# TEACHERS' TOOLKIT

Section 6

Documentation, Evaluation and Assessing Impact

**A NEW DIRECTION**
We create **opportunity**

To help you and your school more effectively use and promote the arts and cultural education
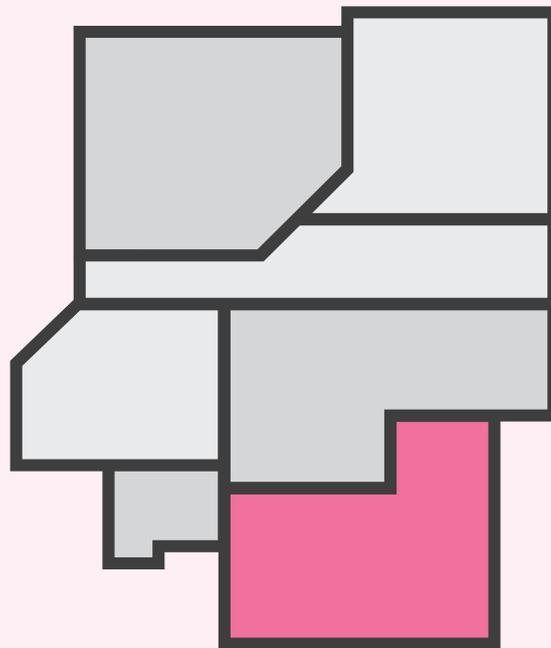
This toolkit has been created by A New Direction to help you and your school more effectively use and promote the arts and cultural education as a critical component of a balanced, exciting curriculum. The toolkit is comprised of seven sections:

- Making the Case for the Arts in Your School

- Leadership and Governance

- Self-Assessment and Quality

- Partnerships

- Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

- Documentation, Evaluation and Assessing Impact

- Creating an Arts Policy

In each, you'll find basic guidance and definitions of terms, Top Tips for success, exercises and activities, and a list of relevant resources for further research and discussion. Some sections also include Case Studies of schools that have been particularly successful at delivering exciting arts activity.

Each section can be used as a stand-alone guide, or taken as a whole.  At the end of each section is a box titled 'Pulling it together', and if you complete this section in all seven toolkit sections you should be ready to take your school's arts programme to the next level.

Most of what's in the toolkit has been inspired directly by best practice in schools, so don't hesitate to tell us how we can make this a better, more effective resource for you.

You can contact us at schools@anewdirection.org.uk.

# ABOUT
# A NEW DIRECTION

**We create opportunity**

**A New Direction is a London-based non-profit generating opportunities for children and young people to unlock their creativity.**

London is one of the greatest creative hubs in the world. Every day, thousands of the children and young people who live here are inspired by the city's culture to unleash their own creative side. They have the chance to develop their skills, talents and passions, becoming people who can thrive in a challenging, changing world and boost our wider society.

