

## Artsmark FAQs

### **Is my school's arts provision good enough for Artsmark?**

Yes. Artsmark helps schools to extend and develop their arts and cultural provision, so any school can apply.

As you work towards your Artsmark award, your school will receive bespoke support from a team of experts who can help you to embed arts and culture into your School Improvement Plan.

Don't think of Artsmark as simply an accreditation scheme; it is a tool to raise the standards of arts and culture in your school.

### **My school already excels at arts and culture, so how will I benefit from Artsmark?**

Artsmark helps you to set goals for future working, so that your school can stretch and extend its arts provision. No matter where you are, there are always new ways to develop.

### **How will Artsmark support School Improvement planning?**

Artsmark encourages schools to examine and develop the quality and depth of arts provision, and recognises achievements with the Silver, Gold and Platinum awards.

To do this, Artsmark provides a clear and progressive framework for arts and culture in school that can be used as a guide and a provocation to ongoing improvement.

The framework describes what Arts Council England consider to be the main characteristics, provision and practices of a school that promotes the arts, including:

- The opportunities available for children and young people
- The quality of professional development for teachers
- The level of engagement with artists and arts & cultural organisations;
- The influence that the school has on other schools and the wider community

The circular nature of the Artsmark process will be familiar to school staff: audit, action plan, implement, evaluate, set new ambitions and goals, action plan and so on.

Artsmark has been developed by experienced teachers in order to make it as accessible and usable as possible.

### **What happens at a Development Day?**

A Development Day is the first step towards achieving an Artsmark Award. It is a full-day CPD session that will get you thinking about arts and culture in your school and within a wider, regional context. It is an opportunity to share ideas with other schools as well as hear from experts from the arts sector.

The day will be framed around writing your Statement of Commitment and is designed to support you in getting the most from your Artsmark application, and to extend your ambitions.

### **What is a Critical Friend?**

After you have submitted your Statement of Commitment, you will be linked with a Critical Friend. Critical Friends are experts from the education and cultural industries who are here to help you plan and reflect on arts and cultural provision in your school.

A school can choose when a Critical Friend visit would be most valuable. For example, you may prefer to meet your Critical Friend at an early planning and development stage, or you may find it more useful at the evaluation stage, when you are preparing your Case Study.

The Critical Friend visit is designed to support your, and your school's, forward planning rather than inspection and judgement. Their role is to help guide, challenge and facilitate your thinking and practice.

### **How long will my Artsmark award last?**

The award lasts for two years.

### **How do I find out about local professional arts and cultural organisations? How can Artsmark help me to forge links with them?**

You will have the opportunity at your Development Day to discuss any ambitions you have to work with arts and cultural organisations.

Arts Connect as your Bridge organisation can assist you in making contact with these organisations.

### **How far back can I reference arts provision in my school when applying for my Artsmark?**

When you apply for your Artsmark, you use your current provision as your starting point and then plan to extend and improve provision into the future.

### **Can Artsmark contribute to Ofsted reporting?**

The evidence you produce will illustrate how school is meeting its social, moral, cultural and spiritual requirements for Ofsted.

### **How much does it cost?**

The basic package fee is £500. Bespoke package and small school fees are also available.

### **Who is Arts Connect?**

Arts Connect is an initiative of the University of Wolverhampton, working with Culture Central, that delivers Arts Council England's Bridge programme in the West Midlands. Our aim is that all children and young people in the region can access and enjoy a rich and meaningful arts and cultural life.

We undertake activities that help to close the gap between those children and young people that access arts and cultural activity and those that don't. This includes working to develop local infrastructure, leadership, diversity and quality; giving expert advice and information to arts, cultural and education sectors, and increasing participation in Arts Award and Artsmark in the region.

### **Who is Arts Council England?**

Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England. Read more at [www.artscouncil.org.uk](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk)