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**Statement of Commitment**

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| **Name of school/ educational setting** | **Shanklea Primary School** |
| **DfE number** (seven digits) | **929/2077** |

*The questions below are designed to generate a summary of your current and future commitment to developing the arts within your school. The statement will be the foundation for the Artsmark journey your school will embark upon and should create a direct link between a] arts planning and provision and b] your school's long term strategy and vision.*

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| **Question 1** – Please explain the central importance of the arts to your school both at the level of principle (in terms of values/curriculum/developing the whole child) and pedagogically (in terms of impact on improving the quality of provision/teaching and raising standards). In your answer, please refer to both:  (i) current provision and  (ii) plans for future development of the arts  (No more than 500 words) |
| Shanklea Primary School is a larger than average school with 2-5 Early Years provision and available out of school setting. The school is situated on the south-east of Cramlington, a large town and ex mining area in Northumberland, with some significant levels of deprivation and high levels of unemployment. At Shanklea Primary, the Arts are an integral ingredient in providing and enhancing a broad and balanced curriculum that is accessible to every child. We believe the Arts stimulate creativity and imagination; as through the Arts the children are enabled to embark on a journey of self-discovery. We strive to ensure that the children experience the Arts in an authentic, engaging and meaningful way. The arts play a pivotal role in closing the gap with significant value for our children who are eligible for support through Pupil Premium (16.1%). These children often require a personalised intervention programme in order to meet national expectations.  Through carefully planned thematic approaches Shanklea children explore visual, tactile and sensory experiences, and develop a special way of understanding and responding to their world. The Arts encourage the children to communicate what they see, feel and think. They learn to make informed judgements and aesthetic and practical decisions. We believe that the appreciation and enjoyment of the Arts enriches all our lives. Through the Arts, we aim to provide a rich, varied and enabling environment that allows all children and staff to develop their own aesthetic skills and abilities thus reaching their full potential; and promoting our school ethos ‘Be the best you can be’ and ‘Give it all you’ve got!’  **Plans**  As part of Shanklea’s school improvement priorities and journey to ‘Outstanding’, the following aims should enhance and advance the breadth of the primary curriculum. This school has a strong culture of innovation and high aspirations for the community so we shall;   * Actively involve the children and young people by setting up a student arts council which will facilitate leadership and mastery skills whereby the children become the experts and share their passion for creativity. * Promote authenticity by offering children the opportunity to observe and experience a wider range of different art forms within the real-world, thus encouraging the children to explore career options and develop a growth mind-set.   Our ethos is such that all members of the school community will enhance and broaden the children’s experience of the Arts, develop their learning through more exciting and engaging curricular activity. In the workplace there is a strong emphasis upon building a positive attitude toward critical thinking, and this in turn raises standards in teaching and learning. Consequently, we need to build-in robust and clear assessments which measure the impact of these changes on academic learning with a focus on relevant aspects of the school improvement plan. |
| **Question 2** – Following on from your answer above, please describe how and why Artsmark will contribute to your strategic school improvement plans?  (No more than 500 words) |
| The areas of the school improvement plan that will be addressed and supported by the Artsmark process include:   * extending the curriculum to embed further mastery of skills, independence and critical thinking. * building on parental engagement and community links. * developing children’s leadership skills through creating a student’s Arts Council.   We believe that the Arts provide children with the opportunities to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills, by allowing them to express themselves in a variety of ways. By ensuring that opportunities are child-led, by giving them responsibility for and ownership of their learning we should assist in this creative process.  Over time, CPD has taken place, aimed at improving the children’s interaction with the Arts through such approaches as the use of Self Organised Learning Environments (SOLE) which encourage children to widen their use of higher level questioning and develop critical thinking and creativity in their learning. As a school we also strive to incorporate fully ‘choice and challenge’ into our curriculum and high quality lesson planning. This provides for all children of all abilities to further access their learning potential, challenge themselves appropriately and also offer clear opportunities to master skills through critical thinking, resilience and independence.  