But there are also thousands of young people who miss out on London's creative opportunities. Barriers of inequality or simple lack of support stop young people from reaching their creative potential, which has knock-on effects for their chances of personal fulfilment and success in later life.
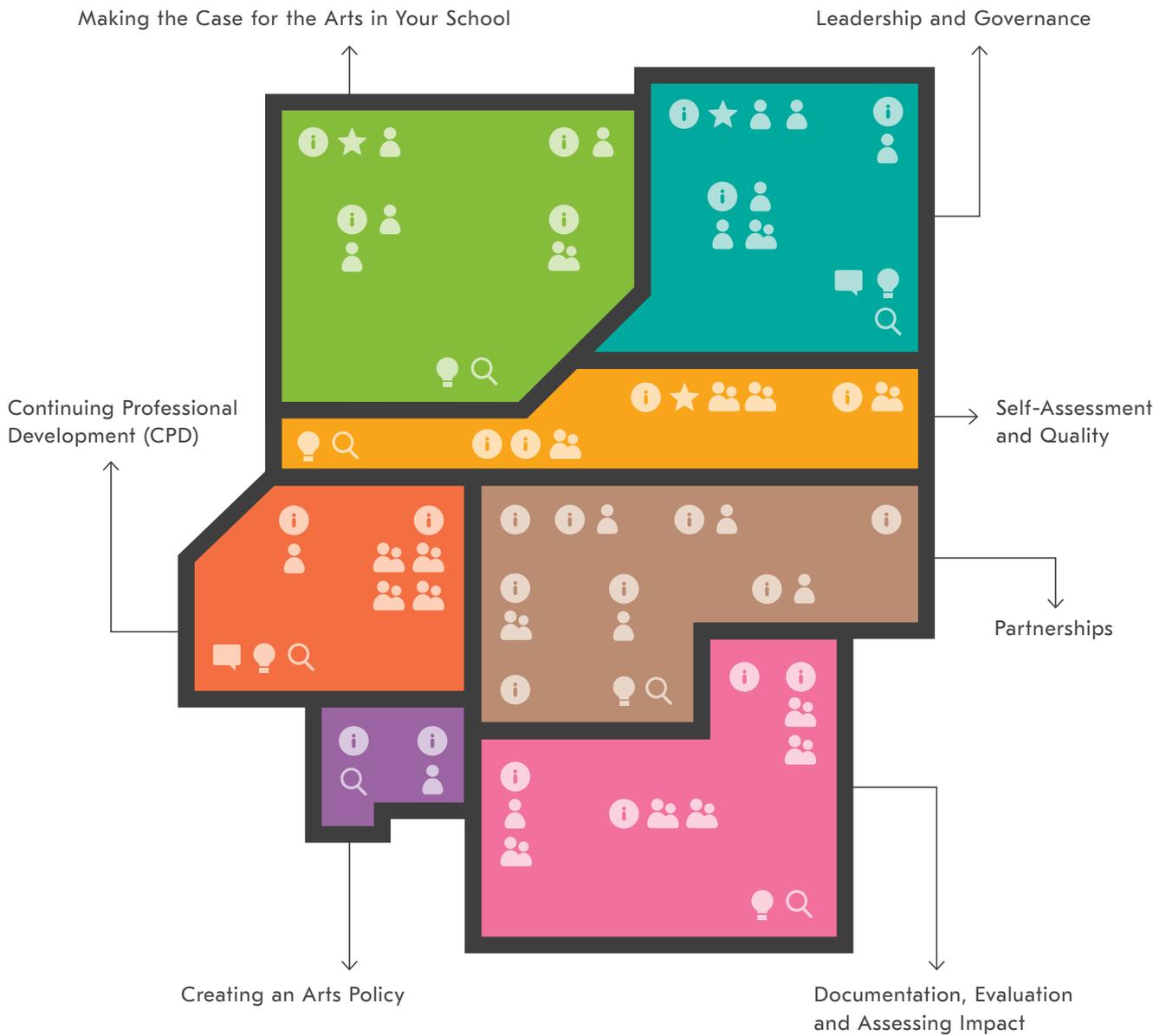
Inequality is not set in stone; we can make London into a city with equal opportunities to engage with culture and be creative for all young people and children. This is our vision.

We are working towards a society where all children and young people can thrive through developing their creativity.

We work directly with the organisations at the front line: schools, cultural venues, local authorities and businesses. We unite those organisations to campaign for better policies that serve children and young people. We organise joint events and projects to reach a broader audience. We connect young people to mentors, work experience and inspiration.

**Find out more at www.anewdirection.org.uk/schools or contact schools@anewdirection.org.uk**

# MAP OF THE TOOLKIT



Making the Case for the Arts in Your School

Leadership and Governance

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Self-Assessment and Quality

Partnerships

Creating an Arts Policy

Documentation, Evaluation and Assessing Impact

## Key

- **i** Basic guidance
- ★ Top tips for success
- 👤 Exercises
- 👥 Group activity
- 💬 Case studies
- 💡 Pulling it together
- 🔍 Relevant resources

# Documentation, Evaluation and Assessing Impact

To start a strong arts programme, you need strong leadership and a good case. To maintain it, you need to demonstrate that the arts are producing a wide range of benefits for your school — above all, that arts activity is having a positive, meaningful effect on pupils. This is where documentation and evaluation come into the picture.

Documentation is the material recording of an event, activity or project. Examples of documentary materials include student work, photos or film, or audio recordings.

Evaluation is a judgment, or set of judgments, about how an activity, event or project went compared to criteria set out beforehand. This may involve hard data — such as numbers of audience members — or it might involve opinions or feelings on the part of pupils, teachers and/or parents.

In our experience, documentation supports evaluation; in turn, evaluation is most useful when using a set of predetermined success criteria, a process often called 'benchmarking.' We are not seeking to determine success or failure, but rather to use these tools to learn and improve, and ultimately to demonstrate the value of the arts broadly across the school.
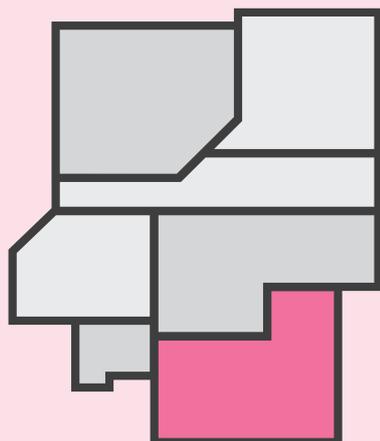
# 1. Set Your Benchmarks _ Part 1
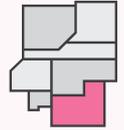
Most schools already set benchmarks for pupil performance in the areas of skill development and subject knowledge. Here are some basic benchmarking questions, all of which are intended to illuminate how arts activity is driving skill and subject development for pupils:

- **What do you hope to achieve and why?**
  Not all targets/goals need to be huge. Be realistic, but be meaningful in terms of what you'd like to see happen.

