

## The Cherwell School: Press Release

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### **The Cherwell School nationally recognised for outstanding contribution to arts and cultural education**

**Artsmark Gold** has been awarded to **The Cherwell School** for its commitment to, and excellence in, arts and cultural education.

Arts mark is Arts Council England's flagship programme enabling schools and other organisations to evaluate, strengthen and celebrate their arts and cultural provision. At the moment only 14% of schools in the South East of England have Artsmark and even fewer gain gold status.

Ellie Hollindale, Faculty Leader for performing Arts explained "Artsmark gold is awarded in recognition of the real commitment we make in providing a hugely diverse range of top quality dance, drama, music, art and design, literature and arts through the wider curriculum for all of our students. The process of gaining this award has been very beneficial for the students in enabling us to assess how well we are doing, what students' value and enjoy and where we need to develop further opportunities based on their interests and enthusiasms."

To achieve Artsmark Gold schools must undergo a rigorous application process, followed by a validation visit from a professional arts consultant. Schools are assessed on many areas of provision including arts in the curriculum, extra-curricular arts activities, how they work with artists and arts organisations and how well their arts provision impacts on staff development and the wider community.

Eillie Hollindale was delighted by the response of the students to this process: "It was so encouraging that over forty students wanted to meet the consultant to explain to her how much they value their experiences within arts at The Cherwell. We have had feedback that our application was one of the most impressive that has been seen and that we may be recommended for use as an exemplar school, in the provision of arts for Artmark Gold applicants."

Paul James, Headteacher was equally delighted: "Artsmark helps raise the profile and importance of the Arts and the breath of education that schools aspire to deliver. The award also helps to reassure parents and carers that arts and cultural provision is a huge strength and priority here, and it acknowledges and celebrates student and teacher effort."

The award recognises that The Cherwell School has an excellent arts and cultural offer and effective approach to building sustainable relationships with arts and cultural organisations, with the report stating that "the school is forward thinking and open to development, committed to investing in its staff and young people, listening to its students and providing opportunities for its community; has an effective approach to building sustainable relationships with arts and cultural organisations; and values the arts and culture through a broad and balanced curriculum".