

Artsmark Validation Form

Artsmark Detail

Please select the level of Artsmark being applied for?

Organisation's Details

Name of organisation/school/college

DFE Number

Arts Provision

1.1 Time devoted to the arts

Please see Part One summary

1.2 Qualifications

KS4 Takeup figures

Please see Part One summary

KS4 Arts subjects

Please see Part One summary

KS5 Takeup figures

Please see Part One summary

KS5 Arts subjects

Please see Part One summary

KS4 + Post 16

Please see Part One summary

1.3 Extra-curricular/ Arts enrichment

The extra-curricular arts opportunities your school offers to pupils

Please see Part One summary

Take up of extra-curricular arts activities

Please see Part One summary

1.4 Artists & Arts organisations

Working with artists and arts organisations

Please see Part One summary

Vision and Quality

2.1 Arts vision

What is included in the arts in your school and why are they an important entitlement for all students?

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

It was a pleasure to undertake the validation visit at Thomas Gray Primary School. All of the children were delightful to meet and made me feel very welcome from the start of my visit. You have provided an exceptionally well written and clear application that made visiting even more of a pleasure as I was able to follow your responses as I heard and saw more about each of the areas of assessment.

In the first response within your application you have given a detailed and comprehensive account of your vision for the arts. Most importantly you have set out what you believe in that the arts should be an integral part of your curriculum, enhancing rather than adding to learning and providing constant new challenges. You show a deep understanding of the needs of your children and how you are meeting these through the arts and as you have a higher than average number of children who are disabled and who have special education needs this is really important.

You have referenced the four key art forms and you have made it clear that your provision is inclusive and accessible. You have also recorded how you support your children in connecting with those from different cultures and traditions. All of this meets the required criteria for this section of the application very clearly.

At the visit I heard from your head teacher, governor, arts - coordinator and other staff, how you all believe that your children are benefitting from the arts; developing their personal gifts, talents and knowledge through self-expression, creativity and both verbal and non-verbal communication. Your children show maturity and speak in an enthusiastic and articulate way about what the arts means to them. They have a very clear understanding of what all four art forms can do for them and how the arts helps them generally in all their learning.

The visit also served to show how your children are exposed to different cultures and how they engage in external activities through competitions and through the Children's University.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

2.2 Quality & Progression

Please explain your organisation's approach to monitoring quality and student/learner progression.

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

You have shown in your application how your school uses a number of approaches to benchmark quality in your school, including in your arts provision. You have described well how you use the various schemes, including the increasing popular Charanga scheme for music, to ensure progression. You have also described how your head teacher and senior leadership team monitor planning to ensure differentiation and that all children are accessing the creative curriculum appropriately. At the visit I heard more about how you follow these procedures robustly, whilst keeping your approach to quality monitoring flexible.

In your examples you have provided information about the projects, for example the Voices Singing Project with Mrs Jones, and how this has modified teaching. At the visit we talked more about this and you developed what you have said in the application to tell me more about how the staff team felt more confident and that their personal music skills had been developed. Having this closer understanding and knowledge helped them significantly in the way they teach music.

Your second example similarly demonstrated how teachers can develop further through arts CPD and then use this learning within the school environment. Now you have a number of teachers using these dance resources and these are leading to good and outstanding lessons following observation.

At the visit you provided me with a very comprehensive, detailed and well arranged, file of evidence to support your application and this enabled me to refer to your various quality evidence as I have prepared this report.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

2.3 Non arts subjects

How do you use and promote the arts to develop learning in non-arts subjects in the curriculum?

Provide two examples in non-arts related subjects of how the use of the arts has developed learning amongst students/young people and staff.

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

As is consistent with the high standard of your application, you have again provided a very succinct and enthusiastic explanation as to why you believe the arts to be valuable in developing learning. You have made it clear that you know that what you do is of quality because you observe and measure your arts provision as it nurtures the inventiveness, self-esteem, self discipline, motivation, collaboration and cooperation that you have described here.

You have also included examples in your introduction which certainly demonstrate how well you understand the variety of ways that the arts support teaching, learning and child development. All of these areas were equally clear to me at the validation visit and the values you describe here are abundantly evident throughout your school.

Your examples are descriptive and interesting, providing an exciting insight into how you teach. At the visit I heard more about the Y5 project on the world without rules. Although it was the previous year, the children remembered it well and they really enjoyed filming the drama and making the video. They felt they had learnt a lot from it and they fully understood the message. This was an excellent example of using the arts in PHSE.

