



Artsmark
AWARDED BY ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Statement of Commitment

Application paperwork 1 of 2

Name of school/education setting	Leicester High School for Girls
DfE number	856 / 6009

Support

We are here if you need us.

Download our guidance on how to complete your Statement of Commitment:

<https://www.artsmark.org.uk/about/artsmark-award-document-downloads>

Get in touch with your Bridge organisation, who offer support throughout your Artsmark journey. Their details can be found online: <https://www.artsmark.org.uk/Bridge>



Context – up to 150 words

Describe the context of your school or education setting (for example your phase of education, establishment type, location, number on roll and so on).

Leicester High School for Girls is an independent, all girls' day school set on the edge of Leicester city. We are a small school, with just 350 students on role from age 3-18, and we pride ourselves on knowing our students and their families, offering excellent pastoral care and academic provision. We have a Christian ethos at the heart of the school, but pupils from all faiths or none are welcome, reflecting Leicester's cultural diversity. Although a fee paying school, many of our students' families are not high wage earners: they make financial sacrifices to select this education for their daughters.



Question 1 – up to 500 words

How do arts and culture currently play a role within your setting's strategic values?

Arts and culture are already hugely important to the community at Leicester High School for Girls. Our strapline of 'Education, Confidence and Opportunity' is at the heart of everything we do and our school's aims and core values ensure that our students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. We are committed to ensuring our students develop and sustain intellectual curiosity, discover and nurture individual talents, creativity and self-belief. We hope our journey to Artsmark status will allow us to demonstrate that the arts and culture are not just delivered through the expressive arts subjects, but are integral to the process of learning at LHS. Creativity in all subjects equips our young people with the skills, ability and confidence to enable them to enter life beyond compulsory education to become rounded individuals, who choose to access a broad range of opportunities in Higher Education, or the workplace as lifelong learners.

We have delivered a broad cultural curriculum for many years, from Early Years to Upper Sixth and we are in a unique position to see the impact this has on our students as they move through the school from age 3 to 18. Children can develop a sense of achievement, independence and creative freedom through the arts. The arts also support academic learning, encouraging a well-rounded experience in all subjects. The curriculum and opportunities across the whole school allows us to take risks in and out of the classroom enabling equality and opening new avenues of discovery. This is a process which happens over time and has become an authentic, fundamental process. The very nature of the arts encourages cross-curricular learning, boosting risk taking, experimentation and playfulness. We work collaboratively across departments and key stages with girls from different year groups regularly working together to achieve a common goal. Our school feels like a vibrant and exciting place to learn and work. We often enjoy impromptu musical performances, as girls practise the piano in the main foyer of the school, or they can be seen rehearsing in

corridors for a dramatic performance for Philosophy and Belief. Our Art, Music and Drama GCSEs and A-levels are very popular and achieve highly. We have hosted Creative Industries Careers events which have broadened the horizons of our students. Many students go on to study creative subjects at higher education, ranging from Architecture at Cambridge to Theatre Management and Creative Writing. Students in the Junior Department have designated art and music lessons with specialist teachers in designated classrooms.

As an independent school, it is our duty and joy to invest in our local community. We are very grateful to be based in such a thriving and community minded area of the city and we encourage the girls to be connected to this community. We have developed partnerships with the locality through joint activities, sponsorship opportunities and leading events.



Question 2 – up to 500 words

How and why will your Artsmark journey contribute to the priorities in your strategic improvement plan?

Our Three-Year Development plan covers five key areas: Leading in Girls' Education, Sustaining a High Performance Culture, Embedding Social Responsibility, Driving Innovation and Developing Confident Women for the Future. Each of these areas is broken down into smaller activities and significant contributions from arts and culture could help us to reach these targets.

When initially investigating Artsmark, we questioned our motivation for wanting to achieve the award. This is a big investment of time and money - so what is the purpose? When going through the self-assessment framework we decided that our provision is already excellent and so we don't need to use it to put in place more arts and cultural activities. We realised that what we needed to do is gain recognition for all we do by raising the profile of the arts and to validate what we already do, recognising the rigour of arts subjects.

The Artsmark journey will underpin the developments we will make across the school and curriculum allowing us to document the impact on the whole school community. Whilst school is supportive of the arts, we don't want to become complacent; we want to generate a greater understanding of what we do. We are open to discovering impact in unexpected places and hope to develop a framework to monitor better this process. Our aspirations in this area are to raise the arts to an equal footing with other subjects. We hope that Artsmark will support us to gain more coverage of the arts and cultural provision both within the curriculum and beyond. We feel that now is a good time to explore the impact the arts are having, as we are currently carrying out a curriculum review looking at timetabling and allocation of time to subjects; this fits in with the timing of the Artsmark award, as we intend to have a new timetable in place for September 2021. This may lead to more curriculum

time allocated to the arts which will hopefully make a difference to our arts offer at KS4 and 5.

