



**Artsmark**  
AWARDED BY ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

# Statement of Impact

Application paperwork 2 of 2

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

## Support

We are here if you need us

### Use this template to draft and finalise your Statement of Impact.

You must submit your Statement of Impact **online** – we do not accept submissions by email. Please read our [Submission Guidance](#) for the steps to follow.

Download our [guidance](#) on how to complete your Statement of Impact and get in touch with our national delivery partner, Goldsmiths, University of London, who is on hand to support you on your Artsmark journey.

### Top 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 impact of your Artsmark journey.
- Equally, try to use as much of the time available to you as possible before submitting your Statement of Impact. The more time you have, the more opportunity you have to evidence the impact of your work.
- Try not to repeat examples throughout your Statement of Impact. It is better to decide which of the questions a specific example fits best with and use it just the once.
- Our national delivery partner, Goldsmiths, University of London, is on hand to support you on your Artsmark journey. Visit our [Support and Resources](#) web pages to find out more.



**Context** – up to 150 words

If there have been changes to the context of your school or education setting since the submission of your Statement of Commitment, please describe them here.

St James' Catholic Primary school continues to grow in numbers, with 234 pupils now on roll- 16.4% Pupil Premium and 17.5% identified as SEND. With our increasing numbers, we are proud to be the only school in Skelmersdale 'over- subscribed' for 2025 September intake.

Here at St James', we have dedicated significant time and thought to updating our school mission statement. After listening to the pupil voice, parent voice and many staff and governor meetings for our staff and governor voice, we are proud to introduce our new mission statement; '*St James', where we belong, believe and achieve*'.

Furthermore, our school has moved cluster groups and are now part of a different cluster, therefore we were unable to access CPD at the local cluster school as originally planned in our Statement of Commitment, however we have completed this and many more within our new cluster as outlined below.



**Question 1** – up to 500 words

Reflecting on your Statement of Commitment and the Artsmark criteria, what was successful in your Artsmark journey and how did you achieve this?

Reflecting on our Statement of Commitment and the Artsmark criteria, a key success in our journey has been celebrating the Arts across our school and wider community. We achieved this through various initiatives, including our summer term art exhibition. Each year group (2-year-olds – Year 6) performed a song and dance on stage related to the king (to celebrate the King's Coronation), while every child displayed their final piece of art or DT in our hall exhibition. To ensure the event's success, staff collaborated to define themes and outcomes before engaging pupils in discussions, incorporating their voices but ensuring to cover the expected outcomes for art or DT in each year. This encouraged enthusiasm amongst our children and as a result, children's confidence soared as they proudly posed with their artwork, sharing their achievements with families and the wider community. Several children who typically wouldn't sing or perform in front of an audience did so with newfound confidence, driven by practice and genuine engagement due to the fact children took an active role in choreographing their routines, further enhancing their enjoyment and self-assurance. The success and impact of this event is showcased on our school website, where the Pupil Parliament created a video to share the celebration with those in our community who could not attend. We were overwhelmed with the positive feedback from this event, "*The children's*

*singing was beautiful and the art work was amazing. It was so lovely for the whole school to celebrate such a special occasion together. I am sure it is something M and G will remember forever,” (26/05/23).*

In addition to this, St James' are the only school in the North West to receive two 'special recognition awards' for their performances at Anfield Stadium and The Hilton. This is a great achievement for our school and has taken months of choir practice and perseverance to achieve. James Holden, from The Royal Academy of Culinary Arts posted on St James' school Facebook post, "This school has the best choir... they entertain my dinner guests annually with amazing performances getting standing ovations! Go sing your lungs out!!!" when our school choir attended Young Voices.

Over the course of our Artmaskr journey, we have assessed and extended the clubs we offer, to provide a variety of different clubs expressing the arts:

- Drama club – Easter and Christmas
- Dance club- external agency
- Gymnastics club- external agency
- Singing
- Art club
- Seasonal crafts club
- Animation club
- Outdoor adventure- external agency
- Pupil Parliament club
- Gardening club
- Cookery club
- External agency (SHARES) cooking club for families
- Board games
- Recorder club
- Reading club

As a result of the variety of clubs offered, we have found children take a lot more pride in their work, they're engaged and ready to learn. They're also communicating and socialising more with each other, making great friends which has hugely raised their self- esteem and confidence to interact with others. We are constantly evaluating and adapting the clubs offered, based on pupil interest and feedback.