The children who took me on the tour of the school were keen to show their work on the Vikings and their model longboats. They obviously found the subject fascinating and I talked to them about the Vikings who landed and lived not so far from them at Formby beach.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

Impact and Opportunity

2.4 Engaging with cultures

What arts experiences are offered to students/young people to engage them in and with a range of cultures?

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

Your school is in an area that is predominantly white, British and culturally has little diversity to demonstrate to your children. You recognise that whilst this makes it difficult to provide them with culturally diverse role models, it also makes it more important to ensure that engaging with different cultures is an integral part of their education. Your examples in this section make it clear that you understand that cultural diversity is about more than tokenistic project work but that you use the arts as a basis for embracing the whole of a culture. The rangoli patterns using beans and pulses were exceptionally well executed and looked like the work of much older students. The children also recalled decorating their hands with henna and understood the importance of this in Indian festivals. They also found the Indian food fascinating as well as enjoyable. As well as appreciating the Indian dancing and performing for their parents, the children were able to tell me how they understood that the movements could mean different things and tell a story in the Indian culture. It was also an important part of the experience to visit the Hindu temple, not something that many non-hindu children get to do and an experience that they remembered well.

At the visit we also had a good time talking with the children about your work on the experience of Africa and Brazil in your cultural weeks. I was able to see the excellent masks made. Although I didn't see drumming or dancing, we did talk about it and it was clear that the children enjoyed it. I also talked to your teachers about African culture. I have spent time in an African school and your teachers have developed a very good understanding of the wide differences in teaching and learning. Your children also have a good understanding of African culture and they enjoyed expressing this through African art. Equally they enjoyed expressing Brazilian culture through music, samba dancing and also through the literacy workshop. You are using all of the arts to provide a wide range of different cultural experiences that are benefitting your children particularly well and helping them considering the lack of cultural diversity in their local neighbourhood.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

2.5 Positive impact

What positive impact does your arts provision have on students'/young peoples' behaviour, engagement, aspirations, their self-confidence and self-esteem and attitude to learning?

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

You have given two strong and very descriptive examples of how the arts is making a positive impact on your school and your students. At the visit I was able to meet the child you have talked about and to witness now confidence he is now. It is excellent to hear how other aspects of his life have also developed positively because of his participation in the Arts. That his academic ability has also grown and increased is an unexpected and very welcome bonus.

Your second example also shows how your schools takes a close and special interest in each child and looks for ways to support them through the arts. You realised that playing the recorder and singing amongst a group of children would help his self-esteem and confidence, allowing him to overcome the earlier nerves he had when trying to perform alone. This child's success alone is rewarding but I was able to witness at the validation visit how at Thomas Gray you have this same commitment to all of your children and to using the arts to help them to develop.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

2.6 Potential & Talent

How do you identify potential and nurture talent in the arts?

Primary schools only

How do you recognise arts development and achievement?

Secondary schools only

How do you recognise arts development and achievement outside of GCSE, AS/A2, BTEC, GNVQ or HNC/D achievements?

How do you provide arts related advice and guidance?

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

In the response to this question you have provided a truly comprehensive description of how you identify potential in the arts. You have also provided considerable information about how you then go on to nurture gifts and talents including working with other agencies such as SPACE.

At the visit I was able to hear quite a bit more about how you proactively look out for children with a talent for any of the key art forms or any additional creative skills. As this is so clearly a part of learning for the children in your school, you are used to finding out new things about them. You told me more about the various national and local competitions that you have entered. The children also showed me their artwork and their poetry from the various competitions held by the prestigious Merchant Taylor school in Crosby. The charcoal drawing of Mahatma Gandhi was excellent and I also talked to the children about the significance and influence of Gandhi, which they understood very well. All of this was really good to hear as it shows that the children have the confidence to aspire and to compete in areas where there might be more privilege than they are used to. They are not daunted by this and instead are very proud of their own achievements.

I was also able to see and hear more at the visit about your work with Sefton Music Service and how the children are progressing in music. Similarly the children told me about Children's University and the various opportunities; about the Wally Cain Dance Festival and the Voices Foundation Scheme. Your provision for identifying potential and talent is a great strength and will give you a strong lead when you are ready to apply for Artsmark Gold, as will your plans to become involved with Arts Award.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

2.7 Leadership & Consultation

How do you consult with students/learners to enable them to play an active part in developing your arts provision? *This question is different from the leadership question at Gold level as it focuses on decisions on how to consult students; 2.7 Gold focuses on opportunities for leadership within an art form.*

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

You have given two strong examples of how you consult with your children to enable them to plan an active part in developing your arts provision.

