allowed schools to display collections of art work by professional Faroese artists, these displays often took up all the wall space of the public areas of the school, making it less likely that children's work would be displayed.

*I am worried in this school. It is so plain. All walls should have art on them. That makes the children feel it is OK to create. They see their ideas and imagination and they want to work well as they see what the other pupils have done. (Principal)*

*The art room has no work on display. (Teacher)*

*The only work on display comes from the last year. The children do not want to take their work home. We make something and it takes three weeks and then we see the children walk out of the school and throw it in the sea. (Teacher)*

*We have a saying here, dentists are the only ones who put children's art up. If you want to see children's art on display, then go to the dentist! (Artist)*

*We don't display the children's work. Perhaps that is something we should think about. (Principal)*

The survey results (Figures 3.7.1 and 3.7.2) show very low levels of display of children's work. For example, at the kindergarten level, more than half of the respondents never display children's work. At the primary level, 81% of schools either never or only once a

year display children's work. The survey results were also apparent in the school visits where often there was no evidence of children's work being on display.

*Figure 3.7.1 How often is children's work exhibited/displayed? (Kindergarten)*

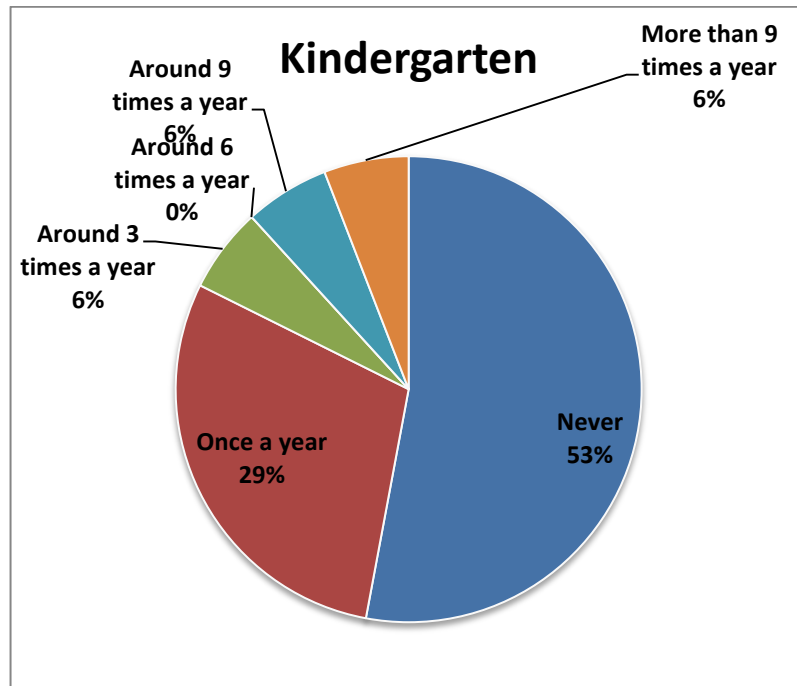
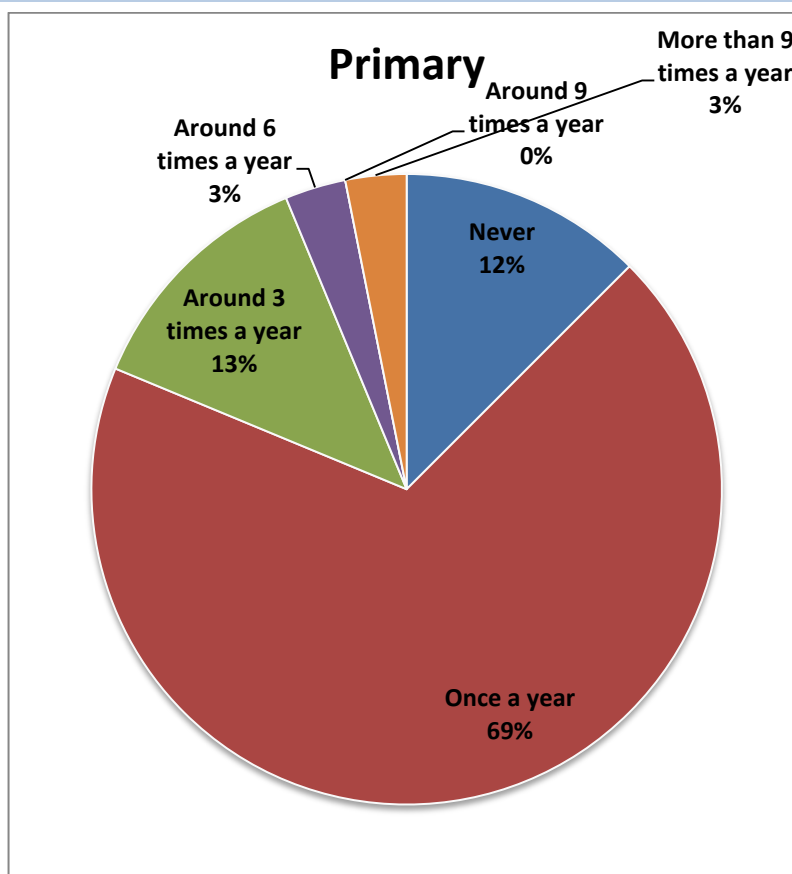


Figure 3.7.2 How often is children's work exhibited/displayed? (Primary)



At the kindergarten level, 52% of schools had no performances or less than one per year. At the primary level, 46% had only one or no performances. At the upper primary level, two of the schools had many performances, but two schools did not do any performances. While most schools in the Faroe Islands either take the children to performances or have performers come to the school, such experiences – however valuable at other levels – do not equate to the active process of a child creating and presenting their work.

*We don't have a lot of performances. There is not enough space. We used to go to professional performances but we haven't done this for some time. It is expensive and the bus is very expensive too. (Principal)*

*Last year we did a performance. It is very motivating for the children but it really is no big deal. (Principal)*

In addition to the curriculum inclusions, students in the upper secondary may participate in a number of creative leisure time activities. For example, in the largest upper secondary school every second year there is a major drama production and additional art classes, a choir and modern dance are all possible. In this example, the bi-annual performance is a professional level production. Auditions are held and a professional Director works with the young people. The vocational education students build the props and lighting and do the hair and make-up. The current play is based on a piece written by a Faroese writer and composer. The performances are held in the professional setting of the

Nordic House and the season of performances runs for 2-3 weeks, having over 16-20 shows to an audience of in excess of 8,000 (around 17% of the population).

### 3.8 The languages of the arts

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- **The arts and culture are vital languages for understanding the world, yet this aspect of the arts is not generally apparent in the Faroe Islands.**

Learning the languages of the arts enables people to talk effectively about their arts experiences and express their feelings. The arts are a powerful form of communication. The development of language skills appeared to be central within the design and implementation of arts-rich education. There are two aspects to be considered. Firstly, unless a child is fluent in the language of arts disciplines – such as the language of colour, movement, gesture and so on – a child’s ability to express themselves in those languages is severely hampered. The second aspect is that even if the pupils in later life do not wish to be active in expression through the arts, they need to develop ways to talk about arts and culture so they can participate actively in the cultural life of their community and of the country. Language has an important function to perform in giving students the words to enable children to talk about their artwork, performance and the work of artists. Children will develop this vocabulary with interesting questions from the teacher or artist and by talking to each other about their arts experiences. Concurrently, both the ability to express oneself through artistic means and to be able to talk and write about artistic and cultural experiences, gives the child a greater range of ways to express feelings. In this way, the arts are a powerful form of communication.

The arts provide a language that enables society to pass on cultural heritage to young people. Importantly, it also allows young people to create their own artistic language and to contribute to their global development (emotional and cognitive). In this way it equips young people with the capacity to develop the cultural heritage of the future.

The arts are symbolic communications that act as a cultural driving force accentuated the role of the arts in social action, social reconstruction and the role of culture in society. For this purpose alone, there is ample justification to foreground the need for systematic development of artistic languages. Effective arts education combines development in the specific languages of the arts with creative approaches to learning. Despite this, the idea that the arts are a form of language and that ‘literacy’ in the arts is vital for contemporary and future society - especially in the light of the rapid changes in communication technologies – notions of visual literacy, aesthetic literacy, sound literacies and so on are not apparent in either policy or practice in the Faroe Islands. As with media education, this area appears to be underdeveloped in the Faroe Islands.

Despite its lack in the official curriculum of schools, Faroese children are very aware of the power of a range of new technologies and artistic modes of communication

### 3.9 Risk-taking

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- **There is evidence that outside of school, children and young people are engaging in a lot of self-generated arts learning and participating in online communities and locally developed experimental approaches**

Quality arts programmes encourage people to take risks and allow them to make mistakes. 'Letting go' of control and being confident to make mistakes is an important part of the creative process. Uncertainty surrounds quality arts practice and this is to be encouraged.

It was observed that the after school sector (including youth clubs) were less constrained by curriculum and timetables, tended to have more expertise and smaller class sizes that seemed to enable more cutting edge practice and risk taking.

Risk taking seemed to be most prevalent in the small, voluntary and independent arts and cultural sector including festivals.

### 3.10 Education in and through the arts

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- **There is a difference between, what can be termed, *education in the arts* (e.g. teaching in visual arts, music, drama, crafts, etc.) and *education through the arts* (e.g. the use of the arts and creativity as a pedagogical tool in other subjects, such as numeracy, literacy and technology)**
- **Schools need strong programmes in the arts AND artistic and creative ways to learn in an integrated way across the curriculum**

The new curriculum means more things can be integrated.

*The new curriculum is no big deal for us, because we have always done integrated programming and written everything down. We follow a sequential curriculum.*

In one school visited, it was possible for young people to specialise in media studies. In this an integrated project and the young people involved develop websites for real clients. In a specialist Year 10 school, there are a number of creative arts options. These include wood and construction, visual arts, music, entrepreneurship, media and fashion design. These can be done for up to 10 hours per week.

There was some evidence of teachers using education through the arts especially in short, thematic weeks. In these cases, a school would choose a topic and then build integrated teaching around that topic with children working in quite innovative ways such as across subjects, across age ranges and with flexible spaces and timetables. For example:

*If I am doing a theme like the Vikings I try to bring some art in. (Teacher)*

*We have a theme week without a timetable.(Principal)*



Once a year we have a day called the "thinking day". We take a topic and really look into depth about that topic. We work in mixed ages and also interpret the topic through a range of subjects and art forms. (Principal)

The survey results suggest that there is a large variation between schools using creative learning and those not adopting pedagogy, with approximately 50% being somewhat creative and 50% being not creative.

Figure 3.10.1 The school achieves creative learning across all curriculum areas (Kindergarten)

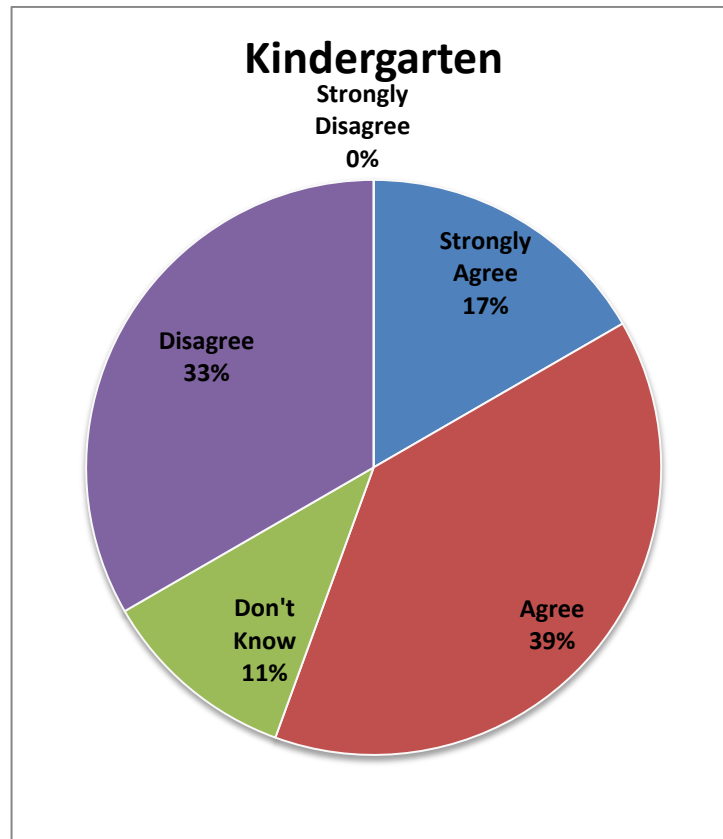
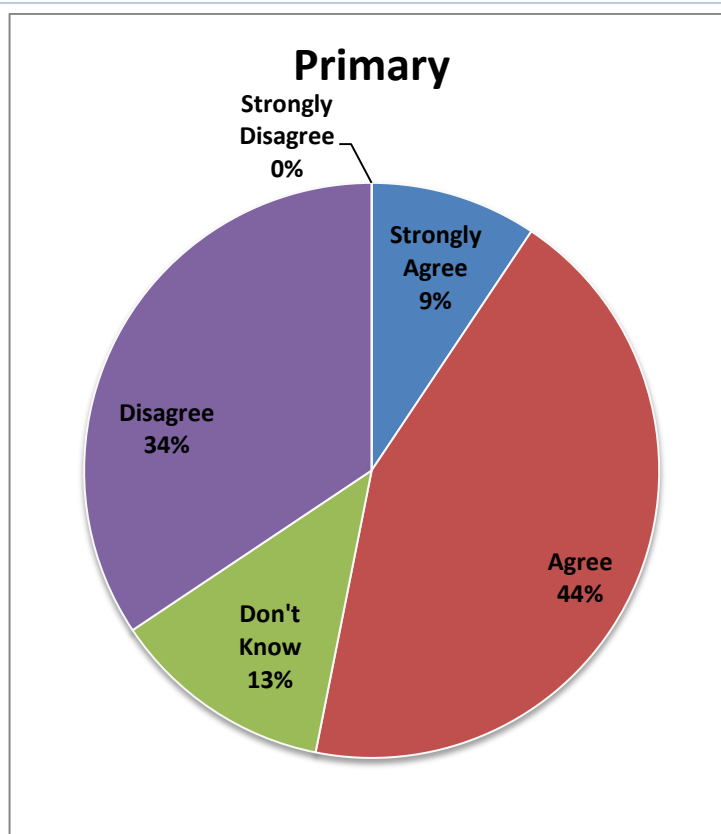


Figure 3.10.2 The school achieves creative learning across all curriculum areas (Primary)



From the field research, it appeared to be easier for smaller schools to adopt more flexible and creative approaches to learning. The greater ease at which a small group of staff could work flexibly and the greater sharing of creative teaching ideas appears to be at the heart of why the smaller schools were generally more creative.

