



WELCOME TO ARTSMARK MONTHLY



Hello!

I'm Abi, Education Programme Manager at Festival Bridge. I look after our Artsmark programme - so if you've attended one of our Development training/ support sessions, or received feedback on a Statement of Commitment or Impact, chances are you've encountered me along the way!

Edition 5: Striving for Excellence and Innovation

Excellence and innovation begins with a clear vision and ambition which challenges senior leaders to light the torch. Through strategic planning, this vision is transformed into high quality experiences throughout the curriculum and in extended activities that happen outside of the school timetable and buildings. Combined, these translate into children and young people having the best possible outcomes. As we know, an accolade achieved by one child is not directly comparable to another which is why it is your job to raise the expectations bar to the right height for your young people. Innovative leaders dare to be different; they find creative solutions!



QUALITY PRINCIPLES UNPICKED

Quality Principle: striving for excellence and innovation

What does it mean?

You only need to skim read the school contributors to the Arts Council England's **Creativity Exchange** in order to see how these schools are innovative; each in their own unique way and refining their own specialisms then sharing their practice and pedagogy.

Though exploring creativity **Dr Steven Berryman** helps us to think about how we enable excellence, innovation and creativity for our pupils and ourselves. His blog gives teachers permission to balance structure and freedom to enable the space where children become imaginative and creative. In my teaching career I would have considered this as scaffolding or perhaps learning through play: what I find encouraging is the research affirms that these support our young people to develop.

How could it look in my school?

You could:

- **Explore** different pathways from a subject: including potential qualifications, transferable skills and careers that can result from development and progression. (*Look out for **Personal Progression** in a coming edition!*)
- Outline the important **life-skills** that arts subjects provide, such as performing on a stage to an audience can give the confidence in future conferences or meetings to present your ideas.
- Plan **inspiring people** into your curriculum (see last months edition inspiring and engaging). Show living professionals working in this art form as well as studying historical figures.
- Use local artists to support development of **CPD** across your school to develop educators' knowledge, skills and understanding of delivering high-quality arts and cultural education: you could also consider how you can collaborate to produce quality teaching resources.
- Have **achievements** to strive towards; awards, competitions and other accolades as well as qualifications.

Remember...

Exciting programmes and projects are important, but these must connect back to that initial spark from leadership so that these are truly embedded into the curriculum and the life of the school. The key parts to this are around CPD for staff, curriculum design and pupil voice.

What next?

Now is a good time to reflect. Reflect on your own leadership and how you can support colleagues and like-minded professionals. Have a dialogue with other teachers, leaders and governors. Consider...

- What process is in place to inquire that all staff take responsibility for delivering good practice across the arts subjects?
- Can you provide evidence of the whole setting's planning for arts and culture?
- Does your curriculum establish high-quality arts and cultural provision that connects subjects and learning outcomes across all phases and links to the whole setting's pedagogy?

As a champion for Artsmark and all that it encompasses if you want to know how to advocate strongly then watch **Bill Lucas** as part of our Spring Native Creatives series on the importance of creative subjects.



SPOTLIGHT ON SCHOOLS

These awarded schools have been: striving for excellence and innovation

St Mary's Roman Catholic Primary School | Lowestoft

As they worked towards their award St Mary's showed great determination in forging new links with professionals from arts and cultural organisations. For instance, KS2 pupils experienced working with professional musicians from the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in creating their own compositions and to perform these in a theatre, whilst Year 6 had their end-of-year performance in a professional theatre. The partnership with Ferini Art Gallery enabled pupils to engage with local artists and their work and provided them with an opportunity to display their own artwork in a professional gallery and share this with their parents.

Silver Artsmark Award

Notre Dame High School | Norwich

At NDHS there has been an increase in participation and improvement in standards across all arts subjects at both GCSE and A' level.

The strength of the music provision has attracted new students to study at A' level.

More impressively students are encouraged and enabled to take a leadership role e.g. giving feedback to trainee music and art teachers in order to improve the quality of their

lessons; as well as supporting CPD for other schools on how to organise a pupil-led musical performance. Pupils have had opportunities to take ownership of planning and delivering authentic arts experiences, such as creating their own musical theatre, 'Horizons'.

Gold Artsmark Award

Fulbridge Primary School | Cambridgeshire

At Fulbridge Primary there is a very deep, strong, consistent and cohesive approach to the Arts which runs across the school and is fully supported by all. There is a strong commitment to developing staff's knowledge and skills in the Arts, they involve professionals (such as visual artists and actors) to work alongside teachers and also employ a specialist art teacher on a one-year contract to create an art curriculum to challenge children's ability in art and training and developing another teacher to become an art specialist.

Platinum Artsmark Award



DON'T MISS OUT

Artsmark Support

This year, we are offering two types of Training Sessions – our regular Development Training, for schools just beginning their Artsmark journey, and a slightly shorter Returning To Artsmark session, for schools already on the Artsmark journey who feel they require some extra support in 'rebooting' their progress. Unlike the Development Training sessions, a member of SLT is not required for this session.

You can find all of our upcoming virtual [Development Training](#) and [Support Sessions](#) for all stages of the Artsmark journey on our website. Get in touch with any query, big or small, via bridge@nnfestival.org.uk.

Looking for an organisation to partner with to improve your provision or work collaboratively with to share expertise? Check out our [Artsmark partner database](#).

Native Creatives

Recordings from our Summer Term Native Creatives sessions are now available to watch back on our website. Over three evenings of events, expert guest speakers from

the creative and academic worlds delivered twilight sessions aimed at enriching, expanding and strengthening personal and professional practice.

Each term we curate our sessions around a theme that comes out of speaking to our audience. Our theme this term was: "Making Positive Change: Advocacy, subversion, pioneership". Watch session recordings and browse resources on the [Festival Bridge website](#).

Local Cultural Education Partnerships

If you don't know where to begin to find authentic arts and cultural providers than these networks are ideal. To find out more look on our [website](#) or contact bridge@nnfestival.org.uk to find out more about an LCEP near you.

Thanks for reading - see you next month for issue number 6!



Festival Bridge is an initiative of Norfolk & Norwich Festival



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Bridge Organisation
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