Your comprehensive file includes the questionnaires referred to in this section and from these I can see that your children are given the opportunity to say what they would like to see. I also heard at the visit how you act on this as appropriate and try to meet the requests as much as possible. Your suggestions boxes are situated throughout the school and are clearly well used.

I spoke to the children about the evaluation forms that they used following arts activities. They had a very good understanding of why they should do this. They understood that arts provision is sometimes optional and therefore it is important that the teachers select the right activities and the right people to carry them out.

We spoke at the feedback session about the idea of appointing arts ambassadors throughout your school, together with the possibility of having an arts committee. You could see immediately that many of your children would respond to this idea and you will consider this as something you will put in place right away.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

A skilled workforce

2.8 Skills development

Describe how you ensure that your staff team are individually and collectively skilled in the arts by:

Explaining how your school identifies staff developmental needs in the arts

Reflecting back on training that has taken place over the previous academic year or that is planned for the current year to provide examples of professional development in the arts:

- Artsmark level - an example from each of two different key art forms.
- Artsmark Gold level - one example from each of the four of the key art forms.

Using the examples identified to explain how staff have developed their skills, knowledge and understanding and how they have applied this to their practice.

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

Your response to this section is a model answer. You have given us all the information we could possibly require in order to demonstrate that you meet the criteria for skills development in the arts. In your introduction you have told us how teachers share learning with others schools, including the setting up of a music working party and your plans to extend this to art and D/T. You have described how a teacher modified her practice by learning to play the recorder herself, which speaks for itself in terms of dedication and learning new skills. You have also provided considerable information in your file where teachers have recorded how they updated their knowledge of music and key words and technical vocabulary. Independent lesson observations also show how teachers had increased their confidence and abilities in dance so that they were joining in with the children, rather than just instructing.

Your example of the work with Rosemary Jones and the Voices Foundation provides a clear record of how you are developing your teachers and making sure that they are observed and supported in their new skills. You are also including parents in this which is excellent.

At the visit I spoke to the teachers who had undertaken the dance course. They were delighted with how much they learnt about ballroom dancing. Although time didn't allow for me to see the video, it was clear from the enthusiasm of the teachers that the training had been a great success. That you then cascaded this training through to colleagues is a further bonus for the staff team.

Your achievements in how you train and prepare your staff to be skilled in the arts is clearly a great strength for your school. You already have much to use as examples when you are ready to pursue Artsmark Gold.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

Community and collaboration

2.9 Communities

How do you share your progress, activities and achievements with the community?

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

Your examples tell us how you share progress with parents twice in the year and through comprehensive school reports each year. You also provide a range of communications through the newsletter and on your website, which is kept well updated.

At the visit I heard about your Christmas concerts and how they are very well attended by parents, family and the broader community. I also heard more about the children singing at the local supermarket and how much they enjoyed this. They said it made it feel like Christmas.

Your craft clubs have also been another great success within the school as have the performances by your drama club. Your school takes advantage of all local opportunities to engage with the community, including the local Literacy Festival. In your file you provided a lovely book published by Bootle Children's Literary Festival called If I ruled the world. This is a very professional publication and is beautifully illustrated. It is a great achievement to which your all of children can aspire. In addition you are involved in the literary festival through the local organisation YKIDS. You are involving your children in a wide range of different competitions and opportunities and they are both enjoying and benefitting from these opportunities.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

2.10 Artists & arts organisations – Artsmark level only

How do you choose and plan which artists and arts organisations to work with?

How do you evaluate the success and impact of this work?

Outline a successful example of work with an artist or arts organisation (taken place within the last year) and explain how and why it was successful.

Validator comments:

Criteria met:

As well as the information you provided in your application, I talked at some length to your arts coordinator and other teachers about how you work with artists and arts organisations. I heard more about your strategy and how you plan ahead for these visits. You keep a file of the numerous possibilities and you check with recommendations before considering external artists through your networks and contacts. The teachers and children told me more about The Pop Project which was clearly a great success.

As well as this you have told us about your activities with The Education Group and African activities, with I-Film and your activities with local poet Billy Chart which resulted in the children entering the poetry competitions. In addition you provided information about the music clubs, Awesome Art, your Arts & Crafts club and a number of additional activities with artists and arts organisations which are detailed elsewhere. Your evaluation of these events is strong and you have an excellent understanding of how children of all abilities grow in confidence and develop a wide range of key and additional skills through these experiences.

