

Discussion Summary

Which aspects of Artsmark are working well?

- Audit – encourages school to think about their timetable and possible changes.
- Raises the profile of arts in the school.
- It appears that the impact is greater in primary schools (in terms of whole school).
- Celebration – Local would work well
- Continuing Professional Development (CPD) – Provides framework, highlights gaps, keeps agenda moving and puts focus on leadership and management.
- Cross arts policy – developing this encourages a strategic view across school
- Curriculum time for individual arts subjects.
- Emphasis on partnerships is working well.
- Diversity/equal opportunities sections are strong
- Encouraging sustained partnerships with cultural organisations.
- Ideal vehicle for specialist arts colleges; should be a requirement to get specialist status.
- Reputation – established, known brand name – accreditation.
- Linking targets to Self Evaluation Framework (SEF)
- Detailed audit
- Staff evaluation

What changes should be made?

- Increased active involvement by Local Authority (LA) – e.g. someone to assess as part of 'quality'.
- Form changes too often
- Timescale – rolling programme?
- Streamlined approach for re-accreditation.
- Self evaluation?
- Investigate the financial investment for the arts, i.e. what is budgeted for the arts?
- Some of the most creative approaches in schools aren't recognised by Artsmark – frustrating for schools pursuing broader creative and cultural approaches.
- Could use some of the language of Find Your Talent (FYT)
- Related Quality Assurance (QA) criteria for arts/cultural organisations.
- Could recognise partnerships with other schools as well as with cultural organisations.
- Longer run in time – some schools rush to get it – enable schools to see it as developmental.
- Localised celebration events organised by the LA.
- Link celebration events into other events, "get it on the radar".
- Don't dilute it.
- Make online submissions possible.
- Sharing best practice between schools.
- Qualitative peer assessments.

How can Artsmark become financially self supporting?

- Via schools paying a fee (e.g. £300) and therefore getting support and quality assurance.
- Schools could pay, although they already do pay through time.
- Accreditation through Ofsted would give it more value and therefore schools may pay, like Sportsmark – parity is the key. Although this could lead to 'kitemark chasing' rather than real development.

- Advertising campaign to promote the arts/emotional wellbeing for Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural (SMSC) learning.
- Schools now expect to buy in services/pay for support etc. They value what they pay for.
- Problematic that the model for providing support for Artsmark differs in each local authority and doesn't exist in some cases. Could be ways of building the support in local authorities which might reduce need for national phone help line.
- Other QA systems do have charges.
- Make sure LAs support and encourage schools.
- Link in to FYT legacy, link in to extended schools legacy and link into Building Schools for the Future (BSF).
- Make sure application process is direct, makes sense and the benefits and value are made clear.

Could Artsmark be managed by a satellite organisation?

- LA could possibly provide a monitoring/support role
- Regional knowledge is vital, could the CCE (Creativity Culture and Education) or LA do this.
- Could it follow the Arts Award model?
- Is there an interest from the DCSF in keeping this going and are they willing to pay?

Does Artsmark guarantee quality provision or should it be aligned with another quality assurance system?

- No - local trained moderators (a bit like a self evaluation).
- Process is as valuable as product.
- Outside view is that it is all about quality of product, need to make people realise the importance of quality in the process.
- Quality is often subjective – it's about giving children opportunities and experiences.
- Appreciation and enjoyment is important too.
- Value added in terms of general confidence and communication is important.