

# Clayfields House

## A case study of Artsmark in a secure setting

### Who we are

Clayfields House is a secure children's home, accommodating and educating up to 20 young people who have been placed with us by the courts for one of the following reasons: they are on remand for a crime they have been charged with committing; they are serving a custodial sentence; they have been placed on a welfare order, because they pose serious harm to themselves or others, or are at significant risk within the community.

Our young people need a nurturing and calm environment, where they learn to follow clear and consistent rules, develop trust in others, raise their aspirations and understand how they might become responsible, independent, fulfilled and safe adults. Depending on their circumstances, young people may be with us for just a few weeks, whereas others are with us for years.

### How Artsmark has worked for us

#### Celebrating our commitment to creativity

Through our Artsmark journey we have further developed the role of arts and culture in our setting through an overarching way of working that promotes, values and celebrates the positive impact of the arts. We have recently created an art gallery throughout the building, which showcases our young people's work. They have helped to create a number of large-scale pieces that are part of the gallery, most recently a piece called 'Moments in Time', which reflects the

identity of every young person who was in the centre at the time the piece was made. Our wide range of activities, including two arts-based festivals we run each year and our much-loved Christmas production, supports us to advocate for the benefits of arts and creativity in learning.

#### A flexible framework

Much like Arts Award, which is delivered within the weekly curriculum time, Artsmark is inclusive and flexible, and allows us to support all young people based on their abilities and interests. Due to the lack of schooling our young people have had, and the fact that their academic abilities are usually much lower than would normally be expected, arts and creative activity allows them to access school and learning through informal sessions.



Using Artsmark's flexible framework has improved their own sense of achievement and wellbeing, and helped them to raise their own standards and ambitions.

### **Embedding arts across our curriculum**

Artsmark has allowed us to develop our arts provision and to work more widely as a centre to provide a range of arts activities and opportunities across the curriculum. Whilst the visual arts have always been easier to deliver, we work more collaboratively as a staff team to develop opportunities that could be used in English, PHSE and Enrichment activities.

### **Developing our partnerships**

Artsmark has supported us as we broker and maintain relationships with external arts practitioners and organisations. We have worked with a variety of external partners, allowing us to bring in authors, sculptors, ceramicists, poets, singers, lyric-writers and musicians to deliver workshops and to perform and exhibit their work in our setting.



### **We'd recommend...**

Get the opinions of young people; if they feel they have been listened to and responded to, they'll feel ownership of the work and activity they do, which will improve their commitment and quality of what they produce.

Exhibiting and showcasing young people's work wherever possible, including outside of your setting such as competitions. Of course, in this environment, young people's identities will need to be protected, but this doesn't need to stop you sharing or celebrating young people's achievements.

Use the whole of the application process, especially the original Statement of Commitment, to inform your arts programme. It's not about creating whole new programmes of work, but about building on your current provision and filling in the gaps.

Cast the net as wide as possible in terms of what creativity means. This could be Art & Design, Textiles, Crafts, Cake Decorating, Tattoo Art, Poetry, Creative Writing, Lyric Writing, Photography, Drama, Story & Script-Writing and IT programmes, such as Photoshop – it doesn't have to be limited to Painting and Drawing!

For further guidance about how Artsmark can work for you please see our specialist settings guidance.

<https://www.artsmark.org.uk/support-specialist-settings>

