



# Statement of Commitment

Application paperwork 1 of 2

Name of school/education setting	The Sherwood School
DfE number	3 1 5 / 2 0 7 4

## Support

We are here if you need us

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

You must submit your Statement of Commitment **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 Commitment 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 expect settings to submit their Statement of Commitment within three months of attending Artsmark Development Training.
- 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 plans for your Artsmark journey.
- 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

Describe the context of your school or education setting (for example your phase of education, establishment type, location, number on roll and so on).

Our school is in the East Merton area with a deprivation indicator of 0.27 (0.21 nationally). We have 309 learners on roll including 16 in EYFS nursery (Autumn 2024). Our pupil numbers have dropped significantly due to falling birth rates etc. 50.8% of our learners have EAL (21.2% nationally). 80.5% are from minority ethnic groups (33.8% nationally). The ethnic group with the highest percentage is White British (18.4%). Our Asian Other (predominantly Tamil) is 11.3%. Our Black African group is 16.5%.

2.6% of learners have EHCPs, one in draft (4.9% London) and 14.2% have SEND support plans (12.7% London). 28.4% of learners are known to be eligible for free school meals (23.0% nationally).

We hold the Gold Rights Respecting Schools Award (September 2019 & 2022). We achieved Sapere's Gold Philosophy for Children Award in June 2024 and we are re-applying for the Gold Arts Mark, previously awarded in 2022.



**Question 1** – up to 500 words

How do arts and culture currently play a role within your setting's strategic values?

At The Sherwood, the foundations of learning continues to be embedded within UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child and pupil voice. To address the particular needs of our community of learners, our strong curriculum is enriched with opportunities for children to develop skills in communication and language through the expressive arts, sports and SMSC. The curriculum is taught through a wide range of themed topics, linked to the foundation subjects, in order to immerse children in their learning and enrich vocabulary acquisition.

We promote children's awareness and appreciation of each other's cultural backgrounds, traditions and values through regular assemblies. We celebrate children's diversity, which is embedded in our school vision: 'Inspire, Learn, Grow'. Expressive Arts and Culture is at the heart of our strategic vision for the school. We promote the principles of Growth Mindset, which are embedded in our pedagogy. Through this, children learn to persevere until they have mastered a skill or acquired new knowledge and understand that the learning process is a continual journey.

Our holistic approach to learning is delivered through the wide range of experiences planned for children. We provide a music specialist to deliver weekly activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage. This continues and is developed in Key Stage 1

through direct teaching of early musicianship skills (dynamics, rhythm, pulse and tempo) through singing and using percussion instruments. Furthermore, children are provided with opportunities to learn tuned instruments across Key Stage 2. This enables learners to develop a wide range of skills, including co-ordination, listening, following musical direction and notation, practising to achieve a shared goal and performing in front of an audience.

Our close partnership with Merton Music Foundation has enabled a number of our students eligible for the Pupil Premium Grant to become London Scholars, providing them with funded instrumental tuition. Such opportunities enrich our curriculum offer to families and strengthen our aim to provide a wide range of experiences that support and develop children's unique skills and talents.

To address increasing numbers of children joining school with English as an Additional Language, we have prioritised oracy within our School Development Plan, incorporating strategies such as reading fluency (choral and echo reading), drama and P4C within English, as well as the foundation subjects to strengthen children's communication skills and confidence.

Personal Development was described as a strength of the school in our last Ofsted inspection (July 2023):

***'Leaders provide pupils with a range of enrichment opportunities. Every pupil is taught to play a musical instrument Pupils commented that it helps them express their emotions.'***

Our holistic approach promotes good emotional wellbeing and mental health. We are participants in the NHS South-West London Trailblazer project, working with families to provide early intervention strategies. Our approach to learning aims to inspire children to make positive choices, to have high aspirations and to discover each child's unique talents and abilities so that they are well-prepared for the next stage of their learning and gain the confidence and self-belief to achieve their goals.



**Question 2 – up to 500 words**

How and why will your Artsmark journey contribute to the priorities in your strategic improvement plan?