The success of your Y6 student in winning the poetry competition shows both how successful this project was and also how you work with your children to make sure they get the best of these experiences. It is excellent that you plan to continue this work.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

Reflecting and Planning

2.11 Strengths & Development

Reflecting on what you have written for previous questions in this application, can you now identify what your particular strengths are and any areas for improvement for arts provision in your organisation?

Validator comments:

Criteria met: From your leadership team to your teachers it is clear that Thomas Gray is a school that is strong on strategy and planning. Your identification of strengths also shows this. You know where you are doing well and you continue to develop these areas to make them even stronger. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your curriculum is broad and varied and you make excellent use of the arts throughout the school and throughout all lessons in order to help your children enjoy and achieve.• You are good at recognising the strengths of your staff team and making sure that they share these with colleagues. Your staff also push themselves and challenge themselves beyond their comfort zone and this brings them rewards as well as paying dividends in terms of your children's experiences.• As you have recorded in your third example, each child is given the opportunity to celebrate their achievements. This is only a part of your overall empathy with and understanding of the children as individuals. You truly recognise individual talents and make sure they are encouraged and developed. In terms of your further development, you will be pursuing Arts Award. This will provide even greater opportunities to identify potential and reward achievement and will complement your existing ethos exceptionally well.

Assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pass
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieving

Validation

Thank you for validating the form. Do you consider this application to have achieved Artsmark status?

Result:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Artsmark Gold
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Artsmark
<input type="checkbox"/>	Not achieved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawn

Part 1 recommendation summary (max. 300 words)

Your Part 1 summary shows that you have an overall total time devoted to the arts of 12.4% in KS1 and 12.1% in KS2. These are good percentages that well meet the Artsmark criteria. Overall Art, Craft & Design and Music are higher and Drama and Dance lower. However having visited the school and seen all that you are doing, I suspect that you have not counted everything you can in your arts provision. We talked at the visit about some ways that you might engage the children in counting all the ways that the arts are used in class and you will give this some thought for the future.

Your extra curricular activities are high with almost all of them exceeding the Artsmark criteria minimum requirement by a considerable amount. This is especially important in an area of economic and social deprivation, as yours is officially designated. Well done for continuing to provide these opportunities.

There is only one area where your provision appears to throw up a question mark. This is in the number of girls attending extra curricular activities in Y3 and the overall total percentage of attendance in Y2. At the visit we talked about this and you realised that you had not included the time when children attended performance rehearsals outside of the curriculum time. This time was in leading up to performances and also during your whole Brazil week. You had also not included the visit to the Atkinson centre (art) and the work with Mrs. Parvi. When we counted up the time of these activities it brought up your percentage in Y2 to meet the required 15% and increased the number of Y3 girls taking part in extra curricular activities to meet the required 12%.

Part 2 recommendation summary (max. 300 words)

Reading the application from Thomas Gray Primary was a great pleasure for me. The application is exceptionally well written and it includes a wide range of interesting activities. It was particularly enjoyable for me as I first visited Thomas Gray over a year ago. (I declared my interest in the school although as I was not involved with your application it was considered appropriate that I should undertake the validation.)

At that time it appeared that the school was very committed to the arts and creativity in teacher and learning. However there was not a great deal of information about the individual ways that you were doing this collected together in one place. It was therefore a great pleasure to read just how much you are doing and how well you have presented the information to show this.

Similarly with the visit. It was a privilege to see first hand all that you are doing to promote the arts in education and to make sure that your children have a wide and enjoyable experience of the arts.

You provided me with a very comprehensive file of evidence and information relating to your provision and this is a sample of excellence in terms of Artsmark support material. In reflecting on your application I have made a number of recommendations which I will record here:

- You are considering Arts Award as a development and following our discussions you will now begin to put this into operation.
- We talked about the possibility of an arts committee and this is something you are going to consider.
- You might want to consider appointing arts ambassadors within your school. Some of these ambassadors could form an arts committee or council that could complement the work of the school council by concentrating specifically on the arts.
- Your wide range of cultural experiences is helping students well considering the lack of cultural diversity in their local neighbourhood. You could consider using some of your outside projects to include a cultural diversity project.
- Your provision for identifying potential and talent is a great strength and will give you a strong lead when you are ready to apply for Artsmark Gold.
- Your journey towards Artsmark has been action-packed and full of arts inspiration. You are achieving much and are getting closer towards Artsmark Gold. You should be able to consider an application for Artsmark Gold with confidence.

I should like to add that it was an inspiration to visit Thomas Gray Primary again to undertake your validation visit. I was very impressed by your children's confidence and their conviction that they would reach their desired goals. I truly wish them every success. I am delighted to be able to recommend your school for Artsmark.