- **How will you know whether or not you've been successful?**
  Think about what will be different if your activity/project does, or doesn't go to plan.

- **If your activity/project starts going off-track, how do you plan to deal with it?**
  You might find the project going in an unusual yet interesting direction and let it develop that way. Or you might decide to pause and get things back on track.

- **What are your documentation and evaluation tools?**
  Some suggestions are offered in this section, but you should be clear from the outset and use these tools consistently from start to finish. For instance, if you start by using surveys and end with verbal feedback, you may not get a consistent sense of what worked and what didn't.

**Notes**

# Benchmarking Questions

## Benchmarking questions

**1** **What do you hope to achieve and why?**

Not all targets/goals need to be huge. Be realistic, but be meaningful in terms of what you'd like to see happen.

**2** **How will you know whether or not you've been successful?**

Think about what will be different if your activity/project goes, or doesn't go, to plan.

**3** **If your activity/project starts going off track, how do you plan to deal with it?**

You might find the project going in an unusual yet interesting direction and let it develop that way. Or you might decide to pause and get things back on track.

**4** **What are your documentation and evaluation tools?**

List the tools you will use, mention from those outlined below or from any you have already developed.

# Scale Game

This is useful for benchmarking before and after a project (just remember to use the same statements!)

## How to use this tool

**Step 1**   Find a space (e.g. from wall to wall in a classroom) to represent a scale that measures opinion or feeling about a subject.

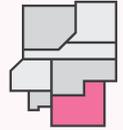Or use the paper tool on the next page if you prefer.

**Step 2**   Pupils are asked to find a place to stand on the 'scale' according to how strongly they agree or disagree with a statement.

**Step 3**   Start with some fun statements to get students warmed up and then go more deeply, e.g., "I like football" and then "I like working in a team".

**Step 4**   Ask pupils why they are standing where they are, in other words to explain
why they feel a certain way about a statement.

# Scale Game

**Statement**

Disagree                    Neither agree or disagree                    Strongly agree

Who?

Why?

Disagree                    Neither agree or disagree                    Strongly agree

Who?

Why?

Disagree                    Neither agree or disagree                    Strongly agree

Who?

Why?

Disagree                    Neither agree or disagree                    Strongly agree

Who?

Why?

Disagree                    Neither agree or disagree                    Strongly agree

Who?

Why?

# 1. Set Your Benchmarks _ Part 2

### Think about whole-school impact

The arts are unique in that they often are offered up for broad scrutiny for the whole school community: think assemblies, performances, displays, or art exhibitions. This is a potential advantage to cementing and building upon a strong arts provision. If you know your school's community agenda, you can use your arts programme to enhance and advance it, to the school's lasting benefit.

### Think about 'soft' skills

In 2014, Forbes reported that two-thirds of business leaders felt that soft skills (e.g. communication, team working) and hard skills (e.g. professional or technical) were equally important, but that soft skills were far more lacking amongst job applicants, and often gave job candidates the edge. The arts are particularly good at developing soft skills, and so benchmarking soft skill development can put the arts at the centre of your school's agenda in terms of future student progression and employability (see Top Tip.)

Some soft skill benchmarks could be simple questions, asked before and after a project, e.g., 'I like to work with others' or 'I feel like people listen to me.' Or you could use documentation — such as before and after photos — to show how an activity or project changed a pupil's soft skill ability.

## TOP TIP

The National Careers Service offers a long list of the soft skills sought by employers. Participating in the arts can be powerful in developing all of these, but particularly:

- Communication
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Problem-solving
- Team working
- Working under pressure

# Feedback Wall

This can be a powerful way of connecting pupils, teachers and parents to your arts programme and its further development.

## How to use this tool

**You will need:**
- Sticky notes
- Marker pens
- Templates (see overleaf)

**Step 1**  Create a Feedback Wall for activities and projects.

Use the paper tool on the next page if you prefer. You can use it by sticking it on a wall or give people a copy to fill in.

**Step 2**  If this is an assembly or performance, for instance, hand out sticky notes and ask audience members to write down one thing they really liked and one thing they'd like to see more of, then come up and stick them in the right section of the wall.

**Step 3**  You might need to curate the final 'wall' to weed out unduly negative feedback.

# Feedback Wall

Feedback wall

Add your title and/or instruction here

Things you really liked

Things you'd like to see more of

# Benchmark Each Other

It could be a unique way for pupils to take charge of their own development while also developing soft skills around teamwork, community and empathy.

## How to use this tool

**Step 1**  Ask pupils to pair up and benchmark each other.
Give out the paper tool from the next page.

**Step 2**  Pupils write down a few questions and choose a score from 1 to 5 for each other (where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent).

