



WELCOME

Welcome to this, our third issue of Arts News, the termly update from Anglian Learning, highlighting just some of the tremendous work in the arts taking place across our schools.

In this issue we celebrate two of our schools recently being awarded Artsmark Platinum, an outstanding achievement. You can read about their journeys to success on pages 5 and 6. We also focus on dance and a collaborative workshop with dance professionals enjoyed by

GCSE and BTEC Dance pupils in our schools. At the same time, in music, we have had primary pupils participate in Young Voices in the O2 Arena and secondary pupils perform at Saffron Hall in a new opera: there is lots going on.

Furthermore, accreditation for all the great work our schools undertake can come in the form of an Arts Award for pupils. You can find out more about this qualification on page 7.

Lesley Morgan, Arts Development Manager, Anglian Learning

Inspiring Young Voices 2025

Our primary school pupils have again been inspired to sing and perform by taking part in the amazing Young Voices concerts, which took place earlier this term.

22 pupils from The Icknield Primary School and 42 pupils from Linton Heights Junior School made the journey to Greenwich to rehearse and perform in the spectacular London O2 Arena.

“Wow! That’s so awesome!” was one description from a Year 5 Linton Heights Junior School pupil as he arrived at the venue, which perfectly sums up the impact of the experience. Performing in such a professional concert with over 7,000 children, to a packed arena of proud adults, is an inspiring and exciting opportunity for both pupils and staff. This year we were joined by guest artists, including a returning firm favourite rapper, MC Grammar, and singer, Tommy Blaize, from BBC’s Strictly Come Dancing.

“We had a fabulous day singing all of the songs we had learnt.” said a pupil from The Icknield Primary School. “We loved singing the medley from Hairspray and watching Urban Strides do their dances.”

“It was amazing,” continued a pupil from Linton Heights Junior School, “Knowing all of our practice was worth it, to feel like this when I sing with everyone! It’s been brilliant!”

The songs and music bring a wonderful feeling of togetherness that is impossible to forget, and we know the memories and benefits will be long lasting. We were all so proud of our pupils, who took part with energy and enthusiasm.

Emma Mason, Music Subject Lead, Linton Heights Junior School



Anglian Learning GCSE and BTEC Dance Workshop

GCSE and BTEC Dance pupils from across Anglian Learning came together recently to participate in a highly exciting and innovative workshop with the renowned dance company 'James Cousins Company'. The pupils worked collaboratively throughout the workshop on a variety of choreography and performance techniques.



The professional dancers from James Cousins Company challenged our pupils to explore new approaches to their GCSE and BTEC work. The workshop culminated in pupils performing a highly complex duet. This opportunity enabled our pupils to develop and share ideas across schools and, in addition, enabled the dance teachers across the Trust to collaboratively share ideas.

Schools involved in the workshops were Bassingbourn Village College, Bottisham Village College, Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport, Linton Village College and Sawston Village College.

**Helen Frost, Head of Dance and Enrichment Lead,
Linton Village College**





Uprising

Sawston Village College pupils perform in new opera

Over 20 pupils from Sawston Village College performed at Saffron Hall with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra (RSNO) on 15 and 16 March 2025 in the new opera *Uprising*.

At that time, the world premiere of the opera had just taken place at Glyndebourne - making the Sawston pupils part of only the second chorus to perform this new music.

Below, **Head of Music at Sawston Village College, Clare Irwin**, writes about the experience. She says,

"I was contacted just before Christmas by Saffron Hall about the possibility of joining with Saffron Walden County High to form the teenage chorus for the *Uprising*! The opportunity to be involved in a brand-new opera, working with professional soloists and orchestra was something we couldn't miss.

"Jonathan Dove is one of the most innovative British composers working today and writes brilliant music for community choirs and young voices. We certainly enjoyed all of the music, which was catchy, rousing, emotive and inspirational.

"In rehearsals and the performance, we were ready to protest and then weep at the destruction of nature he depicts. Pupils committed to an intense period of after school rehearsals plus weekends and evenings. We were rehearsed by the fantastic Dominic Ellis-Peckham and we all learned so much from him. His energy, commitment and musical detail were amazing, and we would love to work with him again. We also enjoyed learning all the movement from Sinead O'Neill (director) and working with Ellie Slorach (conductor), whose energy and detail were fantastic. The soloists and the RSNO were wonderful to work with, and I am hugely proud of all my pupils for their hard work, commitment and the musical quality they produced. To have memorised an entire opera in 10 weeks is extraordinary, and I sat in tears at several moments as I watched an opera with a real message for today.

"A huge thank you to all staff members who supported with rehearsals as I went down with flu and to Caroline Law and all at Saffron Walden County High. We so enjoyed working with them. Here's to more fantastic collaborations and projects in the future. Well done everyone!"



