



How to make the most of arts and culture in your school's Ofsted inspection.

If you're a school leader, governor or an arts teacher, you'll know that the arts and culture are essential to all children and young people's education. You'll also know that they make an important contribution to the life of your school. In Ofsted inspections, inspectors must evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development before making the final judgement on a school's overall effectiveness. So, when it comes to an Ofsted inspection, how can you evidence the impact of the arts and culture on your school?

At Arts Council England, we've worked over the past year with Ofsted directors and inspectors to look at how schools can evidence the benefits of arts and culture within inspections. From September 2015, schools have been subject to a new inspection framework for education, skills and early years. This framework presents many opportunities for schools to demonstrate their commitment to the arts and culture. One of the Arts Council's goals is for all children and young people to experience the richness of the arts, museums and libraries. We want children and young people to take part in and appreciate cultural activities in and out of school. The Arts Council's revised [Artsmark](#) award will help you to develop your school's arts and cultural provision in order to inspire teaching, enrich learning and plan for better outcomes for your pupils.

Here are ten ways in which your school can use the arts and culture to help inform inspection judgements. All these prompts can also provide useful evidence to support your school on its [Artsmark](#) journey.

- How do the arts contribute to the curriculum?
- How effectively do the arts help improve the achievement of particular groups of pupils?
- How do you prepare pupils for work in the creative industries?
- How do you provide professional development to improve teaching and learning in the arts?
- How do arts teachers show high expectations of pupils including the most creatively able?
- How do you use the arts to promote an understanding of diversity?
- How well do pupils show pride in their arts achievements?
- What progress do pupils make in the arts?
- How well do you deliver the 'C' in SMSC?

- How do you use the arts to address school priorities?

Ten Prompts to make sure you are ‘arts aware’ and ‘inspection ready’

The effectiveness of leadership and management

1. How effectively do the arts contribute to the breadth and relevance of the curriculum in order to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of all learners?

For example, how popular are optional arts activities and courses, including examination choices at key stages 4 and 5? [Link to Artsmark [curriculum design](#)]

2. How effectively do learning programmes in the arts help to improve the attitudes and achievement of particular groups of pupils?

For example, a successful creative writing project for a group of Roma children led by a professional writer with a Roma background? [Link to Artsmark [equality and diversity](#)]

3. What is the impact of your school’s connections with the creative industries on preparing pupils for the next stage of their education, training or employment?

For example, through ‘live’ projects, work with visiting artists or work experience placements in galleries, museums, theatres, libraries? [Link to Artsmark [partnerships](#)]

4. What is the impact of your school’s external links on improving teaching and learning in the arts through appropriate professional development?

For example, by supporting non-specialist music teachers to attend CPD provided by your music education hub? [Link to Artsmark [CPD](#)]

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

5. How well do arts teachers and practitioners demonstrate high expectations of what each pupil can achieve, including the creatively most able?

For example, by encouraging able musicians to use their specialist instrument in lessons? By giving talented dancers the opportunity to develop choreographic skills as well as technical and performance skills? The Arts Council’s [quality principles](#) provide an approach to raising the standard of work produced by pupils. [Link to Artsmark [pupil engagement](#)]

6. How well do teachers and support staff use the arts to promote equality of opportunity and an understanding of diversity?

For example, through role-play in drama lessons or by responding sensitively to art, craft and design created in different times and places? [Link to Artsmark [equality and diversity](#)]

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

7. To what extent do pupils develop pride in their achievements, build confidence and discover self-awareness through their learning in the arts? For example, through high quality public performances or exhibitions of their arts work captured in school displays and news reports? [Link to Artsmark [values and ethos](#)] or through listening carefully to each other, reflecting critically on their work and performing confidently in singing lessons? [Link to Artsmark [pupil engagement](#)]

Outcomes for pupils

8. To what extent do pupils make consistently strong progress in the arts, developing secure knowledge, understanding and skills that contribute to strong cultural development? For example, learning how to critically evaluate the work of other artists, musicians, dancers, actors, makers, designers in order to improve the quality and creativity of their own work? [Link to Artsmark [pupil engagement](#)]

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Inspectors will be looking for evidence of provision that successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Evidence in the school inspection handbook includes specific reference to pupils' responding positively to artistic, musical, sporting and cultural opportunities.

9. How well do different groups of pupils in your school participate in cultural learning? How is this reflected in their engagement in arts and cultural activities in and out of school? For example, by pursuing an Arts Award or by using theatre, gallery or concert visits to impact positively on their learning and life? [Link to Artsmark [range of offer, values and ethos](#)]

Ofsted regional priorities

You can listen to your Ofsted regional director talking about standards and priorities for education in your [region](#). You can find out more about arts priorities in your region by contacting your local [Bridge](#) organisation or from the [cultural education data portal](#).

10. How well have you used the arts and culture to address your school priorities or the wider regional priorities? For example, by using pupil premium funding to raise the attendance or achievement of looked after children through opportunities to work with professional artists, writers, and musicians? [Link to Artsmark [partnerships](#)]

And, when your school gets positive feedback on its arts and culture in an inspection report, don't forget to tell pupils and their parents about it. Get in touch with your local music education hub and Bridge organisation.