Our School Development Plan focuses on key teaching and learning priorities, identified in our Ofsted inspection in July 2023. Our focus this year is to strengthen assessment strategies in foundation subjects, including Art & Design, Design & Technology, Music, Drama (English/oracy) and dance (PE). As a Gold Award Rights Respecting School, PSHE is at the heart of our ethos. Our strategy is to further embed opportunities in the expressive arts to ensure that children are given a broad

range of authentic learning experiences, gaining skills that will enhance their language acquisition, build confidence and encourage purposeful discussion. We hope that this will support learning in the core subjects of English and maths through the development of communication, listening, speaking and physical co-ordination skills. We achieved Sapere's Gold Philosophy for Children award in July 2024, which further enhances opportunities for children to develop their oracy, communication and thinking skills. Below, we have described the key strategic priorities for the school this year:

- 1. Attendance: We continue our drive to improve attendance rates for children across all phases of the school (SEND, vulnerable, PPG).**
- 2. To continue our drive to address financial constraints caused by our falling roll with a view to increasing pupil numbers and raising our profile as the school of choice in our local community.**
- 3. To review adaptation for children with SEND / EAL in foundation subjects.**
- 4. To achieve the Primary Science Quality Mark by 2024-25.**
- 5. To promote oracy and the acquisition of vocabulary to support the needs of our diverse community, with a particular focus on children with EAL and writing across the school.**

Our goal is to continue to provide opportunities for children to discover and develop their creative skills through arts subjects, supporting the development of communication and language skills. In turn, this will have a positive outcome for pupils across all subjects of the curriculum.

Our strong curriculum, which features arts activities that inspire children to deepen their understanding, helps them to develop confidence and articulacy. We feel this is a strength of our school and we want to further promote our exciting curriculum through partnership working with other schools and organisations, to support our drive to increase pupil numbers and ensure that we are the school of choice for local families. These opportunities will encourage children to participate in school activities and clubs and therefore encourage improved attendance, which is a key improvement priority for school.

We will increase opportunities to perform music in a range of venues, for example, within the local community, to raise the profile of our school and encourage confidence in our pupils. This will support pupils' emotional wellbeing, develop community engagement and provide opportunities for celebration and reward.

We offer Philosophy for Children as part of our whole school curriculum which sits very well within our Rights Respecting ethos and provides opportunities for thoughtful

discussion, respect for different views and the development of social understanding about global issues.



### **Question 3** – up to 500 words

Looking at the Artsmark criteria, where does your setting currently have strengths and where would you like to develop?

#### **Values / Ethos**

We believe that this is a strength of our school as we have embedded the arts subjects across our curriculum and these subjects bear equal importance and focus within our teaching structures, e.g. timetable, themed planning and delivery of linked learning experiences (school visits, specialist learning experiences such as performance by the Blues and Roots band etc.) Thus our children are offered a range of opportunities to develop their enjoyment of the arts.

#### **Leadership**

The leadership team is fully committed to delivering a broad range of expressive arts activities for all children so that they are able to develop their individual talents; learn to appreciate a range of arts media and take full advantage of the rich opportunities on offer within the capital. This is fully evidenced in our SEF and SDP.

#### **Curriculum Design & Delivery**

We have a wide range of musical opportunities planned into our curriculum, including whole class instrumental lessons in KS2, weekly singing assemblies, music and movement in EYFS and KS1. We also provide stand-alone musical opportunities such as jazz workshops, community singing festivals and media projects through our partnership work with MMF. This is well-established in our school.

#### **Areas for development**

- To further strengthen opportunities for children to participate in arts-related activities with partner organisations, for example, through performance and competitions
- To enable children to develop their skills through our work with partners such as The Jack Lonergan Foundation, e.g. guitar, beatboxing.

#### **Children & Young People**

Our curriculum promotes links across all subjects. Children learn to work collaboratively, e.g. through drama where skills are further strengthened in a dance or music lesson. Our P4C Gold Award reflects the work we do across the school to promote oracy through the development of children's, thinking and communication skills.

#### **Area for development:**

- Further strengthen teachers' expertise in pedagogical approaches that promote the development of children's oracy, particularly for children with English as an Additional Language.

## **Range of Offer**

We currently provide a wide range of arts experiences through our curriculum, and after-school clubs. We plan to extend provision of our Holidays and Food programme (HAF) for music and dance through our Arts Mark action plan.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

Specialist music teachers provide instrumental and musicianship lessons, arrange whole school concerts and out of school performances. Subject Leaders host CPD sessions for colleagues to develop their pedagogy. This could be further strengthened through the Arts Mark action plan.

## **Cultural Collaborations**

We have developed strong links with Arts partners within Merton, for example MMF (our Music Education Hub), the Polka Theatre and the Jack Lonergan Foundation. We want to further extend our work with local drama and dance organisations.

