

# Artsmark self-assessment framework resource: I. Values & Ethos

## Promote arts and culture in your values and ethos

**Definition:** The setting actively promotes a lifelong love of learning and enjoyment of arts and culture through a range of experiences and opportunities. This is reflected in the setting's environment, ethos and the shared language used to celebrate and promote their achievements in arts and culture.

**Silver:** The setting values each subject and promotes arts and culture for the value they have, including appropriate timetabling. Children and young people have the opportunity to develop their skills over a longer period of time.

**Gold:** At primary level, the setting clearly links arts and culture to wider learning opportunities for children and young people so that they can apply their arts learning in a wider context.  
At secondary level, the setting offers a range of suitable arts qualifications so that children and young people can increase their knowledge, skills and understanding of arts and cultural subjects and be directed to other resources and providers.

**Platinum:** The setting demonstrates over time that they actively promote, from an early age, arts and cultural industries as genuine career choices, and promote opportunities to experience working alongside industry professionals.  
At secondary level, the setting demonstrates the impact of a credible arts offer at KS4, which may include arts GCSEs with good levels of take-up.  
The setting should be actively working towards, or have an awareness of, Arts Award's qualifications for young people.

In our experience, schools sometimes start their Statement of Commitment by showcasing their arts offer in great detail without addressing the driving philosophy that connects content with values.

Consider the headline:

**Promote arts and culture in your values and ethos**

Is this already well-established, or is Artsmark the catalyst to make it happen?

Consider also key points from the indicators above:

- » subjects and timetabling
- » allowing time for the development of skills
- » opportunities for the wider application of learning
- » connections with creative and cultural industries
- » accreditation/ qualifications

It's not just about what you do, but why you're doing it!

## Useful information

Below are definitions and links to documents which might be useful.

**Values**      The moral principles and beliefs or accepted standards of a person or social group.

**Ethos**        The distinguishing character, sentiment, moral nature or guiding belief of a person, group or institution.

Where would someone find information about *your* setting's values and ethos?

- » Your school motto or mission statement
- » Your website, including a statement from the head teacher
- » School policies
- » Core values
- » Events, celebrations, open days
- » Accreditations and awards
- » partnerships

Do you have an arts policy? If you would like to write one or renew your existing policy, you might find A New Direction's teacher toolkit useful

Teacher toolkit – Download the section entitled, Creating an Arts Policy

[www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/3948/view](http://www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/3948/view)

Imagine Nation: The Value of Cultural Learning - Published by the Cultural Learning Alliance in 2017

[www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ImagineNation\\_The\\_Case\\_for\\_Cultural\\_Learning.pdf](http://www.culturallearningalliance.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/ImagineNation_The_Case_for_Cultural_Learning.pdf)

Arts Council England's Seven Quality Principles - These can also help you to frame your responses when writing your Artsmark paperwork.

[www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/3803/view](http://www.anewdirection.org.uk/asset/3803/view)

## Activities & questions

These questions will help you to map your provision as it relates to the self-assessment framework. They could be used at the beginning and end of an Artsmark journey to measure distance travelled.

They should interrogate not only what you do but **how** you do it and **why**.

As well as **ethos**, the self-assessment framework (criterion 1) refers to **environment** and **shared language**.

### Environment

Take a walk round your school, starting at the reception desk. Better still, bring a guest to walk with you.

#### What do you see?

- » Displays, art work
- » Representations of your school community and beyond
- » Activity
- » Process and product
- » Materials, colour, shape, texture
- » Light and dark
- » Ideas

#### What do you hear?

- » Music
- » Talking
- » Sounds from nature
- » Artificially created sound
- » Loud and quiet

What about your other senses?

How does the environment make you feel? Simulated, calm, overwhelmed, bored?

What does it say about your arts and culture provision?

Does it reflect your school's values?

Is it accessible? Does it reflect the diversity in your school community?

What's missing?

### Shared language

Without looking at any (Artsmark) documents, write down the first 10 words that come to mind when you think about promoting and celebrating arts and culture in your school. Ask a few colleagues and students to do the same.

Is there common ground or disagreement?

Would any of the words fall into the category of 'jargon'? What do you feel about that?

Do any of these words link with your values and ethos? How?

Where are you connecting with the descriptors in the self-assessment framework? What would you need to do to fulfil the criterion?

### What constitutes 'arts and culture in your school'?

- » List all your subjects, visits, clubs, events.

### Why are these important? How do they reflect your values?

- » What skills can students acquire?
- » What qualifications and accreditation can they work towards?
- » How do these contribute to the development of the whole child?

### Look at your timetable.

- » In a typical week, roughly how much time is to given to the arts as discrete subjects?
- » How many cross-curricular connections can you find between arts and non-arts subjects?
- » How does your provision develop transferable skills, problem-solving, risk-taking?

### How do you celebrate achievements in arts and culture?

- » List awards, prizes, events, showcases, participation in competitions and festivals.
- » How do these promote confidence and pride?

What role do arts and culture play in supporting the wellbeing of students and staff?

How do you promote arts and culture beyond your setting?

- » Events
- » Partnerships
- » Website
- » Local and social media.

What feedback do you have from other settings, partners and local community?

How do you connect with arts practitioners?

- » Artist-in residence model
- » School staff
- » Workshop visits
- » Signposting opportunities.
- » What are your criteria for choosing an arts partner?
- » How do you evaluate partnerships?

How do you assure quality in teaching and learning in the arts?

## Next steps for your Artsmark journey

Your next steps might include:

- » Writing an arts policy
- » Reviewing and auditing provision through the filter of 'values'
- » Drafting Statement of Commitment: this section of the self-assessment could be of particular use when addressing questions 1 and 3.
- » Developing a framework for monitoring and evaluation
- » Collating evidence for Statement of Impact.