**Question 2** – up to 500 words

What challenges did you face and how did you overcome them? Were there any differences from your original plans and how did you implement them?

One of the biggest challenges St James' have faced on their Artsmark journey is finance. As one of our main priorities has been to build cultural capital, by enabling every child to experience an Arts trip this has been tricky to complete in a cost-effective way. Therefore, our pupil parliament children have created their own fund-raising events, such as bracelet making where all money is donated to subsidise school trips. We found that the coach cost alone, to transport students to and from trips, was not sufficient. Therefore, after many phone calls and emails, we were able to organise a whole school trip to St Helen's Theatre to watch Snow White. This enabled all children to experience an arts trip all at once, the coach price was split across all children and tickets were heavily discounted due to the large amount bought at once. In addition to this, we feel this has taken the pressure off parents slightly to build cultural capital. The children were wowed and amazed by the size and architect of the theatre, that many went home sharing this positive experience with parents excitedly which has influenced some families to book family trips to the theatre. Many children have come into school since, sharing with teachers about their upcoming trips to the theatre which has been pleasing to hear.

Moreover, we have found liaising with our local high school a challenge. The high school have apologised for not facilitating a visit as they are undergoing staffing issues and a long new term development project in art. They have offered a drumming session from their enthusiastic music teacher and a drama workshop. We are still waiting to hear from the high school and hoping to complete these sessions in the summer term. Instead of our local high school, St James' have visited our local college, West Lancashire College, for multiple sessions. The children have loved visiting the construction studio, where they had the opportunity to lay bricks, design and create projects, and even try nailing wood themselves.

Furthermore, we were excited to take our Year 4 class to the Apple shop in Liverpool for a media workshop to link in with our bespoke photography unit. This was our original plan as a cultural capital experience for our Year 4 class trip. Unfortunately, this is no longer available at Liverpool therefore we are currently seeking support from our local college and university to try book in a session. Fortunately, our Year 4 class have still experienced their own cultural capital trip as they visited the Liverpool Philharmonic Schools Concerts, "Going for Gold: The Orchestral Olympics" in March 2024, alongside Years 5 and 6 that we aim to continue yearly. It was amazing to see the children's faces, as they entered the philharmonic in awe, enchanted by its magnificence and atmosphere. This has influenced many of our KS2 children to join 'Rock Steady' and learn their own musical instrument.



**Question 3** – up to 500 words

What impact has the Artsmark journey had on your children and young people and how can you evidence this?

Fostering and embedding the Arts into our everyday school life has played a significant role in building self-esteem among our pupils. Throughout this, there is an extensive list of how St James' fosters the arts in all that it does, such as a variety of art, drama and music clubs, cultural capital experiences and opportunities to showcase the arts, sharing this with the

community. This is reflected in our pupil questionnaire results- 91.7% of children 'agreed' with the statement, "My confidence in the Arts has grown," and the remaining 8.3% responded with 'a bit', leaving 0% in the 'disagree' category. These results highlight the positive impact of our approach in fostering confidence and creativity through the Arts, and the importance to continue all that we have put in place throughout our Artsmark journey.

We've created arts opportunities that children will cherish forever. After our school choir performed at Young Voices, one parent shared: "*What a beautiful choir St James has... V loved every second and will remember forever.*" This highlights the lasting impact of our arts provision, boosting confidence, creativity, and pride—20% of our choir are Pupil Premium. Our choir also performed at Skelmersdale's Concourse Shopping Centre, engaging with the local community. We love involving our local community in all that we do, it was so special to be able to give back to them by putting on an exceptional performance. Parents showed their support, with one saying, "*A has absolutely loved it and it's amazing to see her doing her own thing.*" This highlights the freedom and confidence our children develop. This reflects our commitment to fostering self-expression, allowing each child to explore their creativity in a way that is meaningful to them.

