Art and Design Policy

Academic Year: 2026–2027
Subject: Art & Design
Subject Leaders: Brittany Littlewood and Eve Newland
Review Date: July 2027

Introduction

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we recognise Art & Design as an essential form of self-expression which promotes creativity, cultural awareness and critical thinking. Through creating, exploring and analysing artwork, pupils develop their creativity, confidence, independence and ability to communicate ideas.

We believe that Art & Design nurtures children's imagination and creativity, providing opportunities for enjoyment, self-expression and personal reflection. We strive to provide a curriculum which reflects our ever-growing diverse school community, deepening pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own and other people's cultural heritage.

Through a broad range of artistic disciplines, including drawing, painting and mixed media, sculpture and 3D, and craft and design, pupils develop confidence and competence in using a variety of materials, techniques and processes. They are encouraged to experiment, make creative decisions, develop their own ideas and reflect on their work.

Art & Design supports the wider curriculum intent at St Nicholas. We are committed to providing a curriculum for all where every child grows academically, socially, morally and in aspiration, is prepared for the next phase of their academic journey and is spiritually nourished.

We aim to achieve excellence in all that we do in the knowledge that we love one another as God loves us.

Aims

Through our Art & Design curriculum, we aim to:

- Develop creativity, imagination and confidence.
- Enable pupils to express ideas, feelings and experiences through art.
- Develop knowledge and understanding of a range of artists, craftspeople, designers, cultures and artistic traditions.
- Develop competence in drawing, painting, mixed media, sculpture, 3D, craft and design.
- Teach pupils how to use a range of materials, tools, techniques and processes.

- Encourage pupils to experiment, make creative decisions and develop their own ideas.
- Develop pupils' ability to explore, develop, refine and evaluate their ideas.
- Develop subject-specific artistic vocabulary.
- Enable pupils to appreciate and respond to the work of others.
- Develop pupils' cultural awareness and understanding of artistic heritage.
- Encourage pride in pupils' own creative achievements.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to apply artistic skills across the wider curriculum.
- Ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND and those requiring additional support, can access and succeed within the Art & Design curriculum.

Statutory and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and should be read alongside the following statutory and regulatory documents:

- National Curriculum in England: Art and Design programmes of study (2014), including the statutory programmes of study and attainment expectations for Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Framework, particularly the Expressive Arts and Design area of learning.
- Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework, including expectations concerning the quality of education, curriculum and pupils' personal development.
- Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to avoid unlawful discrimination and make reasonable adjustments where required.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015).
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, alongside the school's wider health and safety procedures.

Curriculum Coverage

Our Art & Design curriculum provides a progressive programme from Reception to Year 6. Pupils develop knowledge, skills and understanding through drawing, painting and mixed media, sculpture and 3D, and craft and design.

Pupils encounter a range of artists, craftspeople, designers, cultures and artistic traditions, developing an appreciation of the richness and diversity of Art & Design.

The curriculum develops pupils' understanding of:

- Drawing and mark-making.
- Painting and colour.
- Mixed media.
- Sculpture and 3D.
- Craft and design.
- Line, shape, form, texture, colour and composition.
- Artistic vocabulary.
- Artists, craftspeople and designers.
- Different cultures and artistic traditions.
- The processes involved in developing and refining artwork.
- Evaluating and responding to their own work and the work of others.

Art & Design units are taught during the first half of each term, with Design & Technology taught during the second half. Our two-year rolling programme allows pupils to revisit key artistic disciplines and develop their knowledge and skills progressively throughout their time at St Nicholas.

The rolling programme includes units covering drawing, sculpture and 3D, painting, mixed media, craft and design, including opportunities to study individual artists and artistic traditions.

Curriculum Implementation

At St Nicholas, Art & Design is taught through the Kapow Primary Art & Design scheme of learning, which provides a clear sequence of lessons and supports pupils to build on prior learning and develop their artistic skills progressively.