What is *Uprising* about?

Jonathan Dove's new community opera in two acts looks at the climate emergency through the eyes of those whom it will affect the most – the young.

From teenage rebellion to the connective power of the internet, family dynamics to business ethics, it asks searching questions on an issue that should unite us all. How do we cast our eyes beyond the here and now? What is the most effective way of protesting, and do we listen carefully enough to those that are?

This is a music drama that melds the everyday with fantasy, a serious message for our times, laced with humour, honesty, and warmth. Above all, it gives a persuasive voice to the principal players in this crisis - nature itself and young adults.

Dance

at Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport

DanceEast Workshop

On 10 March 2025 Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport hosted an exciting dance workshop facilitated by DanceEast, led by the talented Beth Siddaway. We offered this workshop to provide pupils with an opportunity to explore creative expression, improve their physical skills, and develop teamwork skills. The benefits were numerous, including enhanced coordination, increased confidence, and critical thinking tasks. The pupils were highly engaged, participating enthusiastically and showing great interest in learning new dance techniques. It was a vibrant and enriching experience for everyone involved!

**Mihaela Petrova, Dance Teacher,
Joyce Frankland Academy, Newport**



The Arts Journey

continues at Linton Heights Junior School

Linton Heights Junior School has enjoyed a variety of arts opportunities this Spring term 2025. Highlights include securing a new Yamaha Digital Clavinova piano from the exciting Millers Music #pianoequals project, and working on a clay project as part of our Year 5 Ancient Greece topic, with glazing and firing in our kiln underway as we write this. We also witnessed staff and Year 3 pupils preparing to perform on ocarinas and recorders in our church Easter services at the end of term.



**Emma Mason,
Music Subject Lead,
Linton Heights Junior School**



A further highlight took place on 17 March 2025 when a group of Year 4 pupils travelled to West Road Concert Hall, in Cambridge, to enjoy a Cambridge University Wind Orchestra concert. The fantastic programme included music from Disney Pixar favourites, a Lion King Medley and the soundtrack to How to Train Your Dragon. The trip, funded for pupils who qualify for pupil premium, Free School Meals (FSM) and who have special educational needs, provided a high quality, live musical experience, introducing a range of orchestral instruments to the young audience in a fun and engaging atmosphere.



Artsmark Platinum Award for Bottisham Village College

Our ethos at Bottisham Village College is shaped by a deep belief in the power of the arts to inspire, enrich, and foster personal growth. Having previously been awarded the Artsmark Gold Award, from the outset we set ourselves the goal of achieving the Platinum Award this time round.

Whereas the Gold Award recognises the impact of the arts within your own setting, the Platinum criteria reflects the impact you have had on arts experiences and opportunities within other schools and across your wider community. In our Statement of Impact we were able to evidence this through projects, including the creation of the Cultural Leadership events, the launch of the Bottisham Music Centre, our national leadership of the Creativity Collaboratives research project, and delivery of Trust-wide arts events.



Throughout our journey we engaged constantly with the Arts Council's Quality Principles, with the aim of ensuring pupils received an engaging, inspiring and inclusive arts experience, regardless of background or starting point. Bottisham arts staff helped lead and deliver many events, including concerts and performing arts showcases, Trust-wide events such as Stage and Platform 24, and large-scale productions, including *We Will Rock You*, complete with full pupil band and tech team, right down to intimate end-of-term sharing events for our beginner instrumentalists. We also developed partnerships with organisations including DanceEast and Lamphouse Theatre to enhance our curriculum and challenge pupils beyond extracurricular arts.

Arts Council England's seven Quality Principles are:

1. Striving for excellence and innovation
2. Being authentic
3. Being exciting, inspiring and engaging
4. Ensuring a positive and inclusive experience
5. Actively involving children and young people
6. Enabling personal progression
7. Developing belonging and ownership



**Artsmark
Platinum Award**
Awarded by Arts
Council England



The Artsmark assessors also recognised the exceptional and active role pupils play in shaping the arts at Bottisham, with pupil voice influencing curriculum decisions and many pupils taking on leadership roles, mentoring younger pupils, and helping in the recruitment of instrumental music teachers.



The assessor's report said, "*Bottisham Village College has made very impressive progress in its championing of the arts and leading developments across the Trust,*" and we are thrilled that this Platinum Award recognises the passion and dedication of our pupils, staff, and wider school community. As we celebrate this milestone, we look forward to continuing to advocate for the power of the arts in education, ensuring that creativity remains at the heart of Bottisham Village College's ethos for years to come.

