



Friday 19 May 2023

Artsmark Award for Warden House

Dear Parents and Carers

As I'm sure you are aware, we are incredibly passionate about the Arts at Warden House and our staff do a huge amount to embed this into many aspects of our curriculum. As a result of this passion, we decided to begin our "Artsmark" journey at the start of 2019 with the aim of achieving an "Artsmark" award for our school. Artsmark awards are either 'silver', 'gold', or 'platinum'.

As part of the process, we started gathering evidence of the range of "irresistible learning" opportunities taking place across the school. Covid then hit in 2020 and slowed some things down; as a result, this delayed our submission. Our portfolio was submitted in March this year – and we have today heard that we have been awarded Artsmark - **at GOLD level!**



**Artsmark
Gold Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England

We are obviously very proud of all we have achieved and of the quality of the Arts education on offer to our pupils. We especially proud of our arts leaders- Sheila Vyse (who started the journey prior to her retirement in 2021) and teachers Ashleigh Mann and Jade McDonald who completed the very detailed final submission.

The statement overleaf was sent to us following our submission and highlights the strengths of the school and our next steps to progress even further. We thought that you would enjoy celebrating this special news with us.

Wishing you all a super weekend.

Yours faithfully

Mr Rob Hackett
Headteacher





Warden House Primary School - Artsmark Award

Thank you for your recent submission, and congratulations on completing your Artsmark journey.

You've achieved an Artsmark Gold Award!

We are delighted to inform you that your setting has been awarded an Artsmark Gold Award. Congratulations!

Your Statement of Commitment and Statement of Impact have been assessed and we're pleased to share this feedback from our assessors with you:

'Staff at Warden House Primary School evidently place a high value on the Arts and recognise their contribution to children's personal development, self-confidence, and your mission statement of providing 'irresistible learning for all'.

There is a firm commitment to promoting arts and culture within your setting, and to increasing students' cultural capital. Despite changes in leadership within your Trust; a change in Art Leader; and the difficulties created by the pandemic, you have nonetheless made progress during your Artsmark journey, and capitalised on the arts to boost morale during school closures (e.g. your participation in the National Gallery's Take One Picture project).

You have reviewed your art curriculum and created dedicated new schemes of work with clear skills progression, with a focus on children taking ownership of their own arts work and being enabled to develop their personal progression. You have also successfully introduced the use of sketchbooks, mapping children's progression in art skills across their time within the school. Pupils' understanding of a variety of different cultural traditions has been developed through your regular, whole-school 'Culture Days', with an emphasis on cross-curricular use of the Arts to support learning, including Haka Dance as part of learning about New Zealand and Batik resist-work as part of a day learning about Indonesia.

You have strengthened your music offer and developed teachers' skills through a subscription to 'Kapow!', and by developing links with external partners, including the 'Bold As!' brass group, so that your Year 5 children are provided with weekly instrumental tuition.

Children showcase their musical achievements in recitals and in national events such as Young Voices, and there are now opportunities for them to access extra-curricular music sessions, led by 'Rock Steady'. Other arts clubs, such as musical theatre and dance, are enhancing children's enjoyment and skills in the Arts. Opportunities to work alongside arts professionals, such as authors and illustrators, have inspired and motivated children.



Your 'Mud Maid' project in partnership with Deal Music and Arts Festival created chances for children to work with a local composer and live orchestra to create their own silent action movie, and culminated in a community performance alongside pupils from other local schools.

Staff have benefitted from in-house CPD opportunities and the opportunity to meet with your arts leaders individually in 'curriculum surgeries'. External training, delivered by 'Learning through Landscapes' has enhanced teaching outside the classroom and planning has been embedded within the art curriculum. This sounded really interesting, and we would love to hear about this in more detail.

For the future, to strengthen your work at Gold, we suggest that you look to develop mechanisms for involving young people in the planning and delivery of authentic arts and culture learning opportunities, exerting personal choice, and making decisions about their arts learning. This could be achieved, for example, by appointing pupil Arts Ambassadors who work with staff to steer choices about visiting arts practitioners, extracurricular arts opportunities, and visits to arts venues.

Although COVID prevented you from making all the planned links with other Trust schools, going forwards, you are in a good position to begin to champion the arts within your MAT, and to begin to find ways to grow your sphere of influence beyond it. We suggest that you consider: how staff can promote the arts and share good practice across a wider range of settings; how key staff support, develop and lead CPD beyond the setting (and provide evidence of the difference this is making); how you can involve your young people in your outreach work; and how you can evidence the difference this making in other settings.

Lastly, we look forward to hearing how your plans to develop your derelict year 6 building into a Community Arts Centre progress – this would be a wonderful resource for your local community!

Congratulations on your Artsmark Gold Award!

Your award is valid for two years and will expire on 19/05/2025