

Artsmark self-assessment

framework resource:

1. Values & Ethos

Demonstrate commitment to arts and culture

Definition: Where arts, culture and creativity are placed at the core of learning, they will be part of the overall values and ethos of individual settings. Arts and culture will thrive when embedded in approaches to teaching, celebrated routinely and valued for their impact on children and young people's learning and lives

Silver: Arts and culture are valued and promoted in the setting, and it strives to ensure that all children and young people can develop and display their arts skills within and beyond the core timetable. Children and young people have opportunities to explore their creativity and enhance their wellbeing through enjoying and engaging in arts and culture, and emerging links to creative practitioners model the arts as careers.

Gold: Arts and culture are valued for their own sake, and for their wider contribution to wellbeing, personal development, and the setting's sense of community. For primary aged children, arts and culture are linked to wider learning opportunities. Secondary aged students are offered a range of arts qualifications and other avenues to extend their engagement in arts subjects. The setting develops children and young people's ability to express their creativity through the arts and draws attention to the creative and cultural industries as career choices.

Platinum: Arts and culture are deployed strategically to develop creativity and enhance achievement. They impact positively on wellbeing and strengthen the setting's community. The setting advocates widely for arts and culture, sharing its vision with other settings and supporting them to develop their own vision for arts and culture. The setting actively promotes the creative and cultural industries as career choices within and beyond the setting.

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:

Demonstrate commitment to arts and culture

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

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

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

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.