*When you are a small school, I think it is easier to be creative. We see each other work and then think, I can do that. We don't; have any faculties, but we make do. We have developed a roll away art room. In a small good, if someone is good at something other people see it and then they try it too. Creativity sort of gets into the culture. I would like more special rooms, but we don't have them but have come up with some solutions. (Teacher)*

Generally though, creative teaching was not common and thematic weeks and opportunities for integration were 'one off' opportunities, as the following comments suggest:

*None of the arts programme is integrated. Special needs are integrated. The special needs teacher comes in. (Teacher)*

Some artists who visit schools also pointed to teachers not fully understanding the importance of a "creative process" – not just producing the outcomes or products, as the following quotation emphasises:

*How do you define creativity? Creativity is a process. There are too many reproductions in schools. (Artist)*

Despite the rhetoric that suggests quite child-centred learning approaches are being used, in most of the classes visited, it is very traditional teaching with the teacher talking at the front of the room and the children sitting listening quite passively. Group work was not common nor was active or discovery learning. In a number of instances, the children were disengaged and very passive.



## Chapter 4: Taking the longer view

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### 4.1 Introduction

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The research has concluded that there is a discrepancy between espoused ideas in the policy and their implementation in the classroom. This chapter examines some key areas for development.

### 4.2 Continuity – Arts impact and learning lines

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- **Teachers are unclear about the aims and specific learning embedded in the arts**
- **Learning is characterised by a series of largely disconnected projects and experiences**
- **Links are not explicit for either to child or the teacher**
- **Continuity is vital if arts education is to have an impact**

A comprehensive study conducted in 2004 (Devos, 2004) implored schools and the broader educational sector to commence arts education early in a child's life and ensure there was continued development of creative and cultural competencies throughout the entire school programme.

It is possible for kindergarten children in the Faroe Islands to be in the centres between 8am-5:30pm every day. The experiences of arts education in the kindergarten are of intermittent quality and tend to inhibit rather than expand creativity. The child's experiences of arts and cultural education in general primary school in most instances is likely to be patchy, with reasonably good quality experiences for children with enthusiastic teachers and no art, or lower quality experiences for children where the teacher is not interested in the arts. In secondary school, most children will receive some music and possibly some visual arts education but the quality can vary from excellent to abysmal. This lack of consistency and quality was reported in high frequency during the focus groups and interviews, as indicated in the following example:

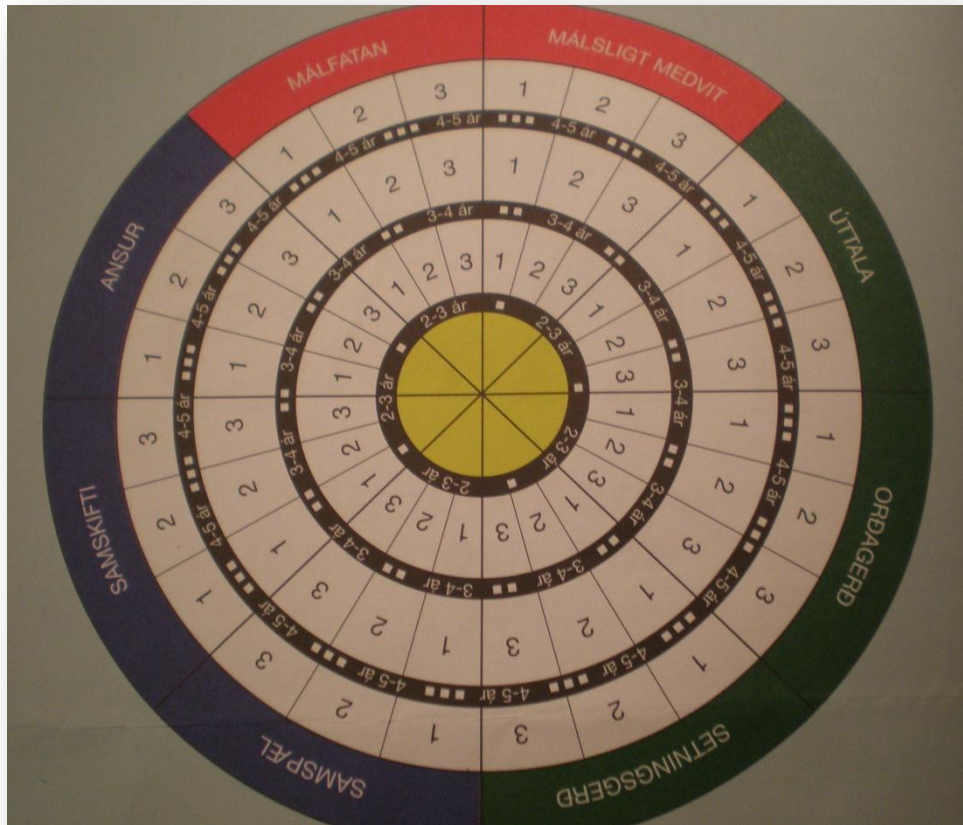
*We try not to disturb the children. The boys like playing with the rains and the girls like the dolls. We might do painting sometimes, maybe twice a week. Only if the children like it. Some don't like to get dirty. There are no instruments or materials available for the children. It's funny, the children go into the toilets to play with the water. They will always find a place to play with water even if we say "NO". The arts don't play much of a part here, but we are thinking about it (the kindergarten teacher has been in the kindergarten for 23 years). (Kindergarten teacher)*

The kindergarten teacher could not remember going to any professional development and did not track the children's development. The kindergarten had no external partnerships. This lack of professional development and systematic practices for assessing early years' development was apparent in a number of the centres visited.

*We have a staff meeting about once a month and we get someone in to speak. We have two professional development days coming up (in October) but we don't know what we are doing yet. (Kindergarten teacher)*

*We are supposed to assess the children according to their personality, social skills, traditions, communication, creativity and movement and motor skills. Every child has a piece of paper and we try to work with individual difference. (After school pedagogue)*

In one centre, they had a quite well-developed 'wheel' for assessing the children's development and were also keeping individual developmental records of each child. This centre provided directed creative activities for the children.



The kindergarten workers tended to say that "We are not teaching. It is not our job to teach". Arts education in kindergartens is supposed to be impulsive, child-centred and not systemised.

*They say, when a child reaches first grade childhood stops, but before then they are free to play.(Parent)*

Despite the rich and stimulating environment around each kindergarten, often the internal environment is quite sterile. "Clean" materials such as pencils and felt tip pens are most likely to be available. There is also an overabundance of pre-made plastic, Disney-style toys and insufficient creative material available to children to stimulate imaginative play. Often the children were watching TV or videos. The art room in one setting was being used as a storeroom. Too often, there was no children's art displayed and instead, Disney style posters were on the walls. The children were not allowed (or able) to choose their own art making materials. The adults in the setting could not identify any pedagogy or methods influencing their practice. The children had no access to instruments or ways to make music.

While the school curriculum states quite ambitious aims and outcomes for visual arts and music, this is not backed by specific, continuous learning programmes for the arts and the time given to the arts in the primary school is insufficient and intermittent, meaning that the possibility of developing sound knowledge and skills in the arts is extremely limited. In practice the time given to arts and cultural education in schools in the Faroe Islands is very limited and poorly defined. Furthermore, the emphasis on provisions in 'free time' or after school means that there is an inequity and discrepancy between the cultural

education a child receives, largely corresponding to their geographic location, availability of spaces in programmes and 'keenness' of their parents to inscribe them in arts programmes. Free time arts education is by nature voluntary and cannot be seen to be incorporated as part of a child's basic entitlement to the arts.

In some schools (especially in smaller schools) learning has effectively been mapped across the school and within particular school years. Yet in most instances, the programme has a 'stop and start' arrangement and so children remain at relatively low levels of artistic development and get frustrated by their lack of progress. As children, for example, may only experience music for one term or less and then not again for another year or more, the children remain largely as beginners and novices and both the teachers and the children become frustrated by their lack of progress. Consistent and continuous experiences are vital if a child is to develop fully their artistic languages.

### 4.3 Testing and Pisa

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- **The Faroe Islands has low results in international tests of educational achievement**
- **Focus on the basics has been claimed to reduce the arts and creativity in Faroese schools whereas international research would suggest that arts-rich schools actually enhance learning in literacy and numeracy.**

It would be reasonable to say that following the Faroe Island's first participation in the PISA international testing process in 2006, there has been a shocked reaction from policy makers and schools alike with the poor performance of Faroese pupils. As can be seen in the following figures (Figures 4.3.1-4.3.3), the pupils' performance in the Faroe Islands is the lowest amongst the Nordic countries and is placed below Mexico for literacy and only one step above Mexico for numeracy and science.

Figure 4.3.1 Pisa testing results for literacy 2006<sup>22</sup>

COUNTRY	PISA 2000	COUNTRY	PISA 2003	COUNTRY	PISA 2006
Finland	546	Finland	543	South Korea	556
Canada	534	South Korea	534	<b>Finland</b>	<b>547</b>
New Zealand	529	Canada	528	Canada	527
Australia	528	Australia	525	New Zealand	521
Ireland	527	New Zealand	522	Ireland	517
South Korea	525	Ireland	515	Australia	513
Japan	522	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>514</b>	Poland	508
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>516</b>	Belgium	507	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>507</b>
Austria	507	<b>Norway</b>	<b>500</b>	Belgium	501
Belgium	507	Switzerland	499	Switzerland	499
<b>Iceland</b>	<b>507</b>	Japan	498	Japan	498
<b>Norway</b>	<b>505</b>	Poland	497	Germany	495
France	505	France	496	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>494</b>
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>497</b>	<b>Iceland</b>	<b>492</b>	Austria	490
Germany	495	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>492</b>	France	488
Switzerland	494	Germany	491	<b>Norway</b>	<b>484</b>
Spain	493	Austria	491	<b>Iceland</b>	<b>484</b>
Czech Republic	492	Czech Republic	489	Hungary	484
Italy	487	Slovenia	482	Czech Republic	483
Hungary	480	Spain	481	Luxembourg	479
Poland	479	Luxembourg	479	Portugal	472
Greece	474	Italy	476	Italy	469
Portugal	470	Greece	472	Spain	461
Luxembourg	441	Portugal	469	Greece	460
Russia	440	Russia	442	Russia	440
Mexico	422	Mexico	422	Mexico	410
				<b>Faroe Islands</b>	<b>409</b>
Mean value	497		494		489

Reading literacy is defined in PISA as the ability to understand, use and reflect on written texts in order to achieve one's goals, to develop one's knowledge and potential, and to participate effectively in society.