## **Equality, Diversity & Inclusion**

This is a strength of our school and is embedded in our UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools work. We are participating in a number of projects to support children's emotional wellbeing, including our work with the Emotional Wellbeing Service (NHS), Merton's Black Lives Matter and EDI groups to further strengthen this work.



## **Question 4 – up to 500 words**

What are the goals and ambitions for your Artsmark journey and what steps will you take to achieve these? (*Enter your answer here*)

### **Vision:**

Through the Artsmark journey, we aim to ensure that all children receive a broad range of learning opportunities in the Expressive Arts so that they become confident, articulate and caring individuals who have developed their own interests and individual talents and are ambitious for the future. We will achieve this by:

- Providing a wider range of extra-curricular enrichment opportunities for children who attend our school.
- Strengthening our links with the local community, including schools and professional bodies to enhance children's experiences.
- Enabling all children to access a range of opportunities that will enhance their wellbeing and mental health.

### **Creativity:**

Our curriculum is designed to focus on the development of communication skills.

- A focus on speaking and listening activities across all subjects of the curriculum to enable the development of subject specific vocabulary;
- We hold UNICEF's Rights Respecting Schools Gold Award
- We hold Sapere's Philosophy for Children Gold Award

**Purpose:**

The purpose of our Arts Mark action plan is to further strengthen opportunities in the arts. Our School Development Plan for 2024-25 reflects this.

**Intention:**

We strive for excellence and to broaden opportunities beyond our families' expectations.

**Objectives:**

1. Our school vision encapsulates our aim to provide an education of the highest quality. Our music curriculum is taught by specialist teachers, who are highly committed to supporting our school vision. We want to continue our drive to enrich our curriculum with high quality arts-related experiences.
2. We want to ensure that the Arts are interwoven through all aspects of school life and that further enhance our offer by extending our arts provision to include extra-curricular activities and holiday programmes.
3. We want to use arts activities as a vehicle for strengthening children's vocabulary and articulacy by:
  - Including imaginative arts activities, such as drama within lessons.
  - Provide opportunities for children to express their views using P4C.
  - Ensuring that children have a say in what and how they are learning. UNICEF Article 12: *Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.*
4. We want to continue access to a wide range of inclusive experiences in the Arts as part of our standard provision. An example would be instrumental lessons taught across KS1 and 2 and the development of musicianship skills in the EYFS and KS1. Children enjoy weekly singing assemblies and may be invited to join lunchtime recorder and violin clubs.
5. We will use pupil questionnaires to provide pupil views and our School Council underpins this aspect of school life.
6. We want to strengthen our links with professional bodies, such as Merton Music Foundation, the Jack Lonergan Foundation, the Polka Theatre and the Attic Theatre Company.
7. The development of arts extra-curricular clubs and music programme foster a sense of pride, belonging and ownership and help children to discover their talents.

**Activities:**

- Arts Mark Statement of Commitment
- MMF projects and whole school music
- P4C activities
- Holiday programmes linked to the arts



**Question 5 – up to 500 words**

What support will you need and what resources will you commit to achieve your goals and ambitions?

*(Enter your answer here)*

**Space and Time:**

We have the use of a dedicated classroom or music lessons. Our hall can be used for performances and activities that require a larger space, e.g. dance and drama.

Our timetables have been carefully structured to enable all subject lessons to take place weekly. We have recently achieved Sapere's Philosophy for Children Gold Award, which is woven into our curriculum across all subjects and also includes half-termly enquiries.

**Cost:**

We commit £25,000 of our school budget to pay for specialist music and arts tuition. Music lessons take place during teachers' PPA time. We pay into the Local Authority Service Level Agreement in order to access extra-curricular activities through Merton Music Foundation. We have tapped into a range of grants in order to provide holiday programmes which we would like to further strengthen to accommodate more children and a wider range of activities, e.g. music technology, beatboxing, guitar, keyboard etc.

**Human Resources:**

We have invested in CPD to support teaching and support staff through our work with MMF. We would like to build on this to ensure that new members of staff are trained in core aspects of arts curriculum such as drama, P4C and art and design.

**Evaluation:**

Our Expressive Arts team will meet half-termly to review our action plan and identify key next steps. This will ensure that tasks are equally distributed and that there are key dates to work towards. The action plan will work alongside our school meetings and activities timetable so that actions are streamlined and aligned to key activities throughout the school year, e.g. Book Week, Curriculum focus days, school concerts etc. We will include pupil representatives in the team so that pupil voice is captured and included in the planning and reviewing process.