Forest School plays a crucial role in our Artsmark journey by fostering creativity, self-expression, and confidence in our pupils. Through outdoor learning, children engage in hands-on experiences that inspire artistic exploration, from storytelling and natural art to music and movement. Through the freedom and discovery, it is clear that our children have increased their self-esteem, resilience, and problem-solving skills. By embedding Forest School into our arts provision, we have created a holistic, child-centred approach that enhances well-being, nurturing creativity. After a successful trial of our children with social and emotional needs, 33% with SEND and 50% Pupil premium, we have fully embedded Forest School into our bespoke curriculum, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to express themselves creatively each week. Thus nurturing self-esteem, resilience and artistic exploration, enriching our commitment to the Artsmark Award. In particular, one child with SEND has hugely grown in confidence; "*I am now confident enough to use the big cutters and knives without help, I am so proud*". This child was afraid to step out of their comfort zone and use the knives, after weeks of building up their confidence, surrounded by other children using the knives, they succeeded. They were so proud and couldn't believe how far they had come, resulting in a significant boost to their self-esteem.



**Question 4** – up to 500 words

What impact has the Artsmark journey had on your staff, leadership team and wider community and how can you evidence this?

The Art Lead has led a variety of staff meetings based on staff's development priorities. As the budget is tight, the Art Lead has attended specialist arts training held by Lancashire Professional Development Service and fed this back to all staff. Teachers identified the use of sketchbooks as an area for development. In response, the Art Lead attended external training focused on enhancing sketchbook use in primary art. They then led a practical staff meeting, demonstrating a variety of media to create an artist double-page spread. As a

result, teachers have since shared their pupils' sketchbooks with the Art Lead, showcasing a significant boost in their confidence and skill; *"My confidence in teaching art has grown significantly. Introducing each topic with an artist has inspired pupils, sparking excitement about their own creations whilst also providing me with clearer direction in my teaching."*

As part of our Year 5 art topic 'Coastal Landscapes', children visited Formby beach to sketch and take photographs, exploring the landscape first-hand. Using their photos, local coastal artist Edward Pugh visited Year 5 to support them in creating their final piece. He taught techniques for shading, texture, and atmosphere, and shared his own artwork. The children were inspired by his visit and enjoyed asking questions about his work and experiences. Their final pieces were framed and proudly displayed at Skelmersdale Library, where they were delighted to share their work with the community. The librarian said how well this has been received by customers and one adult commented on Facebook, *"Amazing work, well done."* Before Artsmark, only 12.5% of staff agreed that children's talents in the Arts were shared with the community. That figure has now risen to 100%, reflecting the school's commitment and strong progress toward this goal.

At St. James', we value strong family relationships and invite them to share performances, including stay and plays, Mother's and Father's Day events, the KS1 nativity, KS2 Carol Concert at St Mary's Church, Year 6 pantomime, and spotlight assemblies. 96.2% of parents agree that *"St James' celebrates the Arts across the school,"* highlighting the many opportunities children have to showcase their talents. We also introduced a coffee and cake morning for parishioners, where each year group performed Christmas songs. The children beamed with pride, showing compassion as they interacted with guests. Seeing the parishioners' joy was truly heart-warming.

Our SHARES cluster group runs a cooking club for families, helping them create healthy meals and enjoy quality time together. It has boosted confidence in both children and parents. One parent shared, *"V and A love learning new skills and trying new foods."* Due to its success, another six-week course will run after Easter. St. James' also hosts a weekly baby group for 0–2-year-olds, offering the community a space to connect through sensory play, painting, and nursery rhymes. This supports early development and helps children begin expressing themselves through art from the earliest stages. We value creativity as a key part of a child's growth.



#### **Question 5** – up to 500 words

How has your Artsmark journey influenced change to your strategic values and the priorities in your strategic improvement plan?

Throughout our Artsmark journey, we have strived to foster stronger partnerships with external agencies and the wider community. One recent example of this is our local 'Artz Centre' who provided a drama workshop for our year 6 pupils. We visited the studio and our children loved seeing the stage, lighting and having the chance to perform a variety of 'freeze- frame' scenarios. Our children returned from the trip very happy and eager to

perform in our yearly Year 6 pantomime, showing a great confidence boost in the willingness to perform. We are now booked in for other year groups to visit, strengthening this community link. We believe that drama enables children to develop emotional expression, helping them to communicate feelings in a creative and meaningful ways. Our nurture room provides a supportive space where children can build their confidence and emotional well-being.

In line with our school mission statement, 'St James', where we belong, believe and achieve' we have a dedicated Arts display in the school hall where we celebrate children from our 2-year-olds provision right across to Year 6. In addition to this, we have prioritised our art budget to create a new art space within our school to engage and motivate children during their art/ DT lessons. This space has been designed by our Year 5/6 art club, who have embraced our school mission statement and created a variety of mixed media art displays expressing our school values. We have also adapted our Year 5 DT topic 'Fashionista' to ensure we are celebrating different ethnicities and backgrounds in the arts, promoting inclusivity. This topic, is now based around the artist 'Althea McNish', the first designer of African- Caribbean heritage to gain international recognition. Althea McNish is a brilliant role model for art and our pupils due to her creativity and cultural influence.