They can choose questions relating to the list below:

- Communication
- Flexibility
- Creativity
- Problem-solving
- Team working
- Working under pressure

**Step 3**  Use this tool before and after a project for students to realise and develop their soft skills around teamwork, community and empathy.

# Benchmark Each Other

Who are you benchmarking?

**Question**

1 (poor)                                                                    5 (excellent)

**Question**

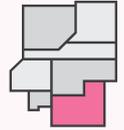1 (poor)                                                                    5 (excellent)

**Question**

1 (poor)                                                                    5 (excellent)

**Question**

1 (poor)                                                                    5 (excellent)

**Question**

1 (poor)                                                                    5 (excellent)

## 2. Be Creative and Fun in Your Documentation and Evaluation

Like the Feedback Wall suggested above, the best documentation and evaluation activities are often those that don't feel like documentation and evaluation. Use drawing, movement, writing, music and other art forms to evaluate; involve your pupils, colleagues and even parents in the process.

### MINI EXERCISE

For any activity or project, create a Documentary Team whose job is to record everything that happens. Equip them with notebooks, sketchpads, and perhaps cameras or recording devices if you have them. Give them a clear set of questions to ask, or things to look for. The teams could change with projects, and it could be a point of pride to be part of such a team.

Documentary team members

Equipment

Questions to ask

Things to look for

# 3. Share Your Results, Whether Good or Bad
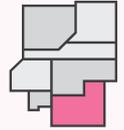
Not every project or activity will go to plan, but sharing what's happened and what you and the students have learned is just as important as trumpeting obvious successes. Following the guidance in the Leadership and Governance section, think broadly about the audiences to which you can present your findings.

It can take a bit of bravery to say a project didn't go the way you'd hoped, but at such moments, you can remind your audiences (whether colleagues or parents) that risk-taking and learning from failure are two of the qualities most prized by employers!

After a project/activity, form pupils into small teams and task them with redesigning that project/activity. What would they do differently, and why? What might have made it more interesting for them? Ask each team to create a short presentation on their findings; you might have teams deliver these to the whole class. This is very much in line with ideas around Assessment for Learning, which might offer further guidance (see Resources).

Notes

# Redesign the Project

## What was the project?

## What would you do differently, and why?

## What might have made it more interesting for you?

# Things I Know

For KS3 and higher, this exercise can be a great way of learning what pupils feel they've gained from a project or activity. It can also serve as useful documentation.

## How to use this tool

**Step 1**  Individually, pupils write down 10 lines that begin with "I know…" They should write them in stanza form, one line beneath another.

**Step 2**  You can create a subject prompt — e.g., things you know about Van Gogh — or make it broader, as in, things you know about working with others.

**Step 3**  Give pupils a fixed time period, usually no more than 10 minutes, and encourage them to write down the first thing that comes to mind

**Step 4**  Another layer can be added where pupils share their points, either in pairs

or small groups. If appropriate, you could ask for volunteers to share their writing with the whole class.

**Step 5**  You can add a further layer by asking pupils to write down five lines that begin with "I would like to know…"

**Step 6**  The writings, if collected, can serve as both documentation and evaluation. They could be anonymous or named, but decide this at the start.

Things I Know

# Things I Know

## Things I know

1. I know...

2. I know...

3. I know...

4. I know...

5. I know...

6. I know...

7. I know...

8. I know...

9. I know...

10. I know...

# Things I Would Like to Know

**Things I would like to know**

**1** I would like to know...

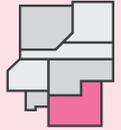**2** I would like to know...

**3** I would like to know...

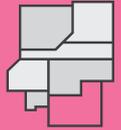**4** I would like to know...

**5** I would like to know...

# Pulling It Together

How and why is it important to document and evaluate your school's arts work?

How do you ensure quality in this area?

How well are you communicating your findings?

# Resources

The Teaching and Learning Academy has produced a clear, comprehensive look at Assessment for Learning, including definitions and examples of good practice, which might inform documentation, evaluation and benchmarking activities.
→ bit.ly/1D1k2xV

The full look at soft skills and their importance to employers can be found at the National Careers Service website.
→ nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk/aboutus/newsarticles/Pages/Spotlight-SoftSkills.aspx

This Times Education Supplement (TES) link leads to a simple but effective pupil self-evaluation sheet, easily adaptable to other art forms. If you're not a TES member, it's easy and free to sign up and there are loads of resources and research materials.
→ www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Pupil-art-self-evaluation-6197250

Artsmark is a tool that can give useful structure to evaluating and assessing the impact of your arts provision.
→ www.artsmark.org.uk
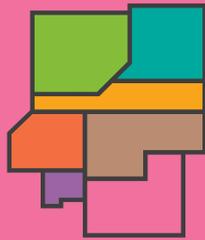
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