<sup>22</sup>Tomas Matti (Eds.) (2009) *Northern Lights on PISA 2006: Differences and similarities in the Nordic countries*. Nordic Council of Ministers, Copenhagen 2009 p 28

Figure 4.3.2 Pisa results for mathematics 2006<sup>23</sup>

COUNTRY	PISA2000	COUNTRY	PISA2003	COUNTRY	PISA2008
Japan	557	Finland	544	Finland	548
South Korea	547	South Korea	542	South Korea	547
New Zealand	537	Japan	534	Switzerland	530
Finland	536	Canada	532	Canada	527
Australia	533	Belgium	529	Japan	523
Canada	533	Switzerland	527	New Zealand	522
Switzerland	529	Australia	524	Australia	520
Belgium	520	New Zealand	523	Belgium	520
France	517	Czech Republic	516	Denmark	513
Austria	515	Iceland	515	Czech Republic	510
Denmark	514	Denmark	514	Iceland	506
Iceland	514	France	511	Austria	505
Sweden	510	Sweden	509	Germany	504
Ireland	503	Austria	506	Sweden	502
Norway	499	Ireland	503	Ireland	501
Czech Republic	498	Germany	503	France	496
USA	493	Norway	495	Poland	495
Germany	490	Luxembourg	493	Hungary	491
Hungary	488	Hungary	490	Norway	490
Russia	478	Poland	490	Luxembourg	490
Spain	476	Spain	485	Spain	480
Poland	470	USA	483	Russia	476
Italy	457	Russia	468	USA	474
Portugal	454	Portugal	466	Portugal	466
Greece	447	Italy	466	Italy	462
Luxembourg	446	Greece	445	Greece	459
				Faroe Islands	450
Mexico	387	Mexico	385	Mexico	406
Mean value	498		500		497

Mathematical literacy is defined in PISA as the capacity to identify, understand and engage in mathematics as well as to make well-founded judgements about the role that mathematics plays in an individual's current and future life as a constructive, concerned and reflective citizen. Scientific literacy (Figure 4.3.3) is defined as the capacity to use scientific knowledge, to identify questions and to draw evidence-based conclusions in order to understand and help make decisions about the natural world and human interactions with it.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid p 29



Figure 4.3.3 Pisa results for Science 2006<sup>24</sup>

COUNTRY	PISA2000	COUNTRY	PISA2003	COUNTRY	PISA2008
South Korea	552	Japan	548	<b>Finland</b>	<b>563</b>
Japan	550	<b>Finland</b>	<b>548</b>	Canada	534
<b>Finland</b>	<b>538</b>	South Korea	538	Japan	531
Canada	529	Australia	525	New Zealand	530
New Zealand	528	Czech Republic	523	Australia	527
Australia	528	New Zealand	521	South Korea	522
Austria	519	Canada	519	Germany	516
Ireland	513	Switzerland	513	Czech Republic	513
<b>Sweden</b>	<b>512</b>	France	511	Switzerland	512
Czech Republic	511	Belgium	509	Austria	511
France	500	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>506</b>	Belgium	510
<b>Norway</b>	<b>500</b>	Ireland	505	Ireland	508
USA	499	Hungary	503	Hungary	504
Hungary	496	Germany	502	<b>Sweden</b>	<b>503</b>
Belgium	496	Poland	498	Poland	498
<b>Iceland</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>Iceland</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>496</b>
Switzerland	496	USA	491	France	495
Spain	491	Austria	491	<b>Iceland</b>	<b>491</b>
Germany	487	Russia	489	USA	489
Poland	483	Spain	487	Spain	488
<b>Denmark</b>	<b>481</b>	Italy	486	<b>Norway</b>	<b>487</b>
Italy	478	<b>Norway</b>	<b>484</b>	Luxembourg	486
Greece	461	Luxembourg	483	Russia	479
Russia	460	Greece	481	Italy	475
Portugal	459	<b>Denmark</b>	<b>475</b>	Portugal	474
Luxembourg	443	Portugal	468	Greece	473
				<b>Faroe Islands</b>	<b>417</b>
Mexico	422	Mexico	405	Mexico	410
Mean value	497		500		498

While these results may have shocked policy makers and teachers alike, there have also been a number of excuses offered for the poor performance.

*We blame the fact that there are not enough books in Faroese and everything children do is in several languages. Also, it is not normal to do tests in Faroese schools so the children are unfamiliar with even doing the test and thought it was a bit of a joke. Testing is not part of our culture and we don't believe in it. (Principal)*

The poor results were also blamed on the language of the test that may have been confusing to Faroese students.

*Since the PISA test in 2009, we have been talking more about children needing to behave and also there is a big question about language. (Ministry)*

*I think this has been very unfortunate. We have to be so careful at how we deal with these results. We don't see a future in our schools compared to the Finnish. (Teacher)*

<sup>24</sup> Ibid p 30

Following the very poor performance of Faroese schools in the international PISA testing, the Faroe Islands have introduced some national tests. The results of these national tests are individually informed directly to schools but are not published publicly. It has been argued that the increased focus on testing and the core subjects of Mathematics, literacy and scientific learning may have had a negative impact on arts and creativity in the schools.

*The situation for the arts is worse than ever. There are fewer and fewer lessons. It has been cut down so much. There is pressure for more and more reading and mathematics and this is causing stress. PISA has led to the curriculum become more pressured. (Teacher)*

*We have less time for creative things as we have to do more language and maths. (Teacher)*

*The situation is worse. There are fewer and fewer lessons for the creative subjects. Everything is stressing reading and writing. It is since the PISA results. There is more pressure in the curriculum. (Principal)*

*PISA is an issue. It is very cognitively based and then creativity suffers. (Principal)*

By contrast, the international research<sup>25</sup> shows that schools that have an arts-rich curriculum tend to perform far better in the core subjects of literacy, numeracy and scientific thinking. The OECD itself highlights that schools with a broad curriculum consistently do better in the PISA testing process. Only one school amongst the schools visited saw this direct connection:

*I think doing the arts helps children to learn better. I can't prove it but I believe it and I can certainly feel it. There is a better harmony in the school and you get a different relationship with the children. (Teacher)*

The general view in the survey respondents was also that the arts improved academic attainment (see Figure 4.3.4). It was also felt by the survey respondents that arts and culture improved pupil behaviour (Figure 4.3.5).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Bamford 2005, Catterall 2009

<sup>26</sup> Note: The focus in this section has been on the presentation of findings related to the compulsory school (primary school) as this age group is also the focus for the PISA testing process, but the general patterns evidenced at the primary level were also indicated at the kindergarten and upper secondary levels.

Figure 4.3.4 Arts education has improved pupils' level of academic attainment

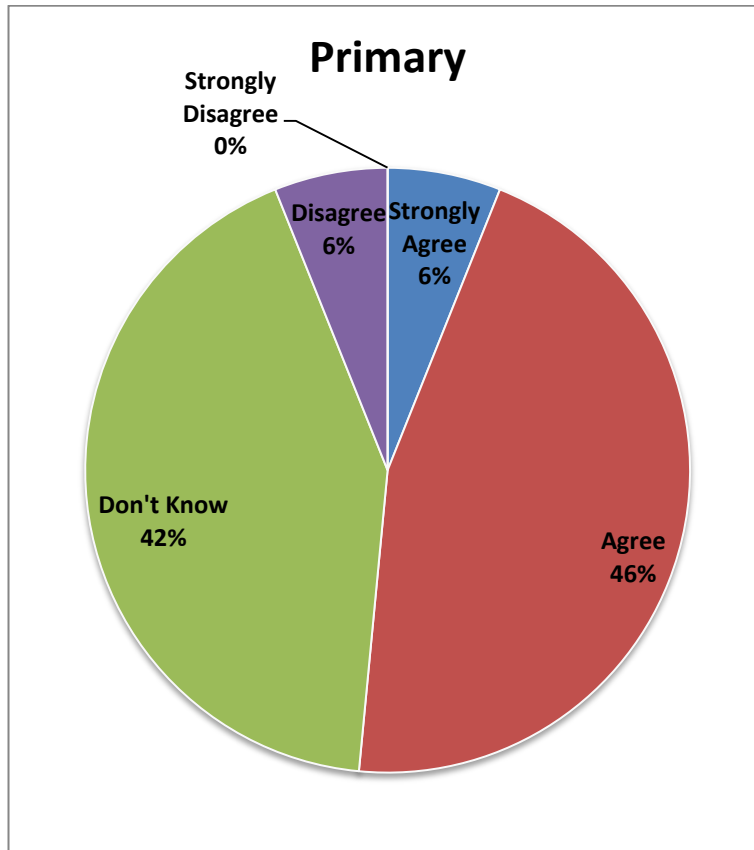
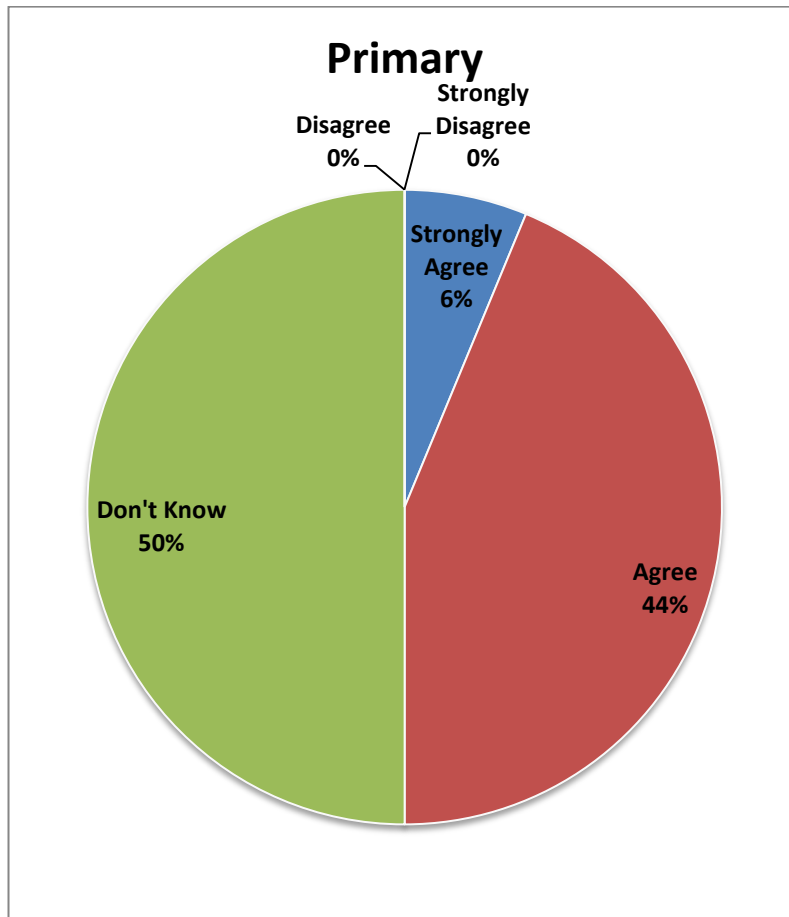


Figure 4.3.5 Arts and culture in this school has improved pupils' *behaviour*



At the heart of effective learning and attainment is the child's confidence and enjoyment of school. The survey result support the notion that arts-rich schools increase pupil confidence and enhance pupils' enjoyment at school, as is evidenced in Figures 4.3.6 and 4.3.7.

*Figure 4.3.6 Arts and culture in this school has improved pupils' behaviour*

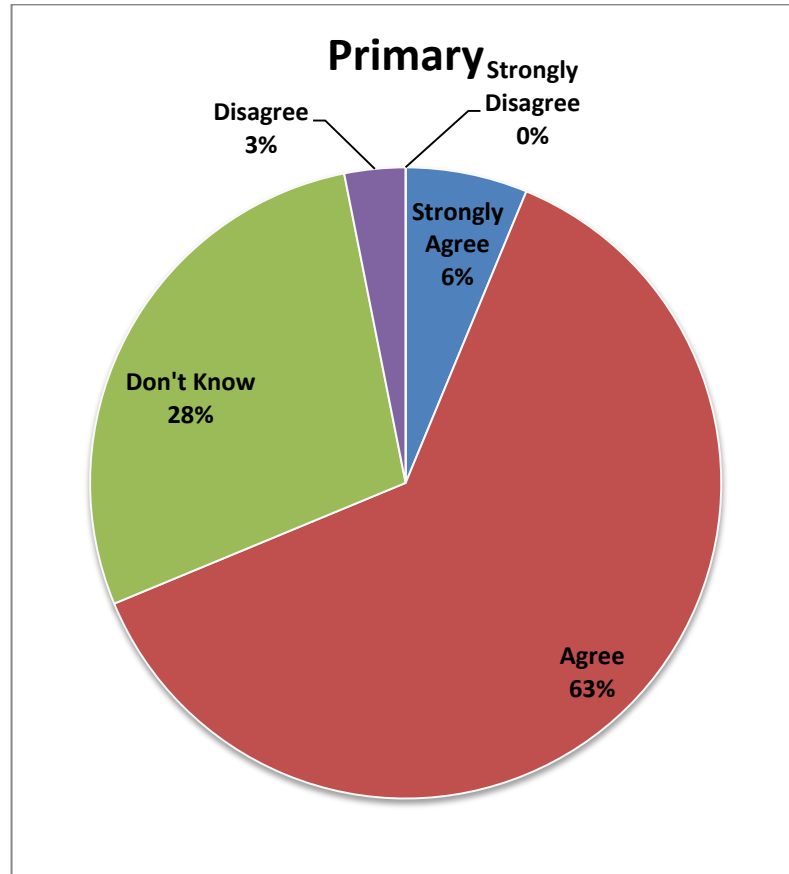
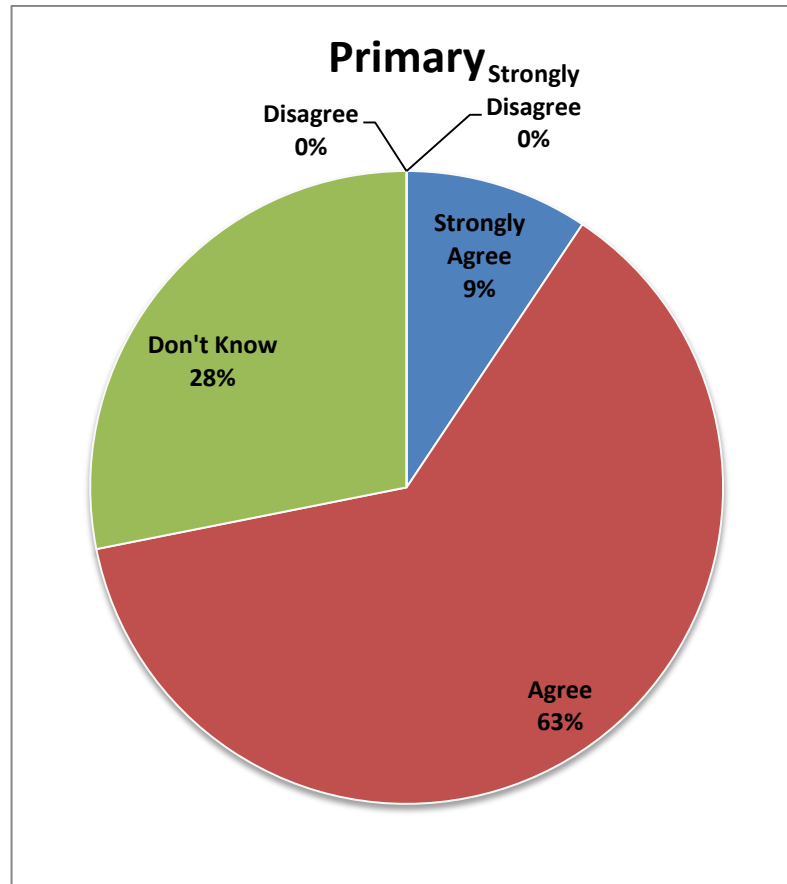


Figure 4.3.7 Pupils feel they can *achieve* in art/cultural lessons in this school



Arguably, while there is not a “PISA” type process for the arts, from the field work conducted as part of this study, the assumption could be made that the Faroe Islands would perform poorly in that area as well for many of the same reasons given for the poor performance in the PISA tests. For example, the PISA results highlighted problems with the amount of time given to subjects, children starting learning very late, the poor quality of teaching pedagogy, vague and overstated learning objectives, poor assessment and poor quality monitoring as being major factors in the poor performance of the Faroe Islands. This report would maintain that all these factors could be equally applied to the general low quality of arts provisions.

