



**** PRESS RELEASE ****

Culture Minister Andy Burnham sees how Creativity and Culture is Changing Young People's Lives in North and South Tyneside

Andy Burnham, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, visited The Customs House Arts Centre today in his mission to discover how culture and creative learning is inspiring young people in North and South Tyneside. The Culture Secretary met with a whole host of young people as well as locals working in the creative sector. Pupils from the Epinay Business and Enterprise School, a special school based in Jarrow, South Tyneside presented their latest routine with breakdancing champions, Bad Taste Cru.

So far, over 8,000 young people in North and South Tyneside have taken part in ***Find Your Talent***, the Government's pilot cultural offer for all children and young people. Members of the region's Find Your Talent Youth Forum greeted the Secretary of State to explain local plans for the programme. Supported by the new national organisation Creativity, Culture and Education, the 10 Find Your Talent pathfinders across England, which includes The Customs House, are investigating how to ensure all children and young people have access to a wide range of quality and sustained cultural experiences, both in and out of school.

In addition, the Secretary of State is visiting North and South Tyneside because it is a hotbed of talent, and a creative learning hub, through the ***Creative Partnerships*** programme. The Government's flagship creative learning programme is producing real results in the region having engaged over 49 local schools. Research shows that schools that work with Creative Partnerships improve their GCSE results faster, and seven out of 10 secondary head teachers say the programme improves pupil behaviour in their schools.

Ray Spencer, Executive Director of The Customs House commented: “We are delighted to have this opportunity to share the learning gained from delivering Creative Partnerships and Find Your Talent to North and South Tyneside. Working in partnership with local authorities, schools, parents, young people, the creative sector and other agencies we have put together a programme which is listening to young people whilst raising aspirations, self esteem, confidence and unlocking inherent talent, giving young people pride in themselves and their communities. We believe that supporting children and young people to develop their creativity is not just right for the individual but absolutely vital for the UK economy giving today the skills this generation will need to succeed tomorrow in careers yet to be created.”

Paul Collard, Chief Executive of Creativity, Culture and Education (CCE), the organisation overseeing Find Your Talent and Creative Partnerships at a national level, said: “We believe that exposure to the arts and culture can transform the aspirations, attainment, skills and life chances of children and young people. Find Your Talent and Creative Partnerships have been changing the lives of young people in North and South Tyneside and we are delighted to be showcasing their talents to Andy Burnham MP on his visit to The Customs House.”

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Notes to Editors:

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Additional quote from Hilary Harrison, Headteacher at Epinay Business and Enterprise School:

“Our pupils are enjoying the creative curriculum. They are encouraged to work as teams, to plan together, to find solutions and the creative aspect of Creative Partnership and Find Your Talent has meant pupils are keen and committed to these lessons and this has had a knock on effect in other lessons, particularly as they are so motivated to come to school and achieve. We have seen a rise in our results over the last four years – pupils with moderate learning difficulties and complex needs are achieving GCSEs and Level 1 awards.”

About Creativity, Culture and Education (www.creativitycultureeducation.org):

Creativity, Culture & Education (CCE) is the new national organisation created to generate transformational cultural and creative programmes for children and young people across England to enhance their aspirations, achievements, skills and life chances, including:

- *Creative Partnerships* – the Government’s flagship creative learning programme: www.creative-partnerships.com
- *Find Your Talent* – the Government’s pilot cultural offer for all children and young people: www.findyourtalent.org
- *Shine* – the annual celebration of the talent of all children and young people: www.shineweek.co.uk

About Find Your Talent:

Find Your Talent (www.findyourtalent.org) is the government’s pilot cultural offer for all children and young people. One of a number of programmes generated by the new national organisation Creativity, Culture and Education, the Find Your Talent programme ensures that all children and young people have access to the wide range of quality and sustained cultural experiences they deserve, both in and out of school.

Access to cultural experiences for children and young people must not be dependent on what ‘happens to be on offer’ in their area or their own personal, economic or social background.

The programme aims to help children and young people discover new things, to express themselves, to develop a passion and to make the most of their talent – whether it is music, art, film, theatre, dance, digital media, exploring libraries, museums or heritage.

About Creative Partnerships:

One of a number of programmes generated by the new national organisation Creativity, Culture and Education, the Creative Partnerships (www.creative-partnerships.com) programme fosters innovative long-term partnerships between schools and creative professionals, including artists, performers, architects, multimedia developers and scientists. These partnerships inspire young people, teachers and creative professionals to challenge how they work and experiment with new ideas.

Working with Creative Partnerships, schools use creativity to solve problems and see real improvements in pupil behaviour and school performance.