Regular curriculum reviews are held, allowing children the opportunities to say what they have enjoyed, what could be improved, and how and why they want to move on in their learning. We want to add to these important elements by further implementation of teaching and learning tools that aid independence and higher order creative, critical thinking skills. Children will be enabled to explore concepts and take ownership of their learning journey within a topic. Strongly linked to the curriculum skills such an approach should become firmly embedded and effective in this area of school development.  Alongside this, parental engagement and community links are an essential part of school development, for which Artsmark will play a huge role. The Shanklea School’s Arts Council, will aim to build stronger links between local schools to provide children from across the district with opportunities to plan and create arts projects within the community. Also, we intend to liaise with staff and parents to create an audit of arts related skills they may have, and who could then be contacted by the school for appropriate events, learning activities or enrichment opportunities. |
| **Question 3** – Referring to the Self-Assessment tool, in your view, what Artsmark level best characterises your school at the moment?  (No more than 500 words) |
| At Shanklea Primary we feel that we are successfully meeting all of the Gold level statements and that we are currently working within the Platinum level. We believe that we demonstrate strengths in Leadership, Curriculum Design, Equality and Diversity, and Values and Ethos within the Platinum statements.  There is a named governing body well established within school also with responsibility for monitoring arts and culture. Governors regularly visit curriculum areas, helping to monitor the quality of provision and the level of enjoyment and participation by pupils across the entire primary phase.  To ensure that the quality of **leadership**, **curriculum design** we provide a clear succession plan to develop areas of expertise and interest. In our pursuit of excellence and so educational standards continue to rise, we provide quality in-house coaching and mentoring for new staff and high quality external **CPD** opportunities for all staff. This includes the involvement with a variety of local arts specialists working within a wide range of arts industries. We are currently working alongside the local secondary school to ensure that CPD links strongly to Teaching, Learning and Assessment priorities across the curriculum.  Recent challenges with regards to budget cuts has had a significant impact upon the level of staff development and release to attend suitable training and professional development opportunities.  Recruitment of new staff is requiring that supplementary training is provided. This ensures that high quality arts knowledge and awareness underpins the EYFS and the primary curriculum at Shanklea Primary School. In order to maintain creativity and exemplary practice experienced across the primary phase, teachers and practitioners are coaching and mentoring new personnel. Additionally, over the previous three years, Shanklea has become a training provider, supporting new PGCE or SCITT teachers in the North-East.  The head teacher applied for National Accreditation for CPD training and is working towards silver level.  There is a high **pupil engagement** and take up for extra-curricular clubs and community events. We continue to broaden the wide spectrum of the creative Arts and family learning opportunities. In the recruitment of staff, governors and the head teacher have prudently appointed personnel who have specific talents and passion for the Arts; such skills include digital technologies, theatre, dance, drama and performance, wood technology, graphic design and food technologist. Additionally our involvement incorporates outside musicians and music specialists to deliver lessons to the children throughout the year. The children host an annual music concert to showcase their skills and talents, using a wide range of musical instruments.  To secure platinum – The school will set up a student’s Arts Council. The children will be given the opportunity to develop key leadership skills and contribute ideas and opinions to help drive forward the arts provision across the entire primary phase. The children will be able to support staff when organising events or CPD opportunities. These ambassadors will help produce an Arts Development Plan which will encompass what they would like to achieve, and inform staff in meeting the needs and aspirations of every child in regards to ensuring an engaging arts curriculum, with links to future prospects within and beyond the creative industry.  We offer a broad **range of arts opportunities** for our children, including trips, visits, performances and concerts in school. We have developed strong networking links with other schools, thus providing quality CPD and learning opportunities for staff. It is clear that our children value and enjoy the range of opportunities on offer, and we endeavour to build on and develop these further.  We routinely enrich the curriculum by inviting artists to lead unique workshops with **Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural** (SMSC) perspectives – these interaction with professional actors, dancers, storytellers and musicians leads to exciting outcomes – discipline, fulfilment, enhanced self-esteem, confidence and personal communication skills. The performing arts enable those disaffected and hard to reach pupils to shine! In our pursuit for platinum status **equality and diversity** are pivotal to our success.  **Summary:**  We at Shanklea aim to progress by further developing quality arts provision, both within and in addition to the whole school curriculum, networking and partnerships so that it can be supported and informed by our own arts body, and also closely monitored and evaluated by staff, children and governors. |
| **Question 4** – Thinking of your future work, what will your school's *action plan* look like? What steps will be essential in order for your school to complete your Artsmark journey?  (No more than 500 words) |