We will invest in staff training, ensuring that everyone is on board with the Artsmark journey. Our middle leaders will be more explicitly involved in the process of decision-making around teaching priorities and we will have a spotlight on the arts at Leadership and within the Governing Body. We will be able to demonstrate that a named governor takes responsibility for monitoring arts and culture with senior leaders advocating for the impact of arts and culture and sharing good practice across the whole school.



Question 3 – up to 500 words

Looking at the Artsmark Award criteria, where does your setting currently have strengths and where would you like to develop?

Arts and cultural provision is a strength which is embedded in our aims and core values. All staff used the Self Assessment Framework with similar results: our provision is scattered across Gold and Platinum. We identified that our strengths are: Values and Ethos, Children and Young People Engagement, Curriculum Design, Range of Offer and Partnerships.

We actively promote career choices and opportunities within the Arts throughout all key stages. Our teachers are experts in their fields, who achieve excellent results and encourage everyone to engage with the arts. This culture is embedded across the whole school and is not dependent upon one person.

Currently, we have no designated senior leader or governor for arts and cultural provision. However, we are well supported by all of the senior leaders at events and in strategic planning. We are encouraged to be creative in the classroom and schemes of work evidence planning for cultural links, which are monitored in departmental reviews and progress checks. Our SDP highlights many opportunities for arts and cultural provision.

We consider the students' engagement is Gold, working towards Platinum. We have huge uptake in all Arts activities, such as participating in extra-curricular clubs, working with visiting practitioners and theatre visits. Our students are so engaged that they regularly enter and win competitions, such as public speaking, or drawing biological specimens. The School Council, Prefects and Committees give the students ownership and the opportunity to make a difference, such as organising a Charity Concert.

The value and impact of a broad arts and cultural curriculum is embedded across the setting, working towards Platinum. From the age of 3, the Junior Department teaches the Cornerstones Curriculum's Imaginative Learning Projects, which fully embed the knowledge and skills from the arts. In the Senior School, there is a wide variety of learning opportunities, such as artistic and cultural residential trips, visits from authors, drama

workshops, foreign language theatre performances and frequent artist workshops. Opportunities to stretch the Highly Able are shared in the Excellence Pathways, which highlight to students/parents how they can extend learning and widen their experiences.

Commitment is demonstrated by the staff accessing various CPD opportunities with professional artists and organisations to develop their own pedagogy. We share good practice and collaborate on cross-curricular and cross-phase planning at staff/faculty meetings. The Heads of Art and Science delivered a cross-curricular workshop on particle physics through practical art activities. This was followed up by a visit to the Hadron Collider in Geneva to see the science in action.

Our external partnerships provide a positive impact on outcomes for all members of our school community. We hold regular Masterclasses for our local primary schools and have established relationships with Oadby Library, Shakespeare Schools' Festival and The Little Theatre. Our choir sing alongside adults in a professional context with St James the Greater Choir.

We also celebrate the arts through the allocation of internal Arts Awards of Bronze, Silver and Gold, which are awarded to girls in recognition of their commitment and performance.



Question 4 – up to 500 words

What are the goals and ambitions for your Artsmark journey and what steps will you take to achieve these?

Our aim for our Artsmark journey is to recognise better and communicate the impact of the arts in our school.

By embedding the arts and culture into all subjects, we create well-rounded individuals, who leave their compulsory education not only with excellent academic qualifications, but also with a love of the arts and an understanding of their relevance to life and work. This achieves our aim of preparing pupils for their lives beyond school, where they can access and be enriched by the arts and culture.

We intend to continue with the excellent current provision, but communicate this more effectively through our curriculum design. We wish to include planning for arts and culture in our CPD. We would like to develop our Leadership by allocating a named Governor to take responsibility for monitoring arts and culture. We would like to offer the Arts Award, starting with the Discover and Explore levels in the Junior Department. These will all add value to the arts.

Therefore, our steps are:

- Develop a monitoring framework to measure the impact of the arts, including case studies of several girls across each phase of the school, and to develop student voice opportunities to highlight the arts and cultural experiences available.
- Allocating a named governor, who will take responsibility for arts and culture. This Governor will develop, evaluate and monitor the arts provision by regularly visiting the school, meeting with designated phase leaders, and completing learning walks and work scrutinies.
- Establish an Arts Open Day – a whole school celebration of the girls’ achievements and the opportunities to work on arts and cultural activities throughout the year. This would aim to increase parental involvement in and awareness of the arts.
- Allocating a member of the Senior Leadership Team to be responsible for arts and culture. This person would develop and evaluate the arts provision, monitoring this through learning walks and work scrutinies during the academic year. This person will support staff on the Artsmark journey and use this process to develop creativity across the curriculum.
- Establish an arts and culture section on the school website, linking to activities and learning opportunities covered as part of the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities.
- Allocate a designated lead for arts and culture across all phases of the school – responsible to the SLT and named governor
- Making arts and culture a required section within curriculum planning in all subject areas. The Highly Able Coordinator and Head of Art will develop a whole school scheme of work to enhance arts and cultural provision in all subject areas. CPD will then be delivered to support staff with implementing creativity into their planning.
- Two staff members to undertake Arts Award Advisor training and start the Discover and Explore awards in the Junior Department.
- To maintain the current provision using the arts subjects, through the whole school curriculum, to provide high quality education, to drive pupil progress and attainment and to seek opportunities to showcase talent and work with partners in an arts-based context.



