



**Artsmark**  
AWARDED BY ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND

## Statement of Commitment

Name of school/ educational setting	Linton Village College
DfE number (seven digits)	873/5416

*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.*

**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)

Linton Village College is an 'Outstanding' 11 -16 Teaching School and Lead College of a growing Multi-Academy Trust, situated to the East of Cambridge on the borders of Cambridgeshire, Suffolk and Essex.

The Arts at LVC are seen as integral to the development of the 'whole child' and an entitlement for all. Every student studies the Arts disciplines of Art, Drama, Dance and Music as discrete subjects in Years 7 and 8 and are then able to specialise further by choosing up to three subjects as 'foundation GCSE's' in Year 9. Interested students specialise further in Key Stage 4 and numbers are proportionally large and growing. Drama and Art are particularly popular, with Drama having added a third group this year. Music recently received an ISM/ISM Trust Bronze Certificate in recognition of the high number of students achieving the top Music grades. Art results are also exceptional and all results are expected to continue to improve this year.

The Arts at LVC provide an opportunity for creative and intellectual development outside the classroom as well as within it. We have broad variety of extra-curricular opportunities, including a number of clubs in all subject areas. In Music, this ranges from the hugely successful Symphonic Wind Orchestra to the Junior and Senior Choir. We run a Main School Production every year and this year students performed a devised piece at the Junction Theatre as part of the Fusion Theatre Festival. Both Dance and Art clubs are well attended and all the Arts perform during Open Evening events and in Assemblies.

We believe that the Arts offer valuable opportunities for working together towards mutual goals, growing leadership, confidence, resilience and team-work; invaluable skills for life and the future workplace.

To this extent, we created a production in a week for our Enrichment Week (a week where the usual timetable is collapsed and students participate in a variety of enrichment opportunities). 170 students worked together across all Arts disciplines to produce an exceptional production of 'We Will Rock You' in just five days, to the high acclaim of an enthusiastic community audience. This was a testament to the culture and ethos of Arts in a school where staff and students pull together to create something magical.

In addition, over 50 students are currently working to complete their Arts Award and we hope to extend this further. This now runs across the disciplines (as opposed to just Art), from photography and dress making to film production. Several teachers are trained in delivering Arts Award up to Gold level. We have an Arts Development Officer who coordinates this and who supports and leads on other artistic ventures, such as the 'Linton 80' celebration where a mural is currently being created by Year 7 students in conjunction with the artist Jim Anderson. There are visits to outside venues to enhance work.

We are proud to be a CALSA Lead School but would like to ensure that the time to work with other schools is available to teachers involved. Whilst we have some strong links with our feeder primary schools, this is another area for further development. We are also pleased to have designated Arts Prefects and a student Technical Team but feel we could make better use of their time and be clearer in defining their roles. In addition, we would like to strengthen Dance as a discrete Art form by creating a Youth Dance Company and showcasing work to the community in line with the rest of the faculty. We continue to work on creating a challenging curriculum and rigorous assessment system in line with the demands of the new specifications.

**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 College Senior leadership Team and Governors believe the Arts is an integral element of the Liberal education that is vital to the Henry Morris Village College ethos. The local community has, over many decades, supported the College in the provision and celebration of the Arts. The Arts have become part of the identity of what makes Linton Village College so special in the perception and heart of that community. The recent Award of Gold Artsmark status was a recognition in the eyes of both staff and local community of the investment and success in the Arts over time.

We are proud to have achieved Artsmark Gold Status in the new pilot and are committed to developing and extending the Arts experiences we offer young people. The continuation of ArtsMark status would further support and celebrate the unique contribution that the Arts has in enriching the lives of local communities in rural Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. The provision of an inclusive Arts enrichment curriculum is a key strand in building a 'Vibrant learning Culture' in the LVC school development plan. This also links with another key element of this key school plan; the Arts is fundamental at Linton Village College, in a predominantly rural area, in fostering the celebration of diversity and multiculturalism reflective of wider life in the world today. Gold ArtsMark would be a significant ongoing recognition and support of the Arts mission at Linton

Village College. Artsmark provides a voice at the highest levels at Linton Village College, thus ensuring a firm commitment for ambitious programmes for advancement over the next 10 years.

**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)

We feel that Gold Award still best characterises our school at the moment and are excited to have performed at the recent Artsmark Celebration Event and to have contributed to the production of promotional materials.

Our curriculum offer and uptake in the Arts is testament to the value we, as a school, and students, place in these subjects.

