

Museums can... help schools get Artsmark

Artsmark is Arts Council England's flagship programme that enables education settings to evaluate, celebrate and strengthen a quality arts offer. It's a nationally recognised sign of commitment to high quality arts and cultural education.

All Artsmark applications need to show that the school works with arts organisations – and this **can** include museums and heritage organisations. The work could be through one-off visits, workshops or long term projects. The key is that the activities students take part in are arts-based: from drawing, model-making and photography to drama, creative writing, or designing an exhibition.

Here are some ways that museums can support Artsmark applications

Curriculum provision

- Any time you spend working with classes on arts based subjects in the usual school timetable, including visits, arts weeks, events or exhibitions, you're helping the school meet the required 12% of curriculum time they need to dedicate to the arts.

Arts Award

- Although Arts Award is not a requirement of Artsmark it feeds into a number of the criteria, for example around leadership. You can help pupils achieve Arts Award, for example by offering visits and workshops based around arts subjects; helping them find out about the artists and craftspeople that made your collections; or introducing the creative aspects of museum practice.

Artists and Arts Organisations: part one

- As a museum or heritage organisation, if you go in to work with a school group, or a group of students comes to you, then you're an eligible example of a partnership with a professional artist or arts organisation. It could be a one-off visit or something more, in or out of curriculum time – the key is that the work you do is arts-based.

Objects from across the globe- and around the corner

- Many museum collections include objects from a very diverse range of countries or cultures. They can be used imaginatively to provide schools with an example showing how students are engaged in understanding, appreciating, respecting and enjoying arts experiences in which they can make connections locally and globally.

Positivity of pupils

- Schools are asked to provide two examples of how the arts increase pupil's engagement, aspiration, self-confidence, self-esteem or attitude to learning. Is there a pupil you've worked with where you've seen museum visits bring them out of themselves or discover hidden talents that make them shine? Draw that to the teacher's attention - it's exactly the kind of example they need.

Professional Development

- Have you run a staff session at the start of or part way through a project, or as a twilight staff meeting?
- Or do you always insist teachers join in or support your delivery with the pupils? This would count as shadowing.
- Both can lead to increases in teacher confidence to deliver new activities or work with new ideas. All schools need to show evidence of professional development in the arts, and Gold level applicants must show the impact of working specifically with arts partners on their professional development.

Sharing and events

- If you work with pupils to create an exhibition for families inside or outside of school, or lead them in running an arts based community event, this is eligible to show how schools share progress and achievement in the arts.
- A Gold Artsmark school also shows strong leadership in arts practice to other schools. If one school leads the way in a project across their cluster; or a secondary school asks you to help them develop a programme of work for their feeder primaries.

Artists and Arts Organisations: part two

- As a partner can you work on bespoke needs, and will you encourage schools to plan with you in advance, and include you in evaluation and debriefing afterwards? By doing so, you will help the school show it meets the partnership criteria. Work with them to pinpoint success stories and identify where real changes took place from your perspective, so they can describe a successful project.
- Where you work with the same group several times, you can help schools applying for Artsmark Gold show evidence of a 'sustained' partnership.