#### 4.4 Creative Industries

- While the creative industries form an important and expanding part of the Faroese economy, this fact has not been taken-up in actions at all levels of education, including professional education
- There are no figures or information available about the scope and nature of the creative industries. It is recommended that the creative industry is mapped to determine the extent of its influence in the Faroe Islands
- The Faroese government needs to immediately adopt a more proactive stance to protecting the rights of Faroese producers and artists under the “Protected Designation of Origin Scheme”

In general terms the cultural and creative sector includes all those who work in the creative occupations across the wider economy. The United Nations estimates that the creative and cultural industries account for about 7% of the total GDP of most economically developed countries and that this sector is growing at 10% per year, which is more than double general economic growth. Furthermore, democratic trends, such as higher levels of education, longevity and increased consumer spending are likely to continue growth in the cultural and leisure activities into the future.

In particular within the Faroe Islands there has been recent growth in core creative businesses (such as fashion and design industries), growth in cultural industries (such as museums, theatres) and consumer orientated industries that rely on creative input such as advertising, retail and promotional industries. Anecdotally, music recording and festivals have grown rapidly and the Faroe Islands have a strong tradition of book publishing, especially in the Faroese language. The Faroe Islands have both a television station and radio channel which are very popular.



Source: <http://shop.gudrunqudrun.com/?qclid=CJ6BtcP7kbMCFU3HtAod6yUAZA> accessed November 2012

This general positive view of the arts is summarised in this quote:

*I think that the situation for the arts is getting better and better in the Faroe Islands. Art is exploding and that is great but people still joke, you have to go to Iceland to get real art!*

Despite the apparent growth in the creative industries within the Faroe Islands, there is almost no data related to this industry. The Faroe Islands do not collect the routine data according to the European categories for the creative industries. There is currently almost no research or education in the field of innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity. Immediate action needs to be taken aimed at raising awareness of the value of the creative industries and developing the talent in the community for creative enterprise. There is no information about levels of employment in the creative industries or about the volume of income generated by the sector. This economic impact needs to be measured.

Beyond the economic effect, it could be argued that there are considerable social effects from a rich creative arts industry including attracting tourism, inspiring innovation, improving products and urban improvement, attractiveness and liveability. These are clearly promoted through tourism material and brochures aimed at attracting investment, but despite their use in publicity material there appears to be no substantial policy surrounding the growth and development of the creative industries. There is a lack of commitment from government to creative developments and a lack of clear and comprehensive data related to the creative industries in the Faroe Islands. To address the lack of policy focus on the arts, LISA (Vignette 4.4.1) tries to lobby on behalf of various arts groups to promote a better recognition of the creative industries.

#### *Vignette 4.4.1 There is only limited information on the creative industries*

*LISA is the name of the Faroese Council of Artists. LISA is an umbrella organisation for the various arts organisations in the Faroe Islands. It was formed in the 1980s and is similar to an arts council. Under the umbrella are a range of special interest arts associations. For example, for architects, actors, soloists, musicians' organisations, choirs organisation (there are 15-17 choirs represented), photographers (there are 7-8 professional photographers). There is no dance society and the authors' society sees itself as separate. The Painters Society broke away and there is the professional arts society. Design is not really represented. There are 11 organisations in total under the umbrella. The member organizations are mostly professional artists and LISA's main objective is to work for better conditions for Faroese artists. The organisation has a website [www.lisa.fo/](http://www.lisa.fo/) but there is only information in Faroese. It states that its purpose is to represent local artists and provide advice on legal matter, tax advice and provide general sector assistance. It does not currently see it role to promote artists to an international audience and the intellectual creative property rights of Faroese artists do not appear to be fully protected. They run courses for artists in tax, but have not run programmes about marketing. They do not currently hold much information as there is only limited information on the creative industries. Publishers and journalists withdrew from LISA and crafts people are not currently included. Designers are a new generation that need to be considered. Designers are members under the Designers' Organisation.*

Concurrently, there is no overt acknowledgement of the role of education and training and development in expanding and enriching the creative industries. Similarly, there have not been sufficient discussions between members of the creative industries and the educational and cultural community and consequently a low level of commitment to the

connection between these fields. It was also felt that quality assurance may be lacking as artists know one another and except for those who venture into the international market, critical review is lacking: "I think we do have a problem of quality. This is a small place. There is no culture of critical review. There are no knowledgeable reviewers." There are some interesting case studies and 'success stories'. For example a knitting and textile company has managed to turn its business around by focusing on creative arts-based input and design.

Festivals are now an active part of the Faroese arts scene and attract international audiences. The following vignette is from the Grot association and the G! festival, one of the Island's two largest festivals. In the middle of July the village of Gøta is home to a music event called the G! festival. The entire beach and village become part of the festival. The vignette highlights the way the festival developed organically and how skills and knowledge developed through the experience. While it has had a somewhat 'rocky' financial basis and still receives additional funding, it has begun to transform the local area and has actively promoted Faroese artists and been a vital part of their career progression. The Festival 'GROT" was started by two people in 1998. The idea was inspired by the experiences the originators had had playing in festivals in Denmark. The idea was to be able to use any proceeds from the festival to create a small venue where 'up and coming' bands could practice and play. As the originators commented:

#### *Vignette 4.4.2 The greatest resource we had was the enticement of the Faroe Islands*

*It was a spontaneous thing. We wanted a platform where bands like ours [alternative music] could play. At the time when we started playing, most of the bands were cover bands. We wanted to be able to play our own songs. In some ways we were the first professional band on the Faroe Islands. We were called "Clickhaze". There were no role models. We were all new to it. We had no network. No experience. We could not afford to tour so we thought "let's bring the bands to us!" So in 2002 we set up our first festival.*

*We really did not have much time and we certainly did not have money. We printed some posters and got our friends to put them up in shops and other places around the Faroe Islands. Within only a few weeks we had the festival full and we set up a stage on the beach and over 800 people attended. It was very successful beginning. We had nothing. We ran electrical extension cords from houses in the village to make it work. It did make some money, around 80,000 DKK. So we thought this worked and so that was the real start of the G! festival.*

*Officially, we began as an Association in 1998. The first festival was held in 2002. We registered with the Tax authorities as a business in 2005. We separated the Association Grót from the business in 2005. In 2010 the Association became more active as a platform for bands to play and practice. Any profit from the festival is devolved to the Association. We have had to work with the tax authorities. So for example there is no VAT on tickets. We now have 1.25 full time equivalent staff. In total about 600-700,000 DKK go in salaries. We applied for and received 1.2 Million DKK from the Nordic Council. This start-up money was*



really crucial. The money was over three years and reduced each year so we can become sustainable.

Initially, we had mainly Faroese acts. There were only two foreign groups and these were friends on ours. But now there is a wide type of music. Bands approach us and want to play. The people in the local town are very excited about the festival. One old couple said, "We are not going to leave the village, because nothing ever happens in this village and now SOMETHING is happening!" We had locals making us cakes and tea and coffee and the guests were staying in houses in the village. My father is 82 years old and he felt even closer to the town and was very positive about the festival. We noticed that people in the village started to want to do their garden, paint their houses and tidy the town. They began to say, "This festival will put our town on the map!"

The second year we had a bigger marketing campaign. We started a website and we had radio and TV advertising. We made more posters. The second year we were very ambitious. We tried to do everything, but it was too much. In the third year we tried to scale down a little. We reduced the number of stages and also reduced the duration of the festival from three days to two days. There were 3,500 people and it worked very well.

We learnt a lot of lessons. We did not know anything about anything! We had to learn everything. We made a film about our experiences in 2003. We did not have skills. We just had a pioneer spirit. We ran the whole thing with one part-time person. The rest of the people were volunteers.

The greatest resource we had was the enticement of the Faroe Islands. People were willing to do things for nothing because they were curious about the Faroes. They saw the Faroes as being unique ...something different. So really good bands said "yes" to coming because they were curious and wanted to see the Faroe Islands, especially bands from Finland. We could pay less because they were curious.

We put the profits into next year's festival. By 2005 we had 9,000 people at the festival. It was sold out at 5,000 tickets. The problem was there were 4,000 freebee's because we lost control of the boundaries. People started storming the boundaries. The figures of people there was only a guess based on what the police said. We never researched anything about our audiences in those days. Today we have 5,000-6,000 people who come regularly. I think the audience is mainly from the Faroe Islands but people are starting to come from overseas as well. Once again, we don't really collect the data. Tourists come. We know that there were at least 100 people who are international because they bought their tickets through the website. One guy came from Florida. Other than that, we sell the tickets through petrol stations and music shops. We know from our online life that our main target audience is 18-25 year olds. We have more than 10,000 likes.

We had to learn everything from scratch. We learnt as we went along, For example, in 2005, we did everything from scratch. We were the source of everything - even the catering. We had people cooking and serving the food. Now we do almost everything through outsourcing. We use high quality catering and we arranged sponsorship with the salmon

*company. The salmon farms ran a "taste of salmon" event and everyone loved it. Everyone loved the food. We were able to negotiate a good deal for the catering. They pay a flat fee and then they receive additional funds based on how much they sell.*

*The festival is changing the character of the town. The town is becoming more creative. Creative people are moving here and also more educated people. The town is becoming a more liberal and creative place. We are starting to build on an image. It is a place that is starting to attract and produce artists. It is all built on image. I would say that now we have built up a milieu - 50% of Faroese artists playing professionally come from here and have played at the festival. It has led to the whole development of creative industries. There are new young musicians inspired by the festival. It is also leading to other creative professionals emerging... photographers, film makers, fashion designers. For example, the Faroese jumpers (sweaters) are becoming synonymous with the festival.*

*In 2004/05 we introduced a children's programme to the festival on the Saturday of the Festival. It includes performances, games, and workshops across all art forms. We did a big theme around African rhythms. We offered a day ticket for children and families. Many people came. We had about 500 children. The children love it. They come to party. A lot of staff brought their children to.*

*Nordic festivals are generally more expensive than other European festivals. You have to compare the price of the festival to the cost of a pair of jeans and shoes. Whatever they cost for the young people is about what they will pay for a festival. Many families give the ticket as a Christmas present it is about 600 DKK per day but it is 1175 DKK with the camping fee. We will make a small profit this year that can go to the Association. One year though we had to have an overdraft so you never know. We went in over our heads. We spent too much.*

*Ten years ago we believed anything was possible. Now three or four other festivals have started in the Faroe Islands. But we have lasted. Generally you would say there are optimistic signs of life in the Faroese arts scene. The arts have become more normalised. There is starting to be a creative space for the arts. We have become more mainstream. We work with the bigger companies such as the banks, fisheries and caterers. Going forward, we want to see the Association existing on safer ground. We want to make the financial environment for the arts more secure. In a concrete way, we would like to see the Association money going into development projects. We would like to reinvent the centre as a proper music venue and rehearsal space. But as you can feel, it is very cold as the building is old and we cannot afford the heating.*

*There is a buzz around Faroese music. Faroese musicians are breaking new ground and getting contracts. We are seeing the emergence of internationally recognised practice in film and design. Something is happening. You can feel it. You now have a generation of young Faroese who have grown up with the G! Festival. These are people of creative ambition. Every time we host a festival there are always talent scouts who come. Last year the festival led to three new distribution contracts for local musicians. People want to be part of it. Film makers come and fashion designers. The festival sweaters with the "G!" on it*

*are really prized. This branding appeared from graffiti. A creative cluster is starting to form. We have a lot of people who come year after year. Last year, 89.4% of people had been before. In 2007, I.Q. Magazine rated the G! Festival as the second best festival in Europe.*

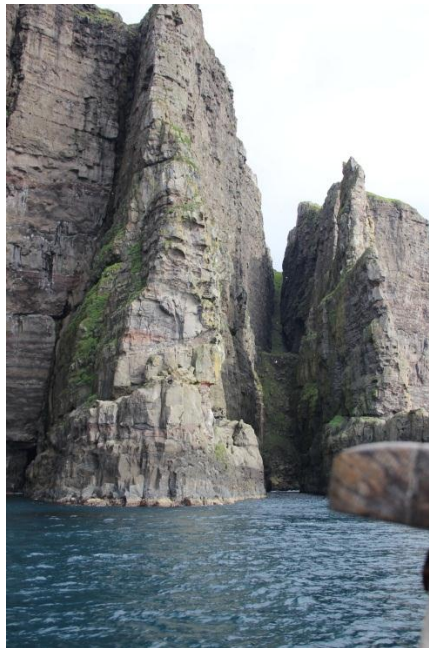
Children living in the village were a little bemused by the Festival, and had not attended but commented, “It has a lot of drunk people and rock and pop. They come from all over!”