Across each unit, pupils should have opportunities to:

- Explore – respond to artists, artwork, cultures, ideas and stimuli.
- Learn – develop new knowledge, vocabulary, skills and techniques through explicit teaching and modelling.
- Experiment – explore materials and techniques, practise skills and make creative choices.
- Create – apply knowledge and skills to develop ideas and produce artwork.
- Evaluate – reflect on their own work and respond to the work of others, identifying strengths and possible improvements.

These stages should not be viewed as a rigid sequence for every lesson. Teachers should follow the Kapow lesson sequence while using their professional judgement to provide opportunities for pupils to revisit, practise and develop their knowledge and skills.

Teachers explicitly teach and model new artistic skills, techniques, processes and vocabulary. Pupils are introduced to a range of artists, craftspeople, designers, cultures and artistic traditions and are encouraged to look closely

at artwork and discuss how artists use materials, techniques and processes to communicate ideas.

Sketchbooks

Sketchbooks are an integral part of Art & Design learning from Year 1 to Year 6. They provide a record of pupils' learning journeys and opportunities to:

- Practise skills and techniques.
- Test materials.
- Experiment with ideas.
- Record observations.
- Develop and refine ideas.
- Make creative decisions.
- Reflect and evaluate.

Sketchbooks should evidence the development of pupils' ideas and skills rather than simply a collection of finished pieces. They provide valuable evidence of progression over time.

Cross-Curricular Learning and Enrichment

Art & Design is used across the wider curriculum where this provides a meaningful purpose for pupils' learning. This includes artwork linked to Religious Education, history, English, science and wider school and community projects.

Examples include:

- Posters, leaflets, book covers, badges, displays and artwork created for real audiences and purposes.
- Artwork linked to Religious Education and Catholic artwork.
- Studying artwork from different cultures and traditions.
- Book cover design competitions.
- Badge design for the Living Streets Walk to School initiative.
- Artwork linked to wider curriculum themes and school events.

Classroom displays celebrate pupils' achievements and provide opportunities for children to appreciate the work of others.

Assessment

Assessment in Art & Design is used to identify what pupils know, understand and can do and to inform future teaching.

Teachers assess learning through:

- Questioning and discussion.

- Observation of practical activities.
- Assessment of artistic knowledge and vocabulary.
- Observation of pupils' use of materials and techniques.
- Sketchbook work.
- Completed artwork.
- Evaluation and reflection.
- Quizzes where appropriate.

Teachers assess the development of pupils' artistic skills and techniques through their sketchbooks and completed artwork. Assessment should inform future teaching and enable teachers to identify misconceptions, revisit knowledge and support progression.

Artwork is not expected to be formally marked. Verbal feedback should be provided during lessons. Where written praise or constructive feedback is particularly useful, a sticky note may be used so that feedback does not interfere with pupils' artwork.

A key ongoing priority is to strengthen how pupils' artistic progression and developing skills are identified and evidenced.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

- Provide strategic leadership for Art & Design.
- Ensure appropriate curriculum time, resources and staffing.
- Monitor the quality and impact of Art & Design provision.
- Support the subject leaders in identifying priorities for improvement.

Art & Design Subject Leaders

- Lead the development and implementation of the Art & Design curriculum.
- Ensure curriculum coverage and progression.
- Support teachers with Kapow planning and resources.
- Monitor sketchbooks, artwork and classroom practice.
- Monitor assessment and progression.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Coordinate enrichment opportunities.
- Support staff subject knowledge and professional development.
- Contribute to whole-school improvement planning.

Class Teachers

- Plan and teach high-quality Art & Design lessons.
- Follow the agreed Kapow curriculum and St Nicholas expectations.

- Explicitly teach artistic knowledge, vocabulary and techniques.
- Provide appropriate modelling, scaffolding and challenge.
- Maintain pupils' sketchbooks appropriately.
- Assess pupils' learning and use assessment to inform teaching.
- Celebrate and display pupils' artwork.

Teaching Assistants

- Support pupils to access practical activities.
- Provide appropriate scaffolding and prompts.
- Support independence rather than