



Artsmark Quality Principles and Indicators

Artsmark Planning guidance

Planning arts-based work in schools can be a varied process, encompassing individual lessons, longer term projects, out of school visits as well as workshops or additional input from external arts providers. To help with this, Arts Council England has developed a set of 7 Quality Principles which are set out below, along with accompanying questions to inspire planning for high quality arts learning experiences.

The seven Quality principles are:

1. Striving for excellence and innovation
2. Being authentic
3. Being exciting, inspiring and engaging
4. Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience
5. Actively involving children and young people
6. Enabling personal progression
7. Developing belonging and ownership

1. Prompts for Planning

Striving for excellence and innovation

- What resources are being used and are they likely to lead to high quality outcomes?
- Arts learning does not always have to be driven by brand new materials and expensive equipment, but obversely, it is unreasonable to expect superior outcomes to flow from inferior inputs – is enough attention being paid to the quality of resources used?
- consider the quality (and qualities) of particular materials used;
- Is the use of space appropriate to task? If you want children to think differently through arts-based work, should their learning space be configured differently, too?
- The allocation of time in relation to expected outcome – is enough time set aside in relation to expected outcomes; is time for reflection and feedback built in?
- Do plans indicate the use of resources in ways that promote the excellence you seek?

Being authentic

We know that learning generally is improved by authentic opportunities offering real-world challenges to learners, and it is no different with the arts.

When you use the arts in your school are you ensuring that the artforms involved are being exemplified in authentic ways; for drama is it possible to see a production in a theatre or to have a theatre group visit the school?

Can studio working experiences be replicated in art? Can a local artist offer a Q and A session to relate learning opportunities to a working artist's context?

Being exciting, inspiring, and engaging

How is new arts work introduced and what key messages are conveyed? Is difficulty or opportunity emphasised?

Are you maximising the number of 'ways-in' for learners of different abilities and learning styles?

If a particular artform is being focused on what might be the most inspirational and engaging introduction you could devise?

Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience

While the arts are often a great chance to foster participatory work and individual creativity, there are also examples where children can be inspired as part of an audience experience. Do your plans for the arts account for this?

Whether children are learning 'hands-on' or reflecting on a performance by others, is the activity pitched appropriately?

Actively involving children and young people

Participation is key, but this need not be restricted to being involved in making and doing, it might also include involvement in initial planning and giving children a say in what and how they might be actively involved with; art in schools is often collaborative, so find ways to bring children to the heart of the collaboration, and get them planning with artists when possible

Enabling personal progression

The 'wow-factor' of art is powerful and important, but unless it is followed up with suggestions, guidance and thought for what might follow it may leave opportunities to progress unrealised.

For that reason we suggest planning for progression within the arts, and not missing any chances to offer additional stimulus opportunities.

These might be for families and out of school clubs related to galleries, concerts or other local arts events, or particular clubs and extra-curricular societies in school.

It might also relate to future schemes of work or projects the school can signpost, so that children can connect current experiences to future opportunities.

But there is also personal progression at the level of individual growth, an element that has long been seen as the preserve of the arts. So wherever possible, if there are chances for the arts to be a platform for personal expression and the development of individuality, build those in at the outset.

Developing belonging and ownership

The arts can provide excellent opportunities to foster a deep sense of engagement among learners; this might be through the use of showcase events to illustrate learning, the chance for parents of the wider community to see the work of young people in a new and impressive light, or the way peers come to see work in and around the school as a statement of connection with and ownership of their school space. Imagining ways this sense of ownership and belonging can be fostered while still at the planning stage

increases the chances of it happening.

Has this element been considered during planning?

2. What is your ambition for Artsmark in your school and what are your expected outcomes?

- In keeping with other areas of learning, the arts are most effective when mediated with focus and purpose, so it is important to plan with a clear sense of what you want to achieve.
- Arts-based work should be able to be understood in simple terms as a plausible set of steps demonstrating why you think the outcomes you seek are likely to be delivered by the arts interventions you have chosen.
- If the intention is to use music as a means of accelerating attainment in maths, for example, then in your planning it is important to be explicit about why it is reasonable to expect that outcome. Similarly, if the aim is to develop an arts offer to enrich the curriculum and provide breadth of experience for learners then your plans should state why this is reasonable to expect.

The use of logic chains can be helpful. Arts Council England's schools programme, Creative Partnerships, often utilised logic chains as a way of expressing intended outcomes and relating them back to inputs.

A series of “if-then” relationships connect the components of a logic model: **if** resources are available to the program, **then** program activities can be implemented; **if** program activities are implemented successfully, **then** certain outputs and outcomes can be expected.



Devising indicators to assess impact

The new Artsmark is designed to make a contribution to school life in a long term way, rather than be a summative statement about the volume and quality of arts provision on offer. Accordingly, the impact of Artsmark will be woven into the impact of the school overall, and many of the existing methods of assessment will be fit for purpose.

3. Evidence of impact – pupils

If Artsmark in your school is designed to improve arts skills and knowledge then identifying measurable indicators of impact can be rooted in the existing curriculum guidelines where expected subject knowledge and skills are set out for each Key Stage for music, art &

design,
drama and dance.

If Artsmark in your school is expected to improve skills and knowledge in non-arts subjects, again the indicators of success can be rooted in the national curriculum guidelines which set out expectations for each subject at each key stage.

If Artsmark is aiming to inculcate non subject-based skills and aptitudes it will be important to root those outcomes in an established typology or model of progression. For example, if you are interested in assessing the development of children's creativity you might consider using Claxton, Lucas and Spencer's model of Creative Learning Progression (2012).

Developing assessment tools to measure progression in creativity / 21st century skills



Source: Lucas, Claxton and Spencer (2013)

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4. Evidence of impact – staff and school

If Artsmark is expected to contribute to overall school improvement by addressing pupil discipline and behaviour, there are a range of metrics such as the Pupil Attitude to Self and School (P.A.S.S), or other attitudinal surveys that would be appropriate and which you may already be employing as part of your School Improvement Plan.

If Artsmark is addressing identified staff development needs then a framework to assess the impact of CPD, such as that devised by the TDA would be useful.

http://dera.ioe.ac.uk/9686/2/impact_evaluation.pdf

Build assessment of impact in from the beginning ...

The key with all aspects of impact measurement is to ensure that you have a clear idea what you are expecting the arts to achieve at the outset and match your success indicators accordingly *up front* during the planning stage.

Schools sometimes perceive challenges isolating pupil impacts associated with arts work. However, often these challenges would be resolved by a different approach to planning, rather than having to invent new approaches to assessment.

This does not mean that there is no room for surprise; unexpected outcomes are also of great interest and value, but the premise underpinning the new Artsmark is that if we begin to plan for outcomes in ways similar to other areas of learning, it will be easier to demonstrate how the arts add value to school life and pupil attainment.