Source:

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10150992671260369&set=o.119006594776925&type=3&theater>  
accessed November 2012

The G! Festival is one of a number of local festivals that occur over the summer. The Association of Faroese composers organises an annual festival of music in concert halls throughout the Faroe Islands. Focusing on original music in includes music in the genres of classical music, improvisation, jazz, folk and rock music. One of the highlights of the event is a concert that occurs in a sea 'grotto' and the audience is in a boat to enjoy the concert.



In addition to the Faroese composers, people come from other countries to be part of the festival. In 2012, feature artists came from 10 international countries. A pass to all the concerts costs a very reasonable, 450 DKK. Out of the over 100 events held during the festival season, 40% are either free or by small donation. The festival runs from June until the end of August and includes concerts on remote islands. Churches, schools and halls and galleries are often used as venues. In some cases, even boats become the venue! This festival is funded by the Nordic House, Danish Composers' Society and the Culture Min*The Summer Festival* in Klaksvík is also well established and a large event

Despite these success stories, the explicit connection between high quality arts education and economic and commercial developments have not been effectively articulated or communicated, by business, education or culture. One way to increase the collective level of skills and knowledge is through research and publication.

The Faroe Islands was seen to be an attractive and 'exotic' place for artists to come to work.

*The Faroe Islands is seen as being 'exotic' and that is good for both music and fashion. There is a ground swell of interest, but we must work together (Artist)*

Art and culture are highlighted in tourist publications and promotions, and while there are no statistics available to substantiate the influence of the arts on the burgeoning tourist industry, it appears that these may be one of the 'selling points' for the Faroe Islands. As one respondent observed, "Culture is widely used in Tourism, but we do not have accurate figures on the impact of the arts on tourism."

Although the creative industries have not been the focus of policy, it appears that they are increasingly a focus for tourism. For example, in the summer version of the Atlantic Airways magazine, 23 out of its 62 pages (37%) are dedicated directly to articles about artists, culture and the creative industries. If you include photography and tourism, this figure climbs to 36 pages (58%). This excludes advertising and publishing which of course themselves are creative industries! In a recent tourist publication, "The Faroe Islands: Take a Deep Breath" each page highlights an artistic performer from the Faroe Islands who has been inspired by the Islands to create their art forms. It includes singers, composers, abstract painters, metal bands, architects, fashion designers, festivals, pop singers and chain dancers. The tourist board also has begun to offer "Faroese cultural tours". The week-long tour includes visits to local artist workshops as well as the more common cultural visits to churches, museums and places of history. The tour costs around 200 Euros per day.



Very few of the artists interviewed saw the direct connection between a robust and expanding cultural and creative industry and arts education in schools. The one exception was the architects, who hold an annual architects' day working in schools.

*There is an architect's day and we go into the schools and promote architecture. That has been popular. (Architect)*

The professional artists interviewed want to see their art as existing on the world stage. While they are proud of Faroese culture, they want to challenge the boundaries "People have a picture in their mind of what Faroese art should be like." The small scale of the professional arts scene on the Faroe Islands means that either artists have to work across a number of paid and unpaid roles, or have to focus their practice on the international stage.

*It is difficult in the Faroe Islands to be professional about the arts. We have to have connection abroad and work with education. (Artist)*

*I don't think professional art is taken seriously (Artist)*

*Very few musicians in the Faroe Islands can make a living exclusively through music. (Artist)*

*Almost every musician is a teacher, performer and does other things. It is the result of living on a small island. But I like it. I can do a bit of this and a bit of that. (Artist)*

There are a number of artists' collaborations on the Nordic level that Faroese artists participate in. There are some entrepreneur grants for music and fashion. The Chamber of Commerce provides financial support for studio space and networking. Local artists are commissioned to create sculptures and public art and these are on display around towns and in schools. While there appears to be some grants available to musicians and visual artists, other art forms felt they did not receive adequate support.

*There are very limited grants for writers in the Faroe Islands. We need more of the Cultural Fund to go to literature.*

Despite the lack of grants going to writers, Faroe book publishing relative to the population size is one of the largest in the world. Around 240 titles are published annually and there are at least 4,500 printed books in Faroese. Faroese literature is also becoming known more widely with for example Guðrið Helmsdal, Rói Patursson, Jóanes Nielsen, Carl Jóhan Jensen, Tóroddur Poulsen, Jógvan Isaksen, Raket Helmsdal and Barður Oskarsson.



Source: [www.Topoftheworld.nu](http://www.Topoftheworld.nu) accessed November 2012

Some of the artists interviewed argued that there **should not be** much support given to artists as there was only a very limited and finite amount of work available for artists and giving more support might lead to an oversupply of artists.

*We have to be careful of training too many artists and musicians or we will be training people for unemployment! (Artist)*

It was also noted that the tax, pension, export and intellectual property policies and systems in the Faroe Islands have not kept pace with developments in the creative industries and the rights of Faroese artists may not be fully protected within Europe. One of the reasons for this could be the Faroe Islands position within the Danish Constitution (part of the Danish Kingdom but not a member of the EU). This means that the Faroe Islands unique artistic products are not being protected under the “Protected Designation of Origin Scheme” though it probably could be if the government more proactively pursued this protection, especially because Council Regulation (EC) No.510-4 2006 covers EU and through bilateral agreements non-EU countries. This rule ensures that “Only products genuinely originating in that region are allowed to be identified as such.”

*It is difficult for artists in the Faroes. They have no rights. They are not recognised and don't get a pension or state benefits. They are self-employed and have to do their own tax. They pay into the system but don't get much in return. (Artist)*

Local audience support for the arts and culture appear to be strong with high per cent attendance at most events.

*I would really say drama is not taught in the Faroe Islands. The amateur scene for actors is growing. There is an amateur theatre group in many small villages. In some ways there was more amateur activity but when TV started in the Faroe Islands in 1977 the amateur scene was reduced. As a professional actor here on the Faroe Islands, I have to do a little bit of everything. I have done children's TV. I have done school tours. I think the TV is quite poor quality, but everyone watches it because it is local. It is difficult to be professional about art, but on the other hand, we are part of the community and so we make connections. (Actor)*

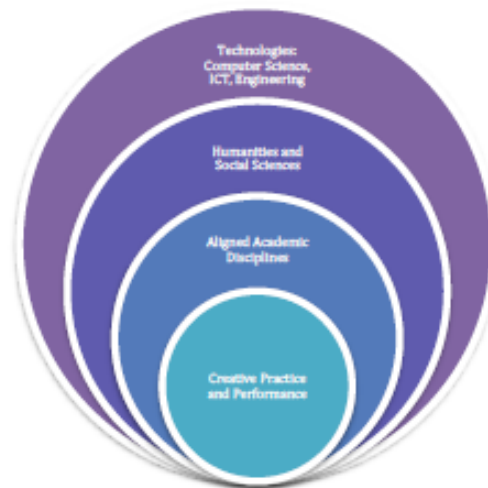
In a general sense, there was a lack of robust gathering of data related to the creative arts and cultural industries in the Faroe Islands. The potential for development in these fields needs to be measured and practices implemented that are likely to enhance this area of economic activity. A helpful point of departure for beginning to collect robust data and build policy in this area might be the ‘The Economy of Culture in Europe’ model <sup>27</sup>, which differentiates from an industries point of view between core arts fields (visual arts, performing arts and heritage) and related ‘circles’. Circle 1 embraces the cultural industries

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<sup>27</sup> The Economy of Culture in Europe. (2006) KEA European Affairs for the European Commission. <http://www.keanet.eu/en/ecoculturepage.html> based on the work of Throsby D., (2012) *Valuation and the Cultural Sector*. Keynote presentation at Conference on Culture and Innovation: New Ways of Capturing Value. Temple Bar Cultural Trust. <http://www.slideshare.net/TBCT/culture-the-economy-david-throsby-valuation-and-the-culturalsector>

and includes film and video, TV and radio, (video) games, music, books and press. Circle 2 embraces the creative industries and includes design, architecture and advertising. Finally, Circle 3 comprises device manufacturers, technology and telecommunications providers (see Figure 4.4.1)

*Figure 4.4.1 The Economy of Culture in Europe*



Creative Practice and Performance	Aligned Academic Disciplines
Animation (production)	Architectural Technology
Architecture	Arts Management
Craft Design (Ceramics, Glass, Metals)	Audiovisual Media
Creative Writing	Creative and Cultural Industries
Design (Digital Games)	Creative Digital Media
Design (Fashion, Textiles)	Design Studies
Design (Modelmaking and Digital Effects)	Drama Studies
Design (Stage and Screen)	Entertainment Technologies
Design (Visual Communication)	Events Management
Drama (performance)	Film and TV Studies
Film and TV (production)	Multimedia
Fine Art (Media, Painting, Print, Sculpture)	Music (studies)
Industrial Design	Music Technology
Interactive Digital Media	Performing Arts Studies
Interior and Furniture Design	Professional Design Practice
Landscape Architecture	Visual and Critical Studies
Media Arts (production)	
Music (composition and performance)	
Photography	
Screenwriting	



## Chapter 5: Impediments

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### 5.1 Introduction

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A number of factors have been identified as limiting arts and cultural education. These differ from situation to situation but can be summarised under the following key areas:

### 5.2 Time and resources

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- **Children in the Faroe Islands have less time than the international averages in the arts – both as an absolute measure and as a proportion of other school time**
- **Allocation of time to arts and cultural education is not evenly spread across the school years**
- **Arts and cultural education should be a compulsory and valued part of every school year**
- **It is vital to have arts and cultural education in all levels of secondary school as this is when the critical and performance language of the arts is developing and the impact of the arts is realised**

Despite there being recommended time for teaching and learning in arts and culture in school, actual time dedicated to the arts can vary widely. These variations appear to be due to the different ways the arts might be defined and organised in different schools. For example, one school might interpret meeting its obligations as being about including some arts and cultural activities as part of a language lesson or religion lesson, while the neighbouring school might have very specific, high quality arts education. As the following comment for a teacher suggests, the perceived lack of time is the biggest impediment to teaching the arts in schools: “I think we have all the things we need... we just need more time.” On average, 47% of kindergartens, 45% of primary schools and 25% of upper secondary level schools claim they complete more than three hours a week of arts education, though this does not appear to be supported by observations during the field work of this review.

#### **Child care and kindergarten**

While kindergartens value the arts, it is at the discretion of the individual settings to determine the specific amount of time spent on the arts. The organisation of time was similar in most centres visited. The kindergartens tend to adopt a weekly theme, such as snow, spring, and farm animals and so on. The day is largely comprised of ‘free’ choice activities. In some cases, this free time is organised in learning spaces or tables within the classroom (such as a craft table, writing table, construction table, role play table) and more structured art and craft activities, group singing and movement. In the best examples, the environment was lively and stimulating with active engagement of children in learning.

However, in much of the practice observed, ‘free time’ was interpreted as being unguided play. Very little stimulus material was provided to children and the ‘art’ often present in the ‘going home trays’ or displayed, was formulaic and not creative. In all settings visited, the rooms were well-equipped, though too often the room was full of

plastic toys and pre-made 'Disney' style objects and the environment was too passive and did not encourage creative play.

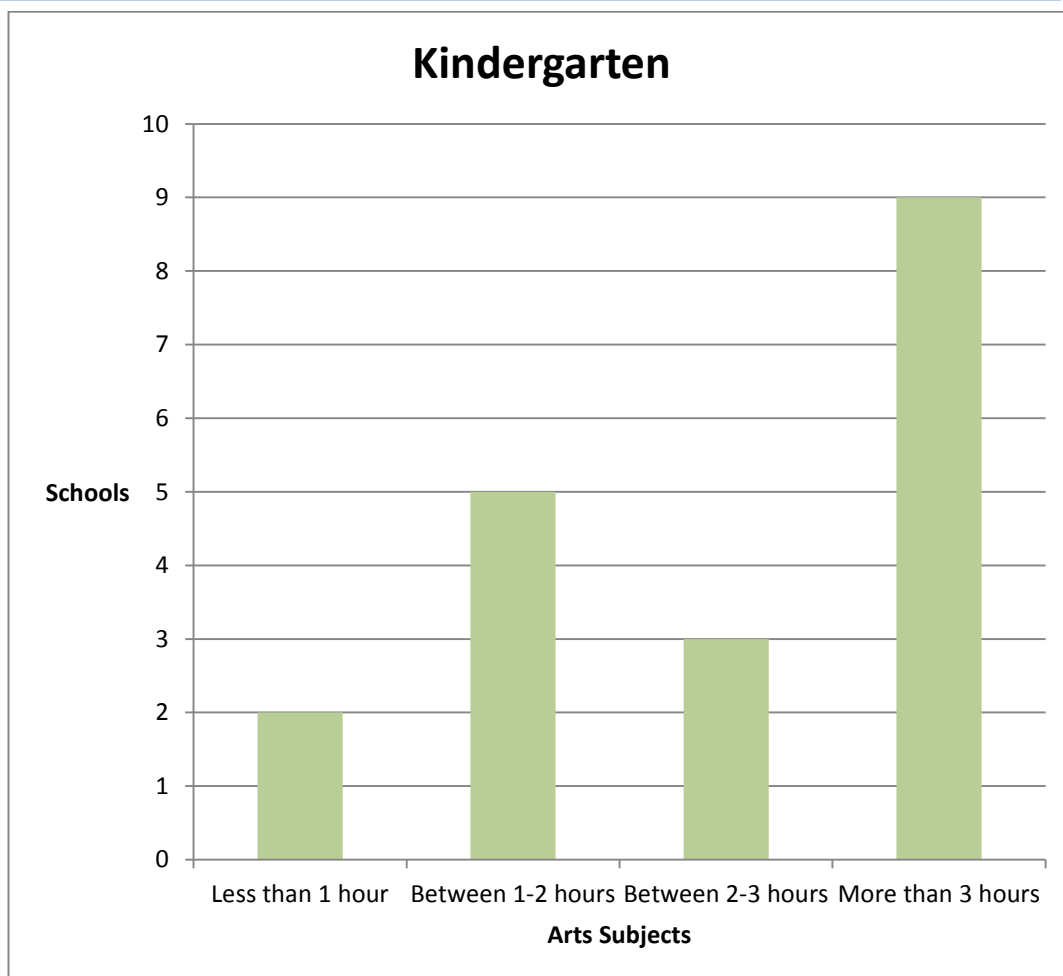
The amount of time spent in kindergartens and child care can be very high, with some centres providing care from 8am to 17:00. Many centres gave only passing reference to the arts. For example, while some did group singing, very few had any musical exploration play for the young children nor did they introduce instruments. Drama was very rare and provision for imaginative play limited. While paint, marker pens and paper may be provided, few centres introduced clay or other 3D possibilities to the children. Dance either did not occur or may be touched on for a Christmas party. Generally artists are not involved, though in a few instances, the kindergarten children may go on visits and see performances in nearby schools.