**Jez Brewer, Head of Performing Arts,
Bottisham Village College**



Artsmark Platinum Award for Stapleford Community Primary School



Artsmark
Platinum Award
Awarded by Arts
Council England

We are delighted to share that Stapleford Community Primary School has recently been awarded the prestigious Artsmark Platinum Award, the highest level of this national accreditation from Arts Council England. After building on our Artsmark journey over a number of years, we are thrilled that this has been recognised through this award. This is a significant achievement and a reflection of our commitment to embedding creativity, arts, and culture across the curriculum. To achieve this award, we developed a whole-school approach to arts and cultural education, ensuring that all pupils have access to high-quality creative experiences.



The Artsmark assessors praised our strong leadership and vision for the arts, highlighting the impact of our work in nurturing children's creativity and personal development. They also commended our partnership with Stapleford Granary through the Small Grains project, which has provided pupils with authentic and inspiring artistic and musical experiences, bringing together children, artists, and musicians in a truly enriching way.



Kate Romano, CEO and Arts Education Lead at Stapleford Granary, shared, "We're delighted to have played a part in Stapleford Community Primary School's superb success in achieving their Artsmark Platinum Award. We believe that our Small Grains programme - a 'twinning' between an Arts Centre and a Primary School - is rare in its high levels of interaction (42 school visits to Stapleford Granary per year). A cultural setting is rich in educational possibilities, but none of this would have been possible without the positive, proactive collaboration of a school which truly values the arts. This relationship enables us to learn from one another, share resources, establish new partnerships and embed creativity and curiosity in all that we do."



Another key element of our Artsmark journey was the reintroduction of Arts Award. We now offer this to all pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 to ensure a sustained arts offer. This opportunity is supported by the Granary and coordinated visits to inspire the projects.

We are incredibly proud of this achievement and would like to thank our dedicated staff, pupils, and wider school community for their enthusiasm and support. We look forward to continuing our journey of creativity and artistic excellence at Stapleford Community Primary School.

**Katie Street, Interim Deputy Headteacher,
Stapleford Community Primary School**

Arts Award – enhancing the arts provision across Trust schools

What is Arts Award?

Arts Award is a qualification awarded to learners by Trinity College London, in association with Arts Council England. It is awarded at five different levels, starting with Discover and Explore levels for primary schools and then continuing with Bronze, Silver and Gold levels beyond this.

The qualifications allow young people to explore the world of the arts, discover their potential as artists and develop leadership skills.

You can find out more information about the qualifications on the Arts Award website here:

<https://www.artsaward.org.uk/>

In their article on page 6, Stapleford Community Primary School mentions reintroducing Arts Award as part of their Artsmark journey, and they are not alone in this. Below, **Emma Mason, Music Subject Lead at Linton Heights Junior School**, outlines plans for Arts Award as part of her school's new Artsmark journey.

Emma says, "We are excited that Linton Heights Junior School has renewed its status as a validated Arts Award Centre. Our plan to provide the in-house option to enter our pupils for their own Discover and Explore Arts Awards is in its early days. Last year we ran a pilot, with a



Discover-level project for our Year 4 pupils, whilst learning the ukulele.

Building on the success of this pilot, we now plan to repeat the process again, and convert these into Arts Award qualifications for this year's cohort, before working on Explore for our older pupils in the next academic year and beyond.



"Practical administrative challenges and funding barriers are very real, but the children will be using creative fundraising in our local community alongside the Charanga platform to collect the required evidence base.

"As we are also embarking on a new Artsmark journey, we know our Arts Award offer will strengthen our arts provision for our pupils. We are looking at how we can align our curriculum with an 'Arts Opportunities Map & Toolkit', threading creativity and culture even deeper through our curriculum subjects."

At secondary level, both Linton Village College and Sawston Village College have well established Arts Award programmes for their pupils.

As a very early adopter of the Arts Award programme, Sawston Village College has been delivering Arts Award since the end of 2006 and, since 2017, has been delivering Bronze Arts Award to all pupils in Year 7, which means that about 230 pupils achieve the Bronze Arts Award each year. The Award is delivered as a mix of homework tasks and classroom activities. For example, for Part B, **Be the Audience**, the school organises to bring in a music concert for pupils, while for Part A, pupils study the art of the Ndebele tribe and make mod roc houses based on their studies.



Beyond Bronze, pupils study for Silver and Gold Arts Awards as part of an extracurricular personal learning programme. This commitment to Arts Award has meant that Sawston Village College has been a Trinity Champion Centre since 2020.



To deliver Arts Award you need to have access to a trained Arts Award adviser and an Arts Award Centre. Schools which deliver Arts Award

regularly will have their own centre and their own trained advisers. However, Anglian Learning has also been set up as an Arts Award Centre to support our schools that would like to deliver Arts Award but do not yet have their own trained adviser or centre.

Any school interested in finding out more about Arts Award should check out the information on the Arts Award website or contact the Trust Arts Development Manager.