



Artsmark
AWARDED BY ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

Statement of Commitment

Application paperwork 1 of 2

Name of school/education setting	St James' Catholic Primary School
DfE number	8 8 8 / 3 6 1 4

Support

We are here if you need us.

Use this template to draft and finalise your Statement of Commitment.

Our submission process has changed. You must submit your Statement of Commitment **online** - [we no longer accept email submissions](#). Please read our [Submission Guidance](#) for the steps to follow.

Download our guidance on how to complete your Statement of Commitment: artsmark.org.uk/resources and get in touch with your [Bridge organisation](#), who offer support throughout your Artsmark journey.

Tips

- We strongly recommend you use as much of the **available word counts** as possible when drafting your responses, to give us as much information as you can about the plans for your Artsmark journey
- Artsmark cannot provide feedback on **draft submissions**. If you need feedback on your Statement of Commitment before submitting it, please contact your Bridge organisation, their details are on our website [here](#)
- We expect settings to submit their Statement of Commitment **within three months** of attending their Development training with their Bridge organisation



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).

St James' Catholic Primary School is an expanding one- form entry primary school located in Skelmersdale with 221 pupils on roll, 20.1% of these are Pupil Premium and 11.3% are currently on the Special Education Needs and Disabilities register. We are extremely proud of our bespoke, knowledge-based curriculum which allows all children to flourish, reach and even exceed their full potential right from our two-year-olds provision through to Year 6. Our curriculum is designed to allow learning to 'stick' across the primary years and beyond, with children 'knowing more, remembering more and doing more' which stems from our mission statement; *We belong to the loving family of St James'*.



Question 1 – up to 500 words

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

Here at St James', we pride ourselves in the design and implementation of our bespoke curriculum, in which the Arts are at the heart of. During COVID-19, our subject leads met with the Curriculum Leader to create our bespoke curriculum for every subject. Therefore, all of our arts subjects such as Art and Design, Design Technology and Music are bespoke to our school, and our children. We interviewed children and teachers and as a result of pupil voice, we were able to create our bespoke curriculum based on the children's interests, strengths and areas of need that we are able to support and build on. All of our subjects have a clear progression, building on prior knowledge and skills. For example, in art, the children are first introduced to printing in Reception class where they paint and print leaves collected, in Year 1 this is built on as they paint hard vegetables and carve into polystyrene. This is then built on in Year 3, where the children carve African patterns into polystyrene and print using ink, which they eventually build on in Year 6 where they carve into lino and print with ink, inspired by artist Keith Haring. We recognise the importance of the delivery of art and the impact this has on our children's personal, social and emotional well-being as one child states that 'art makes me feel like I am dancing in the rain!' whilst another says 'I like art because I can express my feelings into art'.

Throughout our school, every child has a piece of their own work and creativity on display. This display goes right the way through our school, and demonstrates the progression of skills as the children move from Early Years, right the way through to Year 6. Our children's creativity is celebrated every Friday during our celebration assembly, where parents are encouraged to come and watch their child receive an award for something amazing they have done that week.

At St James' we offer many opportunities for our children to express themselves creatively, one of which is through the use of music. Every Monday morning we start the week of with a whole school singing assembly in the hall. Different types of music are always offered to our children, for example children enter and leave assembly to a song, sometimes played live on the guitar by our Year 6 teacher. Our children love to participate in our singing clubs and perform, such as visiting our local care home and singing to the elderly. Also, many of our children request 'calming music' when completing their work as it helps them concentrate. It is evident that music builds confidence within our children as one child in Year 5 said 'when I play music I feel like the sun is around me'.



Question 2 – up to 500 words

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

At St James', we are excited to begin our Artsmark journey and help us to achieve specific targets on our School Development Plan (SDP). Currently, one of our targets is to ensure that there is clear progression in provision from the two years olds to Reception children, in the EYFS unit. Already, we have put in place a curriculum with clear progressions in art, for example, in the Early Years, children in Nursery are introduced to structures when they use their senses to explore, manipulate, join and play with different materials. This then prepares children for Reception where they explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function. Children are then well equipped with their skills in Design Technology to progress in Year 1, where they explore how to make structures stronger by investigating different techniques for stiffening a variety of materials and joining these together using different methods.

Another one of our SDP targets is to provide sensory diet plans for children with SEN. One way we hope to build on this throughout our Artsmark journey is by providing all children, including those with SEN, cultural capital experiences. For example, every class will be given the opportunity to experience a school trip or visit to embrace The Arts such as a trip to the theatre, a visit from an artist or a trip to an art gallery. Alongside this, we have links with a local college who we will be facilitating events for our children to experience and visit. This will then encourage them to aspire, when they grow up by exploring the theatre, science lab, construction site etc.