Best practice in early childhood education should include;

- creative and imaginative room organisation
- self-directed creative play
- ownership of activities by the children (including care of material)
- different and enticing materials

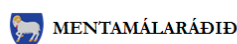
In lower quality examples observed, children were producing identical artworks to rigid patterns. Materials were chosen by the teacher and the tasks were overly regulated. The tasks were similar to ones that would have been in place for many years and the materials provided were 'clean' to avoid mess in the room. The adults were not appropriately stimulating creative play and appeared quite passive.

Figure 5.2.1 The amount of time reported for the arts in kindergarten (per week)



### Primary education

There are 12 main subject areas in compulsory education (grades 1-9). While there are nominal hours recommended for each of these areas, it is at the discretion of each school to determine how this recommendation will be implemented. Some schools have regular timetabled arts sessions, while others may opt for intensive blocks of arts and cultural experiences. Music is prescribed to have 30 hours per year in grades 1-6, 60 hours in grade 7, and 60 hours between grades 8-10.



## Subjects and weekly lessons in primary and lower secondary

- |                        |                                |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • Faroese (1-9) 64     | • Geografy (7-9) 5             |
| • Religion (1-9) 16    | • Biology (7-9) 6              |
| • Mathematics (1-9) 50 | • Sports (1-9) 17              |
| • Danish (3-9) 27      | • Creative subjects 4          |
| • English (4-9) 21     | (5 or more schoolyears in 1-7) |
| • History (4-9) 10     | • Projectassignm. (9-10)       |
| • Nat./tecn. (4-6) 9   | • Own assignm. (9-10)          |
| • Fysics (7-9) 6       | • Compulsory subjects          |

Sport is compulsory at all levels of school and receives considerable focus compared to the arts. The flexibility of the primary curriculum means that it is possible to teach the arts in an integrated way or in their own right. In most cases it is the classroom, generalist teacher who teaches the arts up to around the 4<sup>th</sup> Grade, but in some schools there may be either shared arts teaching (i.e. where one teacher 'swaps' with another teacher to teach the arts, such as might occur if a particular teacher had special talent in music for example) or the arts might be delivered in partnership with a range of outside agencies or by a contracted arts teacher (such as a music teacher coming into the school).

Furthermore, within primary education, there is explicit indication in curricula to include aspects of the arts within some of the other domains of learning. For example, in physical education in primary schools there are specific recommendations to include "rhythmic and expressive" movement. While it might be assumed that the arts could be included within language study (and there are case studies to suggest this, such as the use of drama in language learning and literature in literacy learning) this is not specified. Faroese children spend comparatively little time in school. Following concern over the Pisa results, the number of hours spent on 'basic' subjects (mathematics and literacy) has increased.

In a number of schools visited, the day begins with morning singing. This is often songs from a collective song book. They are religious songs and often followed by a prayer. The children may be given words and music, but the general expectation is that quite quickly the children will know these songs by heart. "We use the blue song book every morning. Number 28 is popular"

It is common practice for schools to divide the time available for creative learning between the different art forms, as the following example shows: We have four groups with 12 pupils in each group. They do two or three weeks of music, handicraft, wood and cooking and then move around. If they stayed longer the pupils might get tired of what they are doing. When they have tried everything, then they start all over again. I don't know if the children in my music group do any after school music. We don't have a band or

<sup>28</sup> Sourced from the Ministry for Education and Culture, 2011

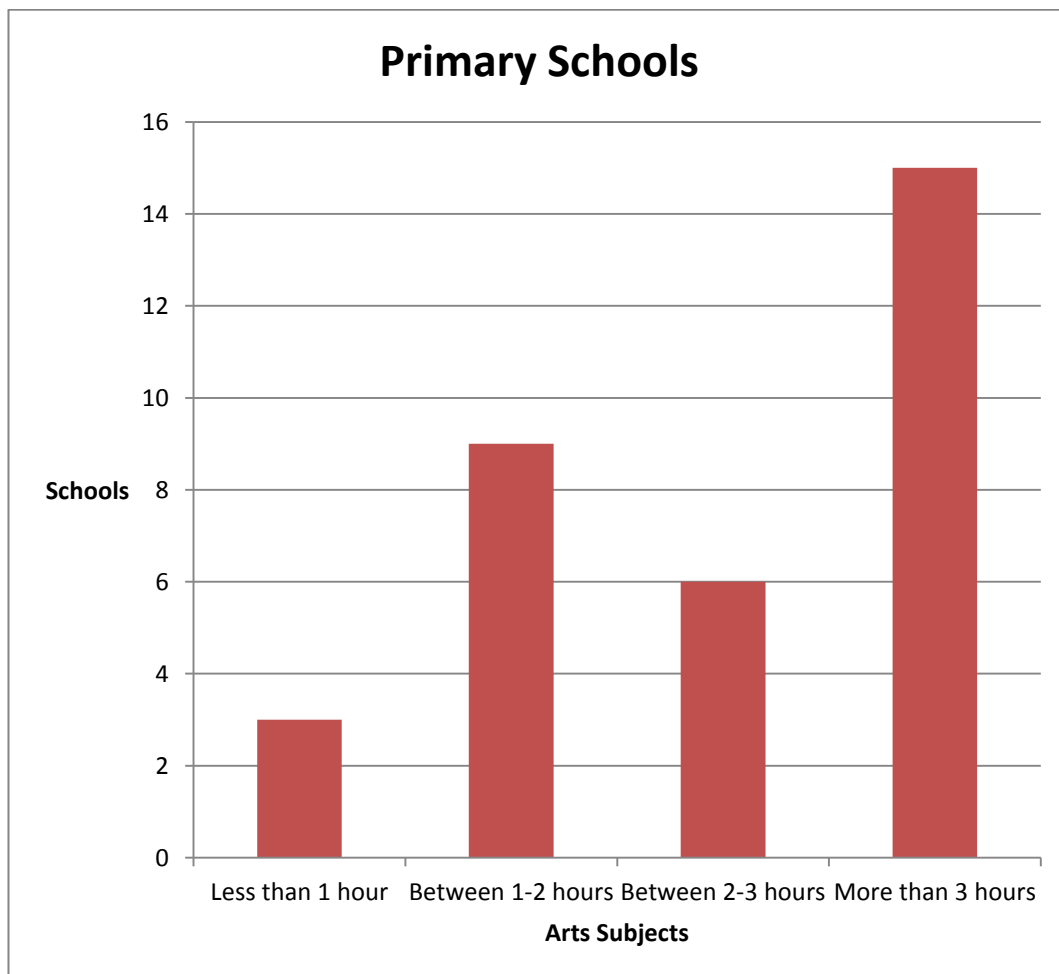
a choir. I try to just introduce the children to something. When they come back to me , they have forgotten again.

The children do a few weeks of all the different groups. I can't teach them to read any music in that time, so they just play. They are really interested in proper instruments and want to play. But because they can't read music, they sit in groups and try to play something. I don't have any connection with the music school. I don't have any professional music qualification. I just like music myself. In this school music stops at Grade 7. That is the choice of the leader. They can choose it again in year nine, but there is a gap and then the children don't feel confident and so only a few choose it. At my last school, the teacher was a professional rock musician and then more children chose music. The children get 3 hours a week, but only for a few weeks.

*I feel really bad. I try to get the children playing an instrument. The first time they enjoy it. Then the classes rotate. It might be a year before the music group come back and then they have forgotten and so it is back to the beginning again. The pupils get bored and don't enjoy it.*

*We really can't achieve much because we only have seven weeks.*

Figure 5.2.3 The amount of time reported for the arts in primary schools



Upper secondary education

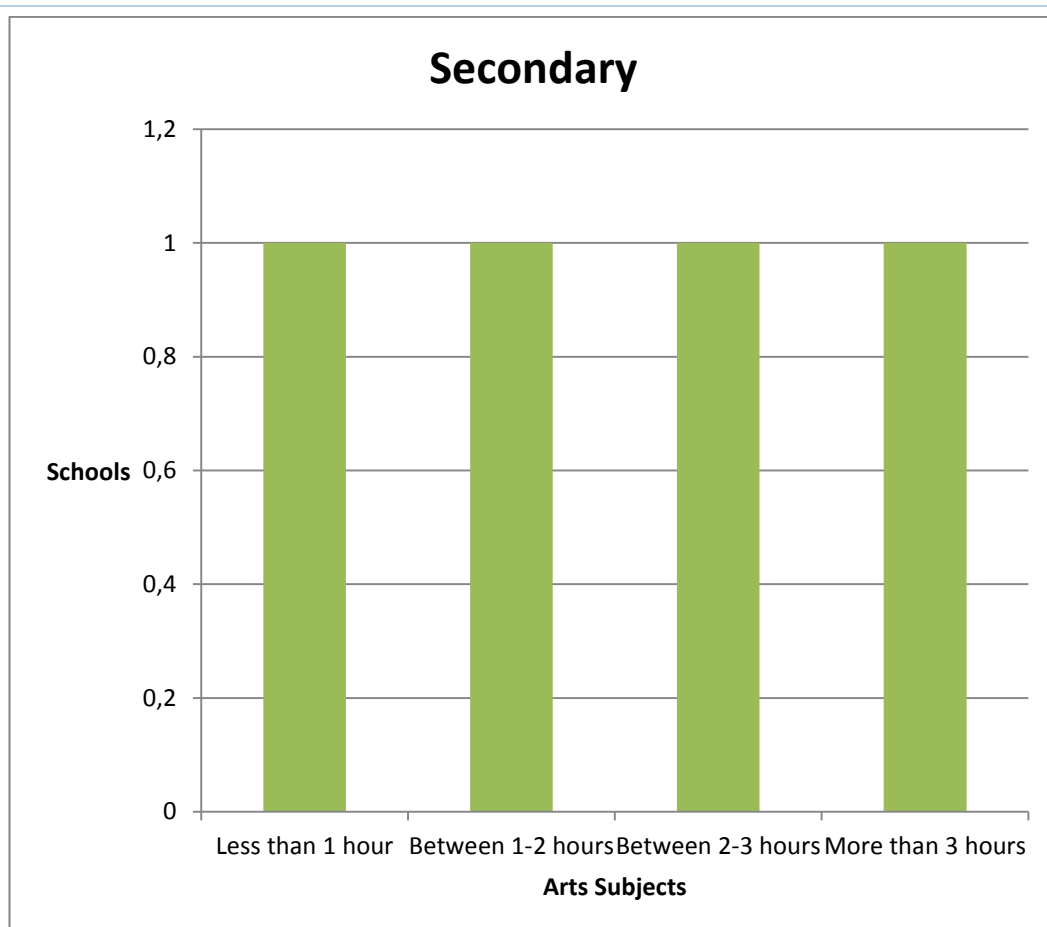
In upper secondary school, all students receive 75 hours of arts education, spanning arts, music and film. This is at C level. In the second year they can choose music or visual arts on B level, adding 125 hours of study, and in the third year another 125 hours makes it an A level. As a reference, the three years of upper secondary school requires 2450 – 2600 hours of study in all subjects combined, meaning that the compulsory number of hours represents less than 3% of total study time. Even for those students choosing all compulsory units in the arts, this would only represent less than 13% of the total study time. At the upper secondary level, all students do two, 90 minute periods of the arts (music and/or visual arts). Additionally, students may be able to take A level equivalent music and B level equivalent visual arts. At the larger upper secondary college, film and TV and drama are also possible but do not currently attract A or B levels. The upper secondary school curriculum is due to be reformed in 2013. In smaller schools, it is more difficult to be able to offer a comprehensive arts programme due to smaller pupil numbers and the lack of qualified teaching staff<sup>29</sup>. For example, "Several years ago we had drama but we had a problem to get teachers rural college. We do music for all students."

In upper secondary school there may be a range of student generated art clubs, bands and plays, but these are additional activities rather than a core part of education. These are often geared towards a special event, such as an end of year concert, so are focused on intensive practice and skill development to ensure a good quality end product, rather than being about the development of artistic ways of thinking, criticism or high level academic competencies.