	Art	Dance	Drama	Music	Population
Year 9	110	39	129	51	176
Year 10	50	14	75	19	156
Year 11	51	17	52	22	162

The Arts at Linton Village College are driven by a new Head of Faculty who has further developed an ethos that inspires team work, enthusiasm, collaboration and communication; an excellent example being our 'production in a week'. In addition, the Arts team have come together to further drive up standards. For example, there are now regular curriculum briefings focusing on data and intervention, resulting in a positive impact on progress and attainment across the Arts and individual departments now have improved communication systems in place.

As another example, the Year 9 Drama Curriculum has been completely overhauled to add rigour and challenge, thus acting as a foundation year for the new GCSE. The 'Blood Brothers' all day Workshop planned by the Drama Team was a huge success and truly helped students prepare for their set text examination.

The profile of the Arts has been further raised through the platform of Twitter, which is managed by the Head of Arts to celebrate success and the huge community involvement in events.

Trips are organised to see live Drama and Music performances and to engage in workshops with professionals in the Arts field, for example we had a printmaker work with Art students this year and students are currently creating the 'Linton80' mosaic with Jim Anderson.

This year the Faculty staged 'The Sound of Music' which sold out for all three performances and had a cast of 70. The elderly residents of the community were invited to attend and the cast also toured the local primary schools. The hugely popular Christmas Carol Service took place, as is tradition, in Balsham Church, to a packed audience. The Summer Soiree was equally well attended.

This year, both the Junior and Senior Choirs performed at the Aldeburgh Festival as well as at the 'Linton Picnic', alongside the Symphonic Wind Orchestra, who will be on tour in Croatia this summer. Both choirs are afforded rehearsal time within the curriculum. Other musical ensembles include a String Orchestra, a Jazz Band and a Guitar Group.

We believe that every student should be enriched by exploring the Arts and work hard to ensure that experiences are accessible and engaging for all. The College offers a full range of instrumental tuition provided by highly qualified teachers. There is a bursary for students who

are unable to afford the cost of instrumental tuition or trips. Students are able to take Music Examinations following the Associated Board of The Royal Schools of Music. There is also a Grade 5 Theory Music class.

The Arts Award Qualification provides many students with the opportunity to develop their interests through the Arts.

School productions are fully inclusive so that students of all abilities and needs perform in plays and musicals staged.

We know this inclusivity and accessibility makes a great impact on our students' social and emotional wellbeing as well as their development of artistic skills.

As the leading school in the Cambridge and Suffolk Schools Academy Trust (CASSA) we hope to drive progression within the Arts to many other schools in the area. The Head of Faculty is the Cambridge Arts Lead for Schools and Academies and supports five CALSAs in developing projects with other schools. For example, sketchbook, African mask making and Dance workshops have taken place in local primary schools.

Linton Village College has close links and partnerships with several organisations:

- We have forged close links with the Granta School, the special school on an adjoining site and are supporting them with their Arts Award process. The Head of Arts is the Link Governor. Some of Granta's students attend Arts lessons at LVC.
- We have close links with our feeder primary schools.
- We have close links with Linton Jazz and the Linton Youth Music Society, who not only sponsor our musicians but provide a platform for them to perform alongside visiting professionals.
- The LVC Library makes a significant contribution, hosting, amongst other events, a 'Harry Potter Night' in conjunction with the Bloomsbury event. This is a highly popular and well attended event, as is the Illustration Club. We also host the biennial award-winning Linton children's Book Festival and have both staff and students actively engaged in planning and organising this. We organise a number of author visits.

**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? This might include, but need not be restricted to:

- auditing current provision
- establishing whole-school curriculum planning for the arts – where the arts are used to improve teaching and learning in other curriculum areas, or where other curriculum content links to arts areas of the curriculum
- developing a CPD programme
- building partnerships with other schools and other relevant organisations
- developing approaches to capturing evidence of impact and evaluating progress

(No more than 500 words)

The development of the Arts is considered by the Head of Arts in association with the Arts Programme Leaders.

The Arts are seen as an entitlement for all at Linton Village College. The current provision enables students to receive a solid foundation in all Arts subjects at Key Stage Three and to build on these in Key Stage Four.

We have identified several areas in which we would like to develop. These include:

- Continue to build a challenging curriculum which exceeds National expectations and further develop consistency in schemes of learning
- Continue to develop a consistent, manageable and effective approach to assessment across the Arts Faculty to drive progression
- Grow enrichment opportunities for students in Art (Gallery visits) and Dance (dance 'groups' and showcase events)
- Improve deployment of Arts Prefects
- Continue to promote Arts Award
- Further develop primary school liaison
- Continue to develop CALSA work
- Grow Music links between LVC and Sawston Village College, Stapleford Grannary and Saffron Hall
- Further develop drum and guitar playing
- Develop an Art display timeline and create a mosaic for Linton 80 celebration

**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)

The school's Leadership Team has a strong commitment to the development of the Arts.

