

The Queen Elizabeth's High School, Gainsborough Artsmark Case study

As the first school in the East Midlands to gain a second Artsmark Platinum Award, Queen Elizabeth's High School (QEHS) believes that the arts are a fundamental part of the experience of their students.

In recent years the devaluing of the Arts has happened at a National level. The narrow curriculum choice of the government's suggested EBacc, alongside the funding situation in education has meant that in many schools the Arts have diminished, if not disappeared entirely. At QEHS the Arts and culture have the full support of the headteacher, leadership and the governors, and have been able to avoid this trend, and indeed strengthen their Arts provision, using the Artsmark programme.

The school is deeply committed to providing outstanding opportunities to its pupils in music, drama and art and has a strong uptake of the arts and cultural subjects at GCSE, AS and A level. The school has continued to develop the ethos of enjoyment and appreciation of culture and the Arts. Students are proud of the Arts departments and relish the opportunities available, especially to support younger students and staff, open evenings, trips and House events.

"The Arts departments are special because it feels like you work with teachers" (student quote).

As part of their Artsmark journey the school developed a 'Subject Ambassador' programme. Sixth Form students receive training to mentor younger students, co-teach lesson, provide practical support and represent their department **"It feels fantastic to officially take on more responsibility; to help embed the Arts culture and develop skills in younger students"** (student quote). Also supporting student leadership skills, all year 7 students undertake Bronze Arts Award, embedded in their art, music, and drama lessons and culminating at the end of the summer term in a collaborative production of 'The Wizard of Oz'.

The school has seen greater numbers of students getting involved in the Arts and other cultural extra-curricular activities. More students have auditioned for productions and further student led ensembles have formed as the Arts grown from strength to strength at QEHS who are extremely proud of their Platinum Artsmark Award.

In schools, in communities and in workplaces across the East Midlands, **The Mighty Creatives** create and support inspiring and vital opportunities for children and young people to be creative.

"The Artsmark journey has helped us to identify and recognise the depth of our commitment to culture and the Arts across our school community, and has given our hard working students, parents and staff the recognition they deserve. We are thrilled to be awarded the Platinum Artsmark for a second time and look forward to future projects".

Rebecca Lawrence, Head of Music and the Arts