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<sup>29</sup> A critical reader commented that also this was due to the lack of time given to the arts and the lack of consideration of teaching multiage groups in the same class.

Figure 5.2.4 The amount of time reported for the arts in upper secondary level schools



Classrooms are well equipped and most classrooms visited had electronic white boards, computers and were spacious and airy. Generally, class sizes are small (around 24 pupils) and these can be even smaller in the arts subject where the class may be taught in half (around 12 pupils)

While the general view amongst those people interviewed was that there was sufficient money (financial resources) to undertake effective arts education programmes, some respondents commented that recent perceived reductions in funding had put pressure on schools and that this was leading to a reduction in possibilities for arts and cultural education, especially if it involved travel. For example:

*The finance has gone down compared to the number of pupils we have. We used to do more trips and also get more people into the schools but the budget for that kind of thing has stopped. I now ask the student council to decide. They make a choice and then we try to do it.*

*There are not enough funds for everything we need to do. We get 400,000 but by the time we pay heating and cleaning there is 210,000 left. The money has gone down. I would say it has gone down 100,000.*

Despite this, schools, keen to do the arts appeared to have innovative ways to use limited funding and were able to deliver programmes successfully within their budgets.

*We do a lot of things using materials we can get for free. The costumes we collect from people. We do a lot of woodwork with wood we get for free.*

*I have no problem really, if we need something I can get it from the budget.*

The survey results highlighted a variation in the level of resources with a large range of schools between those happy with the level of resources and those schools lacking resources, as can be seen in Figure 5.2.5 for the kindergartens and Figure 5.2.6 for the primary schools.



Figure 5.2.5 The school has adequate resources for high quality arts education (Kindergarten)

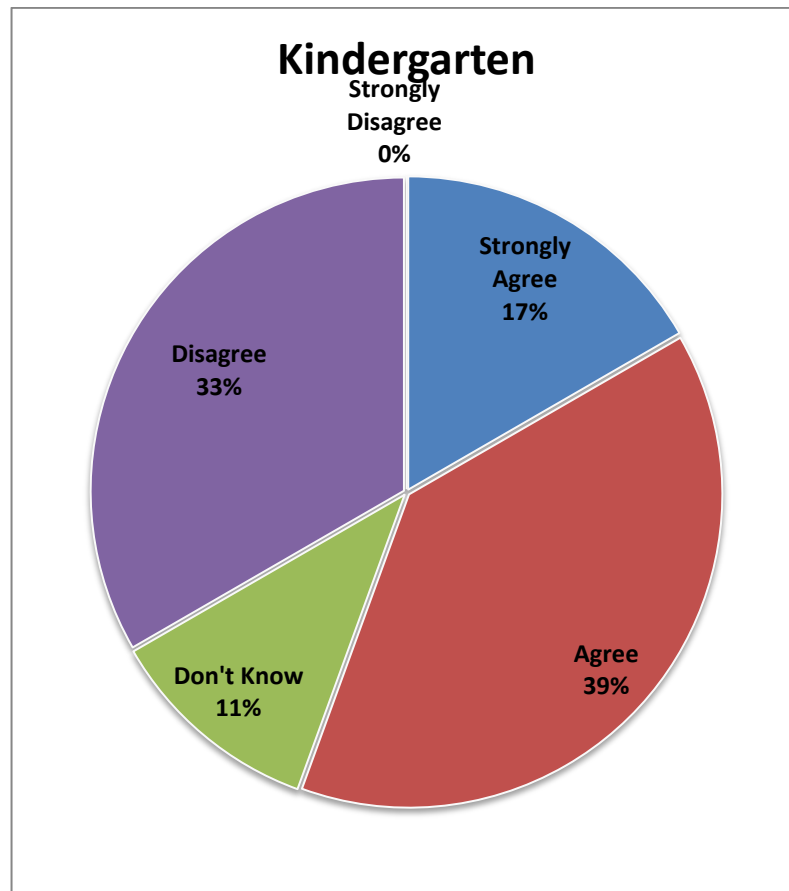
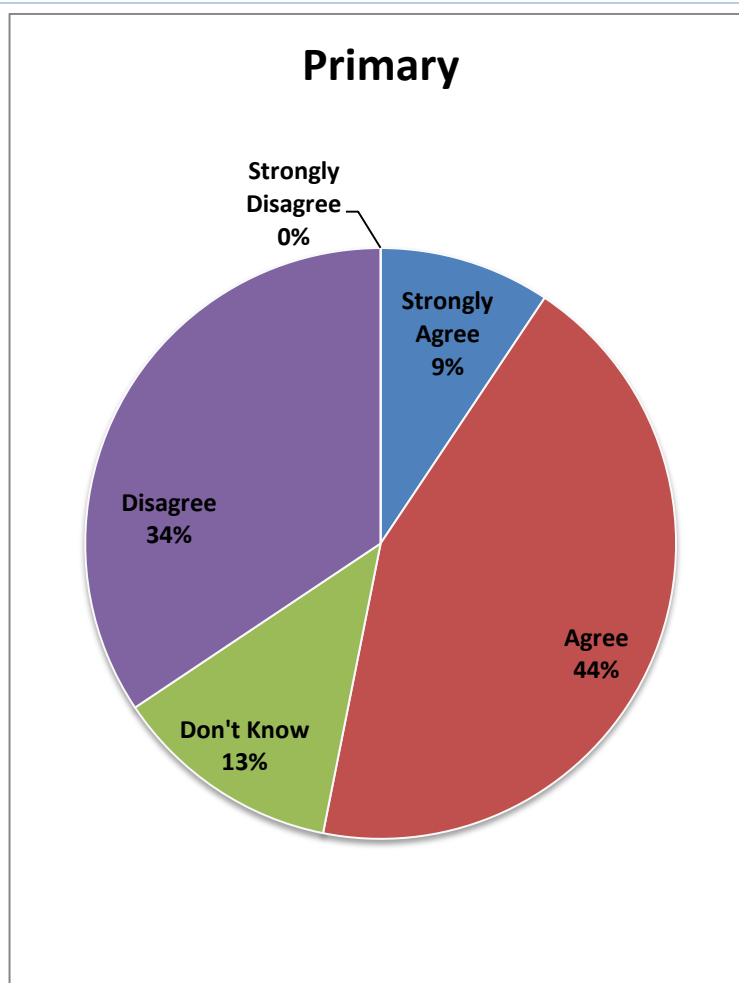


Figure 5.2.6 The school has adequate resources for high quality arts education (Primary)



The salaries in the music school are paid 50/50 by the local municipality and the national ministry. The cost of libraries is 40% from the national and 60% from the local area. The costs of museums are paid 60% national and 40% local. The local municipalities also contributed to building multipurpose cultural facilities and felt that the investment in facilities in schools could be more effectively utilised if these were also widely available to the general community.

*As a municipality, we are setting some money aside to build a culture house. We may get some private investment as well. As a municipality we think if we provide culture and make it an interesting place people will move here.*

*The schools need to be used more for the arts after school. We build the buildings and then don't make enough use of them.*

While money and physical resources were seen to be adequate, the teachers felt there was a lack of resources that could give ideas and practical teaching guidance to the teachers. There was also a lack of classroom resources (such as text books and reference books) that could be used in the arts subjects with children. Teachers tended to have to look to another colleague to get ideas for creative learning.

*There are not many resources for the arts. I go to the library and borrow something or I ask other teachers. Sometimes we swap ideas.*

*I don't have anywhere to get ideas. I would like to do a course to get ideas. Sometimes I get ideas from the pupils. I would really like to get some inspiration.*

*The resources for the arts are mainly in Danish and English.*

### 5.3 School leadership/Directors

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➤ **Arts and cultural education in schools need the support of a determined, passionate and inspiring school leader**

Innovative, creative and inspiring school leaders encourage and promote the arts. During the course of the study, a number of these passionate and committed leaders were interviewed. In each case, their determination and commitment had been inspirational to the staff and had led not only to an improved profile for the school, but to the development of enthusiasm, collegiality and professional development among the teaching staff. These high quality leaders are courageous and perseverant. They are reflective and value the individual talent and collective wisdom of their staff.

School leaders in the Faroe Islands have a considerable amount of autonomy and freedom. There is no formal training for school leaders in the Faroe Islands although some leaders do have a Master's degree. As one respondent noted, "There are no resources have gone into training leaders in the Faroe Islands. Some go to Denmark, but the criteria are different in Denmark." Despite this, the general view amongst the leaders interviewed was that they would like to be able to employ creative teachers and have innovative schools, as the following comment exemplifies: "I try to employ creative teachers. Good teachers have creativity. If the leader is able to visualise different approaches to teaching a subject then the school is better."

### 5.4 Quality assurance

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➤ **It is vital that arts education is of a high quality**

School staff need to collaborate to develop excellent cultural and arts learning. Despite the ambitions of the curriculum, in practice the quality of arts and cultural learning can be quite low. In some school years, almost nothing at all will occur in arts and cultural education. In practice that lack of specialist teachers assigned to the arts area means that the quality is highly variable. In many instances one or two teachers may be assigned to develop and run the programme based purely on their presumed interest in the arts or because they have spare teaching periods. A lack of consideration has been given to the possibility of shared teacher appointments across several schools.

One of the major determinants of quality is the expertise and enthusiasm of the teachers. The following section examines specifically the issues in teacher training and development in the arts.

## 5.5 Teachers and teacher education

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- **Innovative, passionate and committed arts teachers are needed if arts education is to reach a high standard**
- **There is a lack of monitoring of the quality of teacher education in the arts**
- **The aim and vision of teacher education is unclear and mixed**
- **There is insufficient time given to art and culture within teacher education**
- **Students are leaving teacher education without having the skills and knowledge needed to use culture and creativity to enhance teaching and learning**
- **Knowledge and skills of evaluation, research and reflection are lacking in teacher education**

Unlike the usual pattern in most countries, teaching in the Faroe Islands used to be a male-orientated profession. Historically, around 80% of teachers were male, whereas now the majority (around 55%) are female. Teachers up to the third grade are usually generalist teachers and may move from year to year with their class. As children move through the school it becomes increasingly likely that their teachers will become more specialists. At years 9 and 10 almost all teachers will be teaching subject specialisms. The upper secondary teachers and after school music school teachers are generally paid more, but then these are also the teachers most likely to have higher level qualifications and longer training.

Above all, it is the quality, enthusiasm and skill of a good teacher that is at the heart of all successful arts programmes. Throughout the research, teachers have given generously of their time and expertise to contribute to this research.

*Our English and Danish teacher is old on the outside, but she is young on the inside.  
(Pupil)*

*It all depends on the teacher.(Pupil)*

*I try to appoint people with creative skill to be teachers but it is harder to get people.  
There really was not much art in my teacher education. I have really had to learn from experience. We learnt a bit of theory I think.(Principal)*

The average teacher in the compulsory education line gets only around 3 weeks of creative education – that is 15 hours for three weeks (45 hours of training). A major is available in music, textiles, visual arts and woodcraft. Each of these majors amount to 45 ECTS points. Around 10% of students choose any of these courses. During the short time they study the creative arts the focus is on the aesthetic learner process and the creative child. The focus is on the experiences a child gains from the arts. In the kindergarten programme there used to have more time allocated to the different arts subjects. These were mostly practical subjects. In the new system, the kindergarten teachers complete a three week general course. There is also the opportunity to choose a major in “Aesthetic

learning processes and the Creative Child. Some other majors may also cover creativity. Within the teacher education programme, only 3 out of the 25 staff have PhDs. Most have only a Masters qualification. Any teacher trained in the Nordic system can teach in a Nordic school. Around 38 new teachers graduate each year and around 30 kindergarten teachers<sup>30</sup>.

While generally it is not easy to get a teaching job, interestingly, teachers with the music strand or who can teach the arts and are creative can get a job straight away, as these responses from school principals indicate:

*Teacher education has become too specialised. Every teacher needs to know about the arts and how to make subjects interesting by teaching creatively.*

*Teachers have to do everything. They have to be flexible but the training does not prepare them for these realities.*

*There is a shortage of creative teachers willing to work in the schools. I tried to hire someone to run the choir and could not get anyone.*

*It is not always easy to find a teacher who can teach art. I want a strong "real" art teacher. There are very few of them and it is hard to get hold of good art teachers.*

The following vignette from teacher education shows the inherent shortcomings in the system and makes an effective case for the need for teacher education students to have a longer induction into arts and culture within their pre-service training.

#### *Vignette 5.6.1 Most of the students do not know anything about the arts*

*The creative arts programme is an integrated unit. It is taught by the textiles teacher and the woodcraft teacher and includes sport. I have to begin by scratch. Most of the students do not know anything about the arts so I start with theory. I teach a bit about didactics. There is no time to go to the museum. We are attracting better students into teacher education (the average entry mark is rising). 89 applied and only 38 get chosen so we can be more selective. 20% of our students are now older people. There is not enough time to try at all for them to become artists. We try to encourage them to see the arts as a tool. Just on a simple level. We can't get them to work on the higher level in so little time. We stress that the purpose is not to develop artists but to learn to use aesthetic techniques. It is important that the students are able to interpret pictures and learn a few techniques. We need to make our teacher education more research based. We need more people to do research. We haven't got research. In kindergarten it is important that the teacher starts something with the children provide many forms and methods. We find it hard to work on theory and practice. What we cover is just not deep enough.*

These concerns are shared by teachers and school principals in the field.

*Teachers' training is certainly a problem. It should be much better. If you are lucky, there is an individual teacher who knows something about the arts, but otherwise the children miss out. It all depends on the individual. (Principal)*

<sup>30</sup> A critical respondent commented that historically only 24 teachers completed each year and the current number may be reduced if teachers are not being employed.