Furthermore, we have placed music on our School Improvement Plan this year; "To revise our Music curriculum offer to ensure that skills and talents are nurtured and progress is made by all".

Progress made so far, Autumn:

- Questionnaire for parents
- Partnership set up with Lancashire Music Hub for Y3 and Y4
- Subscribed to charanga for curriculum
- Choir every Monday after school
- Choir local community tour- the church, the Concourse and West Lancs College
- The Hilton (Liverpool) trip – Sang for British Royal Culinary Society and served canapes
- Rock Steady sessions continued with performance for whole school and parents
- RAD music- private lessons
- New recorders and glockenspiels purchased
- Music lead CPD- Lancashire
- Music leads created action plan for this academic year

Spring:

- Violin lessons have commenced for children in Years 3 and 4
- Music leads attended training with Charanga
- Music leads attended deep dive training with Liverpool Archdiocese
- Music leads finalised curriculum, created an action plan and music development plan
- Music leads met with James Hall from Lancashire music Hub to discuss the new partnership and discussed developing skills of gifted and talented pupils.
- Attended Young Voices on 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025
- Music development plan finalised for the year



**Question 6** – up to 500 words

What are your future goals and ambitions for developing the role of arts and culture in your setting?

We have recently sent out parent questionnaires to gain their view on their child's RAD music sessions, due to the fact that some negative reviews have been shared about this company. As a result, we have introduced Rock Steady in addition to this. Pupil questionnaires prove they loving Rock Steady. As this is a parent financial commitment, we have also provided taster sessions for all to experience as well as a whole school assembly. However, we have found that 65.3% of the parents who answered our music questionnaire said their child does not participate in external music opportunities through school (Rocksteady and RAD music) due to the cost. Therefore, going forward we would like to find a cost-efficient alternative to this. We have already funded one Pupil Premium child who we have identified as gifted and talented, they receive weekly drumming lessons, and introduced whole class funded violin lessons in Year 3 and 4 since January 2025. In addition to this, we hope to fund more Pupil Premium gifted and talented children. We are looking to take our children to Ormskirk Music Centre to join an ensemble from across the county and will be offering a gifted and talented music club after school.

In addition, to strengthen and widen our already successful community links, we are partnering with other schools in our surrounding area to plan an 'art basket' that will be passed around the schools, creating one final collaborative piece of art to celebrate the Jubilee year. We look forward to collaborating and expressing the arts together, enabling children to connect, share ideas, and contribute their creativity to a shared artistic vision. This project will not only strengthen community bonds but also inspire children to appreciate the power of collaborative art.

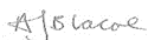
We are well underway in planning our end-of-year arts celebration, which will showcase the incredible creativity of our pupils through performances and exhibitions. This event will bring together our school community and families to celebrate the arts in a meaningful way. Our goal is to provide every child with the opportunity to perform, exhibit their work, and develop confidence in expressing themselves through various art forms. We are hoping to have our school band performing too. By involving the wider community, we aim to strengthen our cultural connections and inspire a shared appreciation for the arts.

As we come towards the end of our Artsmark journey, we are proud to have the Arts at the centre of St James with confident children. We will continue to ensure the arts remain at the heart of our curriculum and school identity, whilst striving for the next goal within the arts.

## Approval

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

X I confirm that I have read, approved and endorsed the Statement of Impact and agree that it represents an accurate evaluative account of the Artsmark journey



**Headteacher Name:** Angela Blacoe

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025

I confirm that I have read, approved, and endorsed the Statement of Impact and agree that it represents an accurate evaluative account of the Artsmark journey

**Chair of Governors Name:** Ryan Hughes



**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025

## 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
- x I have not included any additional information or evidence such as images, media, hyperlinks or weblinks
- 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 must submit your Statement of Impact within **two years** of submitting your Statement of Commitment. Once you've finalised your answers and have completed the checklist above, you are ready to [submit online](#). **We do not accept submissions by email**. Copy and paste your answers into your online Statement of Impact 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](mailto:artsmark@artscouncil.org.uk)