Question 5 – up to 500 words

What support will you need and what resources will you commit to achieve your goals and ambitions?

In order to achieve our goals and ambitions, our biggest area of commitment is time. Every aspect of our plan requires time to carry out; although some actions will be quickly put in place, others will take the two years to measure success.

- Time to complete our Statement of Commitment and Statement of Impact - CPD for specific staff responsible for Artsmark to attend development day and other supporting training opportunities delivered by Artsmark partners, Mighty Creatives.

- Time to deliver whole staff CPD to inform of intentions for our Artsmark journey and to encourage all staff to use their planning to embed the arts and culture into the curriculum.
- Time for phase leaders to oversee planning and delivery of the arts and to track student outcomes
- Time to use Departmental Reviews as tools to monitor the delivery of the arts and the progress of pupils
- Time for two members of staff to attend Arts Award (Discover and Explore) training, plus the funding to deliver this.
- Governing Body support through the allocation of a named Governor
- Time to develop a section within the school website to include information about our arts and cultural provision, including our Artsmark journey.
- Time to track the progress of several students as part of a case study
- Time to explore and develop links with our local Music Education Hub



Question 6 – up to 500 words

How will you know you have achieved your goals and ambitions? What will success look like and how will you evidence it in your Statement of Impact?

Our success will be achieved by having the following things in place, evidenced in the supporting paperwork:

- Allocated Governor for the Arts (Governing Body roles list)
- Allocated member of the SLT for the Arts (Job description)
- Phase leaders analysing the taught curriculum (Departmental Review/Progress checks)
- Schemes of work will identify opportunities for arts (Departmental Handbooks)
- Parents will be more aware of the arts teaching and opportunities in LHS (Survey comparison)
- Parents will place more value upon the arts in their daughter's education (Survey comparison)
- Pupils are more aware of the role of arts in their broad education (Pupil survey)
- Staff are trained in the Arts Award (Qualifications)
- Arts Awards are being gained by the students (Qualifications)
- Cross-phase meetings (minutes of meetings)

However, we don't anticipate enormous change in the daily activities we deliver. The girls won't be aware of any significant change to their education, only that we place more emphasis on celebrating the arts and culture across the school. We hope to raise the profile of the arts and encourage greater understanding of how the arts impact upon all learning. This is very difficult to measure; however, we anticipate that our student case studies and student voice will demonstrate this. We will be able to demonstrate that, from EYFS to Year 13 our students will have access to a broad range of media and are offered equal opportunity to influence, lead, experience and evaluate a diverse range of high-quality arts and cultural activities. We will be able to contribute to development opportunities in the arts and culture for both our own staff and others. We have strong partnerships with arts and

cultural organisations and can evidence the positive impact of this collaboration. Our children and young people have an opportunity to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of arts and culture and we are working to develop the leadership role we have established.

A shared vision amongst all staff and students that arts and culture will be at the heart of what we do. Collaborative planning and focussed professional development engage all staff encouraging creativity and a kinaesthetic approach.

Approval

Click the box to agree to the statements and enter the name and date this was approved.

I confirm that I have read, approved and endorsed the Statement of Commitment and agree to oversee and support the Artsmark journey

I agree to the Artsmark Award Terms and Conditions

(These are available online at artsmark.org.uk/terms-and-conditions)

Headteacher Name: Alan Whelpdale

Date: 10 March 2020

I confirm that I have read, approved and endorsed the Statement of Commitment and agree to oversee and support the Artsmark journey

I agree to the Artsmark Award Terms and Conditions

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Chair of Governors Name: Margaret Bowler

Date: 10 March 2020

Checklist

Make sure your Statement of Commitment is complete before you submit to us.

My school/setting name is written at the top of this document

My DfE number is at the top of this document and matches the one I registered with

My answer to the Context question has no more than 150 words

My answers to Questions 1-6 have no more than 500 words each

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have approved this document

Ready to submit?

You should submit your Statement of Commitment within **three months** of attending your Development Day training.

Email your Statement of Commitment as an attachment to artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk

We will confirm receipt within five working days.