

# You are... a Secure setting

**Artsmark** works with an ever-growing network of schools and alternative education settings to develop and celebrate their commitment to arts, culture and creativity.

Your  
Artsmark  
journey  
starts here

We support a wide range of education settings, including **secure settings**, to achieve an Artsmark award.

While we consider the unique context of every setting, we understand that there may be additional considerations or challenges for your setting that you feel could affect your Artsmark journey.

The guidance below is designed to reassure you that:

- the Artsmark framework is **relevant** and **adaptable** to your setting
- we have an **awareness** and **understanding** of the key issues you may face on your Artsmark journey
- our assessment will be **sensitive** and **sympathetic** to the broader context of your setting
- we have a range of **support options available**, including resources, partnerships and networking opportunities, to support you through your Artsmark journey

For more information on how to embark on an Artsmark journey and what it involves, go to **Your Next Steps**

## Will Artsmark work for us?

Yes! Artsmark provides an open, **flexible framework** that is **adaptable** to specialist and alternative settings enabling them to champion arts, culture and creativity, and secure settings are no exception.

Artsmark can help you to develop arts-based offers that are engaging and productive for the young people you work with. By following the Artsmark framework, secure settings on their Artsmark journey have found that enhancing their arts and cultural provision is particularly effective in:

- providing creative outlets for **personal expression**
- supporting and respecting **youth voice**
- offering innovative ways to **represent and articulate** young people's own issues and challenges.



## Your Secure setting and the Artsmark criteria

We understand that some of the recommended steps outlined in our Artsmark criteria may pose some additional considerations or initial challenges for your setting, such as:

### Children & Young People Engagement

We understand that the role that arts, culture and creativity plays will be led primarily by the individual needs and preferences of the young people you work with.

With a small and varied cohort where high levels of personalised learning are required, we recognise that while some students will engage strongly with the arts, a consistent, collective engagement for all learners may not always be possible.



Photo © Xavier Fiddes /  
Horningsham Primary School

**Our assessment will take into account that use of the Arts in Secure settings may not always be the key driver in CPD provision.**

In practice, we know that students in secure settings often respond positively to the expressive elements of arts activities. Demonstrable evidence of the impact on individuals or small groups of learners, could counteract the challenges of sustaining school-wide engagement.

We understand that opportunities for young people to showcase their successes publicly, partake in outreach work in their community or act as ambassadors for arts-based practice may be more limited due to restrictions and the need for anonymity.

Secure settings could look for other outlets to share the impact of engagement externally, such as contributing to a research project with a university partner, or showcasing work via digital platforms.

**Our assessment will take into consideration that levels of engagement of children and young people may be more specific, partial or varied due to the changing needs of learners, safeguarding and anonymity policies.**

### Continued Professional Development

We ask settings to demonstrate a clear commitment to arts and culture CPD for all members of staff, and to allocate the appropriate resources to do so.

We understand that priorities for CPD provision for your staff will often be driven by policy developments and specialist practice relating to your cohort of young people. We recognise that the arts may not always be the main driver of CPD in responding to the diverse needs and challenges of the young people you work with, but it can make an important contribution in the application of best practice.

Your CPD offer may incorporate the development of knowledge, skills and expertise in arts and cultural education, but will do so specifically where it is useful and relevant to the progression of young people in your setting.

## Partnerships

We encourage settings to connect with external partners such as arts and cultural organisations in your area, as well as other local education providers, to help strengthen your delivery of quality arts and cultural education.

We appreciate that the scope to build relationships and form local partnerships with a wide range of external organisations could be more challenging for your setting considering:

- the specific needs of some learners may require a level of experience and expertise that could limit the range of arts organisations you can work with locally
- visits, workshops and other opportunities through partnerships will be offered where appropriate, relevant and amenable to the cohort of children and young people you work with, rather than a cycle of pre-designed activities and experiences
- additional process, resources or staff support may be needed in order to make necessary adjustments to ensure the safety, security and trust of the young people you work with when engaging with partners

**When deciding your award level, we will take into consideration that opportunities to work with a wider range of external partners may be more limited than in mainstream settings.**

Photo © Xavier Fiddes / Senacre Woods Primary School



Photo © Xavier Fiddes / Northway Primary School

*“ Our Artsmark journey has helped us to audit our provision and push the boundaries of our ambition which has influenced infrastructure changes, procedures and policies. ”*

## Awarding a level

Our assessment process reflects our commitment to support all educational settings to engage in arts and cultural learning:

- We give every submission an assessment that is equitable across all setting types.
- We ensure that the Artsmark award criteria are applied with a sensitive understanding and awareness of the broader context of your setting.

*“ Artsmark gives young people the chance to participate in a wide range of activities, work with professional artists, and gives them a voice, using art as a vehicle to engage and enthuse them. ”*

All quotes provided by Clayfields House, Nottingham

## Your next steps

The personalised teaching and learning environments of secure settings offer great potential for the arts, culture and creativity to be used in highly innovative and transformative ways, especially as forms of therapy and expression. We hope that this guidance reassures you that Artsmark offers a flexible framework that is right for your setting, and we look forward to following and supporting you on your unique Artsmark journey.

Find out more about Artsmark and the support on offer below, or to start your journey, [register for Artsmark](#) today.

## How we will support you

### Resources and Guidance

We have a wide range of [resources and guidance](#) to help get you started and to support you throughout your Artsmark journey.

- [Download our Artsmark booklet](#)
- Use our [Self-Assessment Framework](#) to consider your current arts and cultural provision and reflect on the areas you may wish to develop
- Read our [Artsmark application guidance booklet](#) to understand the process

Our full range of resources and application templates are always available on our [website](#).

### Your Bridge organisation

Your regional Bridge organisation offers ongoing support throughout your Artsmark journey, including 1-to-1 support sessions and practical resources. Your Bridge can also help you to connect with other Artsmark settings and with your local network of leading cultural organisations, including our Artsmark Partners.

Find your local [Bridge organisation here](#).

### Artsmark Partners

Artsmark Partners are our network of arts and cultural organisations that understand the Artsmark criteria and can support schools and education settings on their Artsmark journey.

Find your local [Artsmark Partners here](#).

### Contact us

If you have any questions or require further information and guidance, visit our website [www.artsmark.org.uk](http://www.artsmark.org.uk) or email us: [artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk](mailto:artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk)

“*The developments in our work, and the clear evidence of benefit to young people – academic, vocational and personal and social – has helped set a precedent for creative activity across the whole centre.*”

**Clayfields House, Nottingham**