| **This will include, but need not be restricted to:**   * Key Arts subject leaders to audit current provision and seek to improve further. * Refine and review current whole-school curriculum planning for the arts – ensuring that the Arts are used to improve teaching and learning outcomes in other curriculum areas and make deliberate and authentic links to curriculum content and other Arts areas to ensure meaningful learning. * A CPD programme is under development to extend both staff and pupils’ mastery of technical skills. * The partnerships between other schools, parents, community partners and businesses are strong and well established. Hence children are routinely made aware of career options. Our pupils have high expectations for the future irrespective of background and ability and significantly work alongside positive role models (parents and carers) from industry. * To capture evidence of impact and evaluate progress, Shanklea School’s Arts Council will survey pupil and parent responses.   Our action plan will focus largely on our needs related to the school improvement plan, as well as those stated above to address priorities highlighted from the self-assessment tool.  In summary, an in-depth audit of arts resources – physical, technical and skills – will be undertaken to improve our current Arts provision.  A creative team of stakeholders which includes the PTFA (‘Friends of Shanklea’), the School’s Arts Council, and enterprise champions will lead in-school Arts provision - helping to plan and organise publicised Arts events, activities, educational visits and entrepreneurial community projects. |
| **Question 5** – What support will your school factor in to maximise chances of Artsmark success? This might include, but need not be restricted to:   * overall funding for the arts in the school * investment in CPD * opportunities for whole school planning * utilisation of external expertise – technical or otherwise   (No more than 500 words) |
| Support for our Artsmark journey will be in a variety of forms, of which some are already in place and described above. These also include our strong partnership with local universities and businesses. Shanklea Primary school is renowned for its collaborative work with other schools in the area and forging opportunities for quality CPD delivered both internally and externally. Artsmark will support Shanklea Primary in continuing the incorporation of the Arts throughout the new primary curriculum. We believe that our children should be at the heart of the planning and evaluation of future Arts projects and activities.  Due to the national funding formula, the school budget has been squeezed thus potentially narrowing and marginalising the primary curriculum. However in partnership with other primary schools and through financial bids the school and governors are confident in maintaining and extending our cultural and creative opportunities and progress. A recent challenge with regard to budget cuts has also had a significant impact upon the level of staff development and release to attend suitable training and professional development opportunities. We are smart in the selection of staff to disseminate latest strategies and skills. Recruitment of new staff is requiring that supplementary training is provided. We ensure that high quality Arts knowledge and awareness underpins the EYFS and the primary curriculum at Shanklea Primary School. In order to maintain creativity and exemplary practice experienced across the primary phase, teachers and practitioners are coaching and mentoring new personnel according to their expertise. |
| **Question 6** – Artsmark will help create a network of like-minded schools. In what areas does your school already have strength in the arts and how do you know this? What areas of expertise will you share with other schools in the Artsmark family?  (No more than 500 words) |
| Here at Shanklea our Early Years provision is ‘Outstanding’. Meaningful and relevant role play settings both indoors and within the outdoor learning environment are an integral part of our ethos. The outdoor environment is festooned with relevant, meaningful stimuli. Community feedback suggests that the young pupils expressive skills and self-confidence are astounding.  We have talented musicians, singers, dancers and theatre performers within our staff structure which is a perfect vehicle for the children to explore the Arts. Our children naturally perform their own choreographies at school productions and this interaction improves pupils’ health, concentration, focus and expands their world view and mind. As a school we are at the forefront of modern digital technologies – through eLearning and interactive learning opportunities. Pupils’ motivation to learn has increased and attitudes of students towards learning beyond the classroom has significantly improved.  We invest generously in family learning and parent workshops to provide a vital link with home and school, impacting significantly upon community involvement and support for the Arts. We have an extensive programme of community Arts events to bring generations of families together through learning. We have identified a pool of artistic talent and resources in the community who are assisting in the refurbishment of the EYFS outdoor leaning environment. For example, parents, teenagers and children will assist in the painting of the playground under the supervision of a team of community artists. |

**Signed by Headteacher**

**Full name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Signed by Chair of Governors**

**Full name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Signed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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