



## PRESS RELEASE

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# Arts Mean Success for Royal Opera House Thurrock Trailblazers

## Artsmark for Seven Local Schools

Seven Royal Opera House Thurrock Trailblazer schools have been successful in gaining an Arts Council England Artsmark award, two at the highest level.

**Beacon Hill Academy** and **William Edwards School** both gained the top platinum level. **Chadwell St Mary Primary School** achieved Gold, and Silver was awarded to **Grays Convent School, Gateway Free School, Harris Academy** and **Little Thurrock Primary School**.

"Everyone at Beacon Hill is thrilled that we have been awarded the Artsmark Platinum award," says **Head Teacher Sue Hewitt**. "The majority of students at the school are sensory learners so the Arts provide a really important medium for much of our work. This award recognises the creativity and enthusiasm of all our team, both staff and students."

**Amanda Bradley**, who is the school's Cultural Champion, said "I was delighted to receive the news that Beacon Hill had been awarded the Platinum Artsmark award. We are very lucky at Beacon Hill to have such enthusiastic and creative staff and students and the award is a testament to all their hard work."

Artsmark supports schools in embedding arts and culture into every student's life and learning. The Artsmark award celebrates schools that champion the arts and strive for excellence in their provision. Artsmark supports schools in evaluating their arts offers and helps them to harness the power of the arts in developing confident, creative and resilient young people. 72% of all schools in Thurrock are registered for Artsmark. This compares to just 11% of all schools nationally. Thurrock is

second only to Hull in the commitment of schools to Artsmark, meaning that the arts are genuinely embedded in the curriculum.

In 2016, it was estimated that the creative industries were worth £84 billion to the UK economy. By ensuring young people across Thurrock have access to diverse and rich cultural experiences, Royal Opera House Thurrock Trailblazer and Artsmark are preparing them to be the next generation of creatives.

**Sally Manser, Head of the Royal Opera House Bridge** programme which supports Artsmark, said:

"Achieving these awards is great news and shows what happens when a group of schools come together and make a long term commitment to strengthening cultural learning for children and young people"

To find out more about the Royal Opera House and Artsmark please go to

[www.roh.org.uk/learning/royal-opera-house-bridge/artsmark](http://www.roh.org.uk/learning/royal-opera-house-bridge/artsmark).

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## Press Office contact:

Jules Easlea  
Julie.easlea@roh.org.uk  
Tel: 07941 502577

## Notes for Editors

### Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock

Royal Opera House Learning and Participation in Thurrock has been offering innovative and creative projects and programmes in schools, colleges and across communities in the Thames Gateway since 2006.

Since then, more than 60,000 people have participated in activities ranging from schools' projects to teacher training, from work-based learning to fully-staged community operas. People in Thurrock have both been able to watch special performances at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden and gain a very special insight into the behind-the-scenes process.

The Learning and Participation team runs the Royal Opera House Thurrock Community Chorus which currently has over 140 members of all ages and regularly performs across Thurrock and at the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden. For further information, please go to:

[www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/community-chorus](http://www.roh.org.uk/learning/learning-in-thurrock/community-chorus). Details of future performances

and taster session for the Community Chorus can be obtained by emailing [getinvolved@roh.org.uk](mailto:getinvolved@roh.org.uk) or calling 01708 891200.

Regular public tours of the state-of-the-art Bob and Tamar Manoukian Production Workshop where the sets and scenery for the Royal Opera House stage in Covent Garden are built, and the Bob and Tamar Manoukian Costume Centre, which opened in October 2015, are now available. Please go to [www.roh.org.uk/visit/tours/thurrock-tours](http://www.roh.org.uk/visit/tours/thurrock-tours) for further details.

Since April 2012, the Royal Opera House has worked as a Bridge organisation, working to connect children and young people to great art and culture across Essex, North Kent, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. ROH Bridge is working with similar clusters of Artsmark schools across this region. The Learning and Participation team is based at the High House Production Park in Purfleet which is supported by a unique partnership including Arts Council England, Creative & Cultural Skills, the Royal Opera House and Thurrock Council: [www.hhpp.org.uk](http://www.hhpp.org.uk)