*There is really not much training in the arts. What you learn you learn from practice. There is too much focus on theory. (Recent graduate teacher)*

Some teachers pointed to the changing system as being one of the factors that discouraged good arts teaching. In some cases, teaching the arts is given such a low priority that the teachers are only given the task to fill the necessary timetable sessions.

*I don't want to teach music. I don't like music but then music had to be taught and they had no one with spare timetable, so now I am the music teacher. I do one lesson a week.*

The lack of priority given to arts can to some extent be addressed in a very small school as these schools have some autonomy to be flexible in the way they allocate priorities within the school as the following example from a principal of a small school shows:

*There are just not enough sessions on the arts. When I was at school and learning to be a teacher the arts were separate and you had lots of sessions now it is together and only a few sessions. But then again, when you get out into the schools you can really do what you want to do. This is a small school, so I think about how I want to divide the sessions. I think there is synergy between the art subjects and other subjects so we set aside times for the arts and also make themes and divide the children into different groups. When I came to this school the arts were not good enough so we start every day with singing and playing. I guess I am more creative because my mother is a textile artist who works with knitting. So it is in the blood. Many boys are doing knitting. Some even sit on the boat knitting. The parents were very proud. We are trying to really change the image of knitting.*

High quality teachers are a powerful intangible resource that ensures the quality of arts education for children. Despite this, major concerns were raised about the overall quality of teachers in the arts with teacher education being seen as a major challenge. In every context visited during the research, teacher education was identified as being a major factor leading to the lower quality of arts and cultural education. The criticisms were numerous and focused. In summary it was widely felt that standards in teacher education were falling; there was less time and emphasis given to arts and cultural education within initial teacher education; and, that teachers especially in the primary school lacked the basic skills to be able to teach arts education<sup>31</sup>. It was particularly felt that artistic approaches needed far more innovative coverage within the education programme for those working in the kindergartens and childcare sectors. As one pupil interviewed commented, "It is good when they [teachers] tell stories. You get some insight into their lives."

It could be simplistic to blame only pre-service teacher education. Such an idea assumes that simply by improving initial teacher education that structural limitations in the system would be removed. It also fails to recognise that professional development of teachers in service (especially in the middle years of their teaching career) might provide a better key for unlocking the potential within schools. The UNESCO report suggests that

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<sup>31</sup> The new education for teachers and kindergarten teachers is being implemented and the first students will only begin to teach in August 2012. Consequently, it is unclear which competencies they may have or lack.

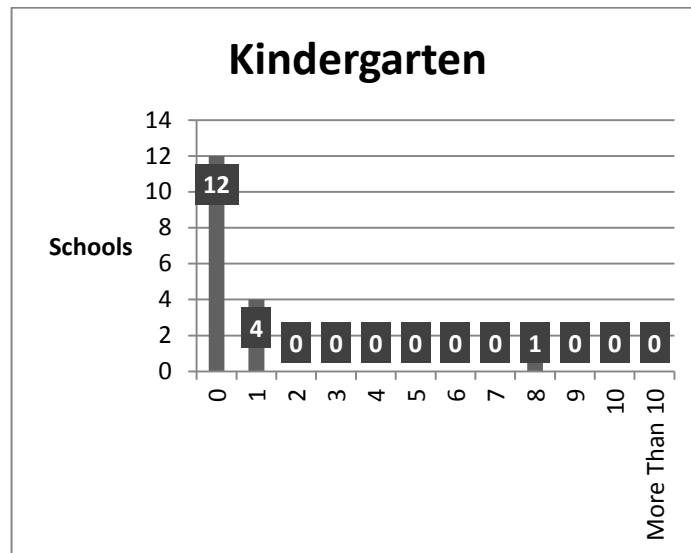
while initial teacher education is beneficial, more overall impact can be achieved in changing attitudes and structures within schools by focusing on mid-career teachers (Bamford, 2006) p 74. This appears to be particularly the case in the Faroe Islands where there is strong demand from teachers for both professional development courses in the arts and evening school courses in the arts, as the following quote exemplifies:

*The sort of Professional Development courses we run are based on the teachers evaluations. It is demand driven. Last time, "glass" got the perfect "10" on the evaluation and we had 100 applications and so we are running it again.*

At the time this research was conducted, a review of teacher education was underway. Given that, it is important that any conclusions from this report should be interpreted on the light of the more detailed specific study and should also be interpreted and enacted in response to these reviews. While there is a commitment to research at the policy level, there is less current research activity from the teacher education sector itself, particularly in the arts, culture and creativity fields, where research receives little priority. Most of the teacher educators interviewed had a masters or Bachelor's degree.

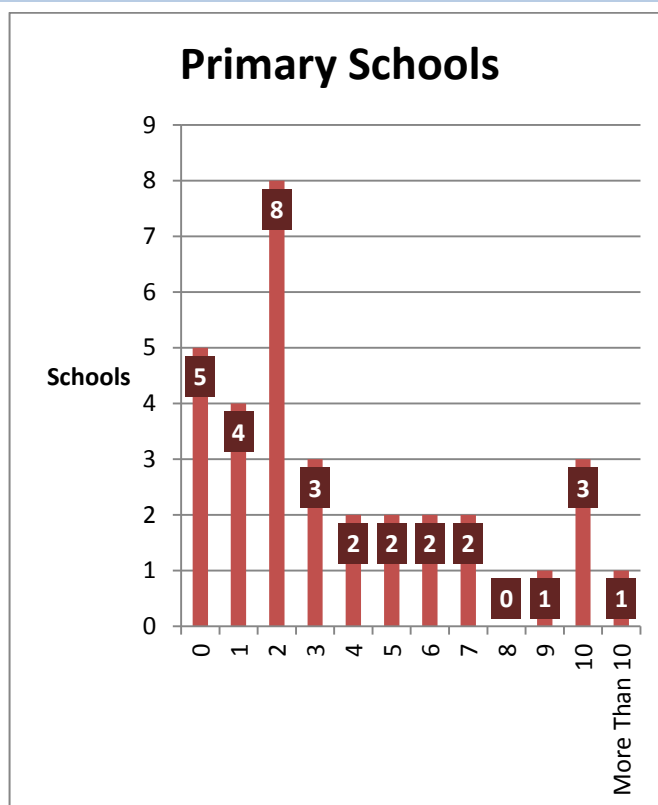
It is lamentable, but the international research suggests that most teachers get between 0-3 months training in arts education during initial teacher education (Bamford, 2006). In the Faroe Islands, there are very few arts teachers with any specialist training. The problem is especially evident in the kindergarten, where most schools have no one with a specialism (Figure 5.6.1)

*Figure 5.5.1 Number of specialist in the kindergarten*



While some primary schools have one or two specialists, it is lamentable that a number of schools do not have any specialist teachers.

Figure 5.5.2 Number of specialist in the primary school



The satisfaction level reported from the schools was quite high for specialist art teachers with 26% of schools feeling they are very good and a further 48% stating that the specialists are good. The satisfaction level for generalist teachers is much lower, with only 4% considered being very good and less than 25% considered to be good. More than a quarter of generalist teachers are considered to be not good at teaching the arts while a further 8% were strongly considered not to be effective at teaching the arts. These statistics point to the need for enhanced training for generalist teachers in the areas of art and culture.

In response to the question, “Teacher education prepares **generalist teachers** well to teach creatively” only 16% of respondents moderately agreed, compared to 39% who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Once again, there was a higher level of satisfaction with the preparation of specialist teachers where 30% of respondents felt Teacher education prepares **specialist teachers** well to teach arts education, compared to 19% of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement.

The survey results also pointed to a strong need to increase the amount of professional development in the arts. Only 1% of respondents felt there was enough professional development in the arts while 48% of respondents felt there was definitely not enough professional development in the arts. Of concern, 15% of the primary school respondents did not know if there was professional development in the arts.

Teacher education for specialist teachers is very different from the training received by general primary and kindergarten teachers. The usual pattern is that the teachers (mainly in



music and visual arts with a few trained drama specialists) have completed an undergraduate qualification in their art form and then complete a graduate diploma as a teaching qualification. Models of teacher education, with some exceptions, are largely based on practices that existed some time ago. Music teachers are classically trained and follow very similar career pathways.

As noted in earlier chapters, the on-going professional development of teachers is vital for high quality arts and cultural education.

*The evaluations show us that every time we offer arts programmes, they are very popular and people want more arts programmes. Because of this positive response, we are adding more arts days in [the professional development programme]. For example, a course on glass art received a perfect 10 in its evaluation so we will offer that again.*  
(Civil servant)

There is the awareness in teacher education that there are challenges and complexities in their role. It was clear in teacher education that there is a perceived conflict between the role of teacher education to induct students into the arts and give them positive experiences and processes, and the need to develop competent arts educators equipped to teach children.

## Chapter 6: Recommendations

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### 6.1 Introduction

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The invitation to conduct this research is reflective of the openness of the Faroese education and political system. Throughout the research, the respondents at all levels have been welcoming and honest. It is hoped that this research report presents an authentic picture of these voices and that as it is read, arts and educational colleagues can feel a strong affinity with the strengths, challenges and recommendations being highlighted.

This chapter succinctly presents the main recommendations emerging from the report.

### 6.2 Recommendations

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There are 7 major recommendations from this research:

#### **1. Policy and implementation**

- 1.1 Clear lines of learning need to be developed for the arts to cover all a child's education**
- 1.2 Time explicitly allocated to arts education (both within existing courses in music and visual arts and in extra courses for drama and dance) should be specified**
- 1.3 Mandated allocation of time to arts education needs to be extended to cover all years of schooling**
- 1.4 Quality needs to be regularly monitored**

#### **2. Arts Education in schools**

- 2.1 Clarify and simplify the aims of arts education so that these are achievable at different levels of education**
- 2.2. Monitor the effectiveness of arts education to ensure that aims are met and that the provision is of high quality**
- 2.3 Ensure that both education in the arts and education through the arts (creative pedagogy) is included at all school levels in a consistent and sequentially building manner**
- 2.4 Process and product should be clearly linked and pupils need regular opportunities for high quality "performance" of learning**
- 2.5 More time needs to be allocated to arts and cultural education to bring the Faroese education system in line with international averages. This includes both overall time and time per week in every school grade level (up to 16 years of age)**

#### **3. After school arts education**

- 3.1 Music schools need to develop innovative ways to deal with the long waiting lists**
- 3.2 Music schools should be encouraged to develop a wider programme to allow for more choice for children**
- 3.3 Consideration should be given to developing offers in other art forms, such as dance, drama and visual arts to complement the offers available through the music schools**

#### **4. Partnerships**

- 4.1 Partnerships need to be initiated between the various agencies working in arts and culture and the schools**
- 4.2 Partnerships, including Listaleyapurin, need to be longer term and include shared planning and sharing of resources**
- 4.3 On-going partnerships between the education and school sectors need to be embedded within policy and practice**
- 4.4 Educational programmes in museums and galleries need to be regularly reviewed and revitalized so that they can inspire repeat visitors**

#### **5. Assessment and evaluation**

- 5.1 Strategies for assessment and evaluation are very limited within arts and cultural education and this area needs further research and development**
- 5.2 Simple models for determining quality in arts education need to be developed and applied**

#### **6. Teacher education**

- 6.1 A review of teacher education is currently underway and the results of this research and other research needs to urgently be enacted to improve teacher education in the arts**
- 6.2 Closer monitoring of the quality of arts and cultural education within initial teacher education is required**
- 6.3 More offers need to be made available as professional development in the arts and creative learning and in school leadership training**
- 6.4 Explicit experience of practice teaching in the area of the creative arts needs to be included as a part of teacher education**

#### **7. Creative Industries**

- 7.1 Data collection around the impact of the creative industries needs to be much more robust and in-line with European conventions of collection**
- 7.2 The Faroese government needs to immediately adopt a more proactive stance to protecting the rights of Faroese producers and artists under the “Protected Designation of Origin Scheme”**

A committee should be formed to oversee the responses to the recommendations. Actions emerging from these responses should be evaluated to determine their success.

#### **6.3 Areas requiring more research**

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While the previously listed recommendations are based on detailed evaluative research, there are areas that will require more research. These include:

- Teacher education
- Development of assessment strategies
- Mapping of learning lines in the arts
- Development of simple measure from determining and monitoring quality

In addition to these areas, media education and links with creative industries should also be further investigated.

It would be timely to have a parallel study into pathways of learning for the arts in the post-school context, particularly in terms of developing the innovation and expertise required for the expansion of the creative industries in the Faroe Islands.

#### 6.4 Conclusions/Future directions

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Quality arts education programmes have impact on the child, the teaching and learning environment, and on the community - but these benefits were only observed where quality programmes were in place. Poor quality and inadequate programmes do little to enhance the educational potential of the child or build first-rate schools. Poor quality programmes are detrimental to children's creative development and adversely affect teacher confidence and the participation of cultural agencies.

Given that, it is important that the rhetoric of policy that supports the inclusion of arts education within the total educational experiences of the child in the Faroe Islands is backed by substantial implementation and monitoring structures that ensure children receive high quality programmes. These programmes are no more expensive to implement than poor quality programmes and afford the opportunity to initiate sustained educational reform and greatly enhance the overall excellence of education.

Given the level of support for this research and the open and enthusiastic attitude and dedication and determination of the Faroese education and arts communities, it should be possible for the Faroe Islands to ensure every child in a Faroese school feels the joy of creative, meaningful and artistic means of expression.

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