**Materials and equipment:**

Any materials needed will be incorporated into the three year school budget.

**Expertise:**

Our Art and music leaders will attend LA co-ordinator meetings to ensure that their professional development needs are met. We will also access neighbouring LA training and explore available opportunities through our links with local organisations,

e.g. The Attic Theatre Company, Polka Theatre. Music will be taught by specialist teachers.

### **Systems:**

We will include arts subjects within our monitoring calendar so that we capture the quality of lessons. Our assessment system for foundation subjects will record children's progress and attainment within each subject, to capture the improvement in children's skills.

We will also include regular pupil voice activities so that we are able to respond to the views of children and adapt the programme accordingly.

All evidence will be recorded and filed electronically, including a baseline of children's skills in music; art; dance and reading and writing. Data will be supplemented with recordings of performances, examples of work that captures children's progress over time, evidence of improved quality of writing and reading in Year 6 and EAD in EYFS.



### **Question 6 – up to 500 words**

How will you know you have achieved your goals and ambitions? What will success look like and how will you evidence it in your Statement of Impact?

*(Enter your answer here)*

### **Range of Offer:**

Pupils at The Sherwood school will be able to confidently participate in arts subjects and share their enjoyment with families and peers. There will be a rich range of extra-curricular activities that children can participate in during term time as well as in the holidays.

Expressive arts continue to be central to our curriculum and the values and ethos of the school. Children will have opportunities to apply the skills they have learned to a range of contexts. The development of a rich vocabulary will enable children to express themselves confidently both orally and in written forms. Children will have access to opportunities through drama, P4C, dance, art and music which will support the development of both creative and factual writing. Pupil, parent and staff surveys will capture their viewpoints about our improved provision in the arts. As a result, children will articulate their thoughts about their own wellbeing and mental health.

### **Curriculum Design & Delivery**

Our pedagogical approach will take account of the unique circumstances of our school and the needs of our learners. We will expect to see improved outcomes as a result of the whole-school focus on the arts, as children develop their speaking and listening skills, gain a rich understanding of vocabulary and increased confidence.

We hope that by the end of our Arts Mark journey, our curriculum will provide opportunities for children to develop a range of skills:

- Metacognition
- Self and peer assessment
- Speaking and Listening
- Inferential reading

- Writing across a range of genres and styles
- Improved conceptual understanding of mathematics.

Alongside these key aspects of learning, we expect our arts programme to provide:

- Musicianship skills, including following musical direction; counting in time; understanding rhythm and tempo; melodic and harmonic themes;
- Experience of playing a range of tuned and untuned instruments
- Performance in a group and as a soloist;
- Opportunities to perform as part of a choir;
- Self-expression through a wide range of media: dance, art and design, drama, debate, music and performance poetry.

### **Impact**

Leaders will ensure that the quality of provision is measured through monitoring activities as well as through teacher and pupil led self and peer assessment.

Sherwood will be part of a music hub and will provide outreach opportunities for schools interested in our pedagogical approach to teaching and learning.

Impact of arts specialist teaching will provide children with opportunities to develop:

- Critical thinking skills
- Confidence and self esteem
- Resilience and a Growth Mindset
- Promoting high expectations of children
- Celebration of achievement, where every child is valued
- Creative expression
- Pride in individual, collaborative, whole school achievement
- To have a voice through the Arts
- Cultural and Arts opportunities

We hope that our planned actions will enhance children's experiences so that they are inspired to pursue interests within the arts through high school and beyond. We want children to access opportunities that they might not otherwise experience which will inspire them to aim high and to set aspirational goals for the future.

## Approval

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

I confirm that I have read, approved and endorsed the Statement of Commitment and agree to oversee and support the Artsmark journey

I agree to the Artsmark Award [Terms and Conditions](#)

**Headteacher Name:** Andriana Samouel

**Date:** 10/12/2024

I confirm that I have read, approved and endorsed the Statement of Commitment and agree to oversee and support the Artsmark journey

I agree to the Artsmark Award [Terms and Conditions](#)

**Chair of Governors Name:** Antonia Palmer



**Date:** 11/12/2024

## 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
- I have not included any additional information or evidence such as images, media, hyperlinks, or web links in my answers
- 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 should submit your Statement of Commitment within **three months** of attending your Artsmark Development Training.

Once you've finalised your answers and have completed the checklist above, you are ready to [submit online](#). **We do not submissions by email.**

Copy and paste your answers into your online Statement of Commitment 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)