

Art and Design Policy 2025-26

Introduction

At our school, art and design is a vital part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Art enables pupils to explore, understand and respond to the visual and material world. It supports creativity, confidence, communication and imagination, and allows pupils to express ideas, feelings and identity in ways that are not always possible through words.

Our art curriculum is informed by the National Curriculum, the PlanBee scheme of work, our own adapted progression documents, and current research including the Ofsted Research Review for Art and Design. We believe that high-quality art education is an entitlement for all pupils and should be carefully planned so that knowledge and skills build over time.

Aims

Our art curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Create imaginative and meaningful artwork.
 - Develop technical skill in drawing, painting, sculpture and mixed media.
 - Use art vocabulary confidently to describe, explain and evaluate.
 - Learn about artists, styles and cultures across time and place.
 - Understand how art communicates ideas, identity and emotion.
-

Statutory Requirements

We follow the National Curriculum for Art and Design, which requires pupils to:

Key Stage 1

- Use a range of materials creatively.
- Use drawing, painting and sculpture to develop ideas.
- Develop techniques in colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.
- Learn about artists, craft makers and designers.

Key Stage 2

- Develop control and creativity with materials and techniques.
- Use sketchbooks to record, review and revisit ideas.
- Improve mastery of drawing, painting and sculpture.
- Learn about artists, architects and designers in history.

In the **Early Years Foundation Stage**, art is taught through Expressive Arts and Design, where children explore media, materials and imaginative expression as foundations for later learning.

Curriculum Organisation

In art, pupils need both technical accuracy and creative freedom. Convergent learning focuses on mastering specific skills, such as colour mixing, shading or printmaking, where there is a clear technique to learn. Divergent learning is when pupils use those skills in their own way to express ideas, feelings or identity. Our curriculum balances both, so pupils gain secure foundations first and then use them creatively in personal and meaningful artwork.

We use the PlanBee Art scheme as a core structure, but it is adapted to suit our pupils and to ensure strong progression. Units are sequenced across year groups and supported by:

- A progression document mapping practical, theoretical and disciplinary knowledge.
- A vocabulary spine with three key words per unit from Year 1 to Year 6.

Each unit includes:

- Practical skill development.
- Knowledge of artists, styles and cultures.
- Opportunities to talk about, evaluate and interpret art.

Progression of Knowledge and Skills

Progression is planned across three strands:

Practical knowledge – skills, techniques, tools and materials.

Theoretical knowledge – artists, styles, vocabulary and cultural context.

Disciplinary knowledge – thinking like an artist, critic or designer.

Children progress from:

- Exploring and experimenting in Year 1,
- To controlling and refining skills in Years 3–4,
- To expressing ideas, identity and meaning confidently in Years 5–6.

Cyclical Progression

“A high-quality art and design curriculum sequences the knowledge that pupils learn so that they know more, remember more and can do more.”

Art learning is not only linear; it is cyclical. Key ideas such as line, colour, texture, pattern, shape and expression are revisited across year groups, but each time at a deeper level.

For example:

- Line begins as mark making in Year 1, becomes shading and hatching in Year 3, and shows perspective and expression in Year 6.

- Colour starts with primary mixing in Year 1, develops into tints, shades and harmony in Years 3–4, and is used to show mood and identity in Years 5–6.

This ensures knowledge is secured, revisited and deepened over time.

Vocabulary and Language

Art vocabulary is carefully sequenced from Year 1 to Year 6. Each unit introduces three key words linked directly to what pupils are making and learning. Vocabulary develops from simple, practical words such as line, pressure and colour to specialist language such as symbolism, perspective, expressionism and synaesthesia.

Children use vocabulary to:

- Describe their own work.
 - Compare artists and styles.
 - Evaluate and improve their ideas.
-

Teaching and Learning

Teaching is based on clear modelling, explanation and practice. Teachers:

- Demonstrate techniques step by step.
- Provide opportunities for repeated practice.
- Link new learning to prior knowledge.
- Balance technical accuracy with creative choice.

Creativity is understood as the result of secure knowledge and skills, not something separate from learning.

Inclusion and Equality

All pupils are entitled to access high-quality art education. Teaching:

- Is adapted to meet different needs without lowering expectations.
 - Reflects cultural diversity and avoids stereotyping.
 - Encourages all pupils to express identity and experience through art.
-

Assessment

Assessment focuses on what pupils know, remember and can do. It includes:

- Observation and feedback during lessons.
- Discussion and explanation of processes.

- Sketchbooks and portfolios.
- Occasional checks of vocabulary and artist knowledge.

Assessment considers practical, theoretical and disciplinary knowledge. Final pieces are valued, but learning processes are just as important.

Health and Safety

Pupils are taught to:

- Use tools and materials safely.
- Understand risks and how to manage them.
- Take responsibility for their working environment.