Providing a Liberal education with strong Arts provision is a fundamental principle of Linton Village College and is a key element in the college's ethos and financial planning. In terms of the curriculum the SLT have ensured that all students have access to Arts subjects in all years. All Arts subjects are taught by specialist staff to all students at key stage 3. At key stage 4 students are able to choose their GCSE options from an open block system that means students can choose as many Arts subjects as they wish. This is marked contrast to the majority of schools where they are restricted to one GCSE Arts subject. These commitments have been part of the LVC curriculum over many decades and governors and SLT are determined to ensure that this continues in the future. The Arts are a separate faculty to ensure that the Arts (Music, Drama, Dance and Art) maintains a discrete, stand alone status rather than being partially subsumed into other faculties. This ongoing commitment is also evident in the fabric of the school building. In a recent build in the 6 years the College built a new Dance Studio; more recently there has been significant investment in light, audio equipment and the fabric of the College hall for performances

The rich Arts curriculum is also complemented by a rich extra curricular programme. Music, Drama, Dance and Art all put on annual calendared performances that involve large cohorts of students. Rehearsal time during the school day in the period leading up to major performances is expected and other subject staff plan to support this. Trips and

external experts are also part of the expectation for students' experiences whilst they are at Linton Village College. CPD opportunities are supported by leadership to ensure that staff pedagogy is of the highest standards.

Linton Village College is the lead school in the CASSA (Cambridge and Suffolk Schools Alliance) Teaching School. CASSA provides administrative support for the Festival Bridge CALSA programme to continue to raise and build the Arts profile in local schools the Cambridgeshire/Suffolk area. There is also separate administrative time dedicated to supporting the Arts faculty and Head of Faculty lead and drive forward the Artsmark work.

**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)

The Arts are an integral part of the cultural life of the school and local community in terms of participation, support and long-term sustainability. It is the expectation of the community that we serve them creatively and we have established a long-term investment in whole school staff support and participation.

Music is accurately perceived as a strong subject because of the sheer number of students involved in Music events and the creative manner in which it is taught. This is backed up by data and Music received an ISM/ISM Trust Bronze Certificate in recognition of the high number of students achieving the top grades this year. The Music department believes that Music is a practical subject; all students thus learn to read music from the beginning of Year 7 and whole class playing is developed throughout the five years that students attend the college. Performance work is balanced by composition work using both VST and live instruments. Assessments are currently undertaken every half term, however, this is under review.

To support classroom work, many students learn to play an additional instrument; we have visiting teachers of all orchestral instruments as well as guitar, percussion and voice. We host both practical and theoretical ABRSM exams several times a year, with several students reaching Grade 8 by Year 11; a phenomenal achievement. There is a multitude of extra-curricular musical activity running each day during lunchtimes and after school and concerts are always filled to capacity. Students tour their music locally and abroad.

The Art Department is made up of highly experienced staff, including a Senior Leader, a commercially successful practising Artist and a Subject Leader who has led Arts in a wide variety of school settings. Grades, including at the higher end, are exceptionally high and demonstrate clear 'value added'. Art operates an 'open door' policy and the department is always busy and thriving at lunchtimes. One of the Art teachers is both an Arts Development Officer and a CALSA. This, alongside the SLE member of staff being in charge of Year 6 transition, has led to a substantial increase in working closely with the local primary schools. Excellent progress is being made on a spectacular new Art display and the Linton 80 Mosaic.

The Drama Department has grown this year with the appointment of an Advanced Skills Teacher with 20 years teaching experience taking on the role of Head of Arts. This has enabled collaboration in Drama and facilitated projects like 'Production in a Week' and 'Musical in a Day'. It has also been an opportunity to refine schemes of learning to make them more challenging and to jointly plan for the new GCSEs as well moderate work. A more rigorous assessment process is currently being developed. Year 10 numbers have risen from 43 to 75 at GCSE level.

The Programme Leader for Drama directs an annual Main School Production and this year we took part in the Fusion Theatre Festival and performed at the Artsmark Celebration event. The Head of Arts runs an Arts Award Drama Club.

Dance is beginning to grow in numbers with specialist teaching and there are plans in place to create more enrichment opportunities for students.

Key features of the Arts Faculty are their team spirit, resilience, and ability to cope with change and challenge. We are passionate about the Arts, our teaching and the young students we see thrive and grow through their rich Arts experiences every day.

We would be delighted to share our work with the Artsmark Family.

**Signed by Headteacher**

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

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

**Signed by Chair of Governors**

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

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

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