A third priority on our SDP is to improve standards in writing and increase writing stamina across the school. One way in which we hope to achieve this, is through drama. We will be using Artsmark to aid in our delivery of drama, as we are currently increasing the number of opportunities offered to our children to express themselves through drama. We hope that the more we provide our children with opportunities to role play and take part in drama, the more confidence and creativity our children will gain to apply this and improve their writing.

In addition to this, we will be putting art on our SDP in September 2023, specifically to improve the implementation of our well thought out curriculum. We anticipate that our Artsmark journey will be positive and successful, aiding us to not only achieve all of our targets, but to exceed these.



Question 3 – up to 500 words

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

At St James', we have a meticulous, successful, bespoke curriculum put together by subject leaders and the curriculum lead, as mentioned above. Every child in our school is introduced to at least two different artists and designers in each year group which we believe helps stimulate children's curiosity and creativity. We have a music specialist teacher who comes into our school weekly and delivers our bespoke curriculum to each cohort. The progression of skills builds in each year group and the children are introduced to new musical instruments. Each child is given the opportunity to learn how to play the glockenspiel, the recorder and the ukulele. We offer a wide range of opportunities to our children, such as The Last Choir Standing, that our KS2 children participated in during March 2022. Additionally, in 2019, our KS2 children attended Young Voices. The children loved learning the songs in our school singing club before performing these live for many to see. As a school, we would love to participate and offer more of these opportunities to our children as we move on from the effects and restrictions of COVID-19.

As a school, we aim to develop our cultural capital experiences for all our children. Although we offer many experiences, we would love to offer every class a school trip or visit surrounding the arts, as mentioned in question 2. Another area we will be developing is the CPD offered to staff, as we believe this will raise confidence and expertise of our staff to deliver a rich curriculum. We will be arranging CPD with a school in our local cluster for the Art and Design Lead and the Design and Technology Lead to attend and then deliver to all staff.

All of our children are given the opportunity to express themselves through drama. We offer all children the chance to attend Drama club, children are also given the opportunity to perform in our KS1 Nativity play, KS2 carol concert, KS2 Easter meditation and Year 6 end of year play (Cinderella Pantomime 2022). However, as mentioned above, we will now build on this by providing more frequent opportunities such as embedding drama into the curriculum, to eventually improve children's creativity and writing. As a Catholic school, we would also like to use our links with our church, St Mary's, to give our children the confidence to perform more often in front of their parents and our parishioners.

At St. James' we are proud to offer a vast range of additional experiences in order to engage the children and enrich our bespoke curriculum. The current extra-curricular clubs we offer to extend the arts provision, offered outside of the school day include; gardening, choir, drama, a range of sports and Live Simply Arts club. We are excited to extend the range of clubs offered to our children throughout our Artsmark journey, to provide unique and exciting opportunities for our children whilst celebrating the Arts and culture.



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?

As part of our Artsmark journey, our first goal is to monitor the usage and effectiveness of our new bespoke curriculum, particularly in Music, with our new subject specialist teacher. As a school, we will continue to deliver certain activities, as well as introducing more, such as; whole school singing, bespoke whole school music lessons, provide extracurricular clubs such as singing, audit music across the curriculum including skills and monitoring the enjoyment of subject and provide staff with the opportunity to observe our music specialist teacher in order to develop confidence and CPD. To ensure this goal is achieved, we will be gathering evidence such as analysing the outcome of the audit skills and confidence survey, observing the progress regularly through live observations and recording this through photographs and videos that will be evidenced on our school website. When we come to evaluate the impact of this goal, we hope that children will feel more confident in their musical instrument and self- esteem, our staff will have the confidence to deliver and support our children through their musical journey and our children will show passion to continue music lessons as they move on through high school.

Secondly, we aim to celebrate Art across the school with parents and the wider community. In order to achieve this, we will be hosting an Arts event for parents, carers and the wider community to celebrate the children's Art this summer. We will be providing children with the skills required to achieve their final product to display at our Arts event, by implementing and displaying our bespoke curriculum. We will also liaise with art subject leaders within our local schools cluster and the local ARTZ centre to share good practice and arrange external CPD opportunities. In addition to this, we will build links with our local high school and university to share good practice and teach our children with their specialised skills in Art and DT. We believe that by hosting this event to share and celebrate our children's talents that their confidence and wellbeing will increase whilst also highlighting their gifts.

Our third aim, is to build cultural capital by allowing every class to experience an Arts trip or visit, providing them with additional opportunities to access arts and culture. To achieve this goal, we will begin by contacting external companies to find a trip suitable for each cohort taking into consideration their needs, interests and our curriculum. We will know that we have achieved this goal when the children are able to talk about their trip, what they experienced and we can see evidence of this through photographs and videos that will be shared with the children's families and the community online. Once achieved, children will have experienced a wide range of trips and visits and their experiences will be widened, enabling them to shine and have a greater understanding about the Arts.



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 implement our plans and achieve our goals and ambitions, here at St James', we have put together a wealth of resources. To help us achieve our first goal, we will need a specialist music teacher to deliver our curriculum, a variety of musical instruments, time for this to develop and an external company to provide 'in house' music lessons – we have appointed RAD music for this. For our second goal, we will need a company to provide art frames and boards for display, time for children to prepare and produce their final products and a suitable method to share the news with the community, such as posters.

One of the main resources we will need to achieve our goals is money, therefore we will be hosting fund raising events to raise the money, if necessary, to ensure each class can access a relevant trip or visit, as well as all the other resources needed as mentioned above. In addition to this, we will need transport so that we are able to get our children to and from the different locations chosen for our trips. To complete this

goal, we will be liaising with external companies so that we are able to provide our children with successful, meaningful trips and visits.

Throughout our Artsmark journey, we will strive for support from our local community. Whether this be acknowledging and joining us to support and celebrate the arts across the school, or donating resources to help us achieve, such as picture frames for our arts exhibition. Furthermore, we will be working closely with local companies to make our art exhibition a fun packed, memorable experience for all. Therefore, we will be looking into hiring different stalls for our event such as an ice-cream van and a bouncy castle. This event will then be shared via our social media pages and school website using photographs and videos from the day.

Through the support of our local cluster schools, we will be sourcing and funding relevant and beneficial CPD for teachers across the Arts, as mentioned in question 3. In turn, this will increase staff's confidence in teaching certain skills, identified as necessary through a staff questionnaire. Going forward, staff can then use this training to help develop the children's final pieces or performances for our big art exhibition.

In addition to all of the above, we hope to build a prayer garden in our school grounds as a safe space for our children to worship. This is going to be a whole school project that we welcome the involvement and creativity from our children. Our children will be designing our prayer garden, once we have all the plans in place and have decided on one plan, we will take our children to explain this to a local construction team. The local construction team will help us put our ideas into place, based on the staff and children's interests.



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?

As we come to the end of our Artsmark journey here at St James', we guarantee we will have a wealth of evidence to celebrate the success of the Arts in our school. The success of our Artsmark will be evident in our children and staff; high confidence, positive attitudes, love of the Arts and much more. Standards across the board will be improved. This will be evidenced in a range of different ways, for example; progress evidenced from book scrutiny, analysing teacher assessments for each subject across the years and pupil interviews. In addition to this, subject leaders and senior leaders will be able to observe improved standards as a result of learning walks and teacher observations, to ensure high quality lessons are delivered in an exciting learning environment.

Throughout our Artsmark journey, all at St James' will be participating in collating and gathering evidence of the Arts in action. Children will record their learning and their creativity in their books, for example art sketchbooks. Besides this, teachers will share pictures and videos of their subject in action on our school website under the correct class and subject. By taking videos, this will enable us to watch and listen to

the progress made in certain subjects, such as music. Many of our photographs and videos of the arts in action will be shared via our school Facebook page (St James' Skelmersdale), enabling families and the wider community to celebrate our successes too. In addition to this, our school uses the Classdojo app to communicate with our families daily. We are very efficient in keeping our families up-to-date with what we have been up to each day. Therefore photographs, videos and updates will be regularly available for any subject leaders and senior managers to also witness the Arts in progress.

Our arts expedition which we will be hosting in May 2023 will enable not only teachers, but also the children and the wider community to witness the progress and success that our talented children bring to our school. Throughout this, our children will be able to share their work with pride, which in turn will build enthusiasm, confidence. As well as listening to our pupil voice, at events like this, we will be collecting responses from parents and guardians too, to gather their feedback on the way the Arts are delivered across the school.

Here at St James', we are excited to grow and develop our Arts and culture throughout the next couple of years where we allow our children to inspire, succeed and achieve. Our children will always be at the heart of this journey, where we will do our best to allow them to shine.

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: Angela Blacoe

Date: 31.03.23

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Chair of Governors Name: Ryan Hughes

Date: 01.04.23

Checklist

Make sure you've checked the following before you submit online:

- 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
- I have not included any additional information or evidence such as images, media, hyperlinks, or web links in my answers
- The Headteacher and Chair of Governors (or where these positions don't exist, persons of equivalent levels of responsibility) have approved this document.

Ready to submit?

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

Once you've finalised your answers and have completed the checklist above, you are ready to submit **online**. **We no longer accept submissions by email.**

Copy and paste your answers into your online Statement of Commitment form using the unique web link we emailed to you. Can't find your link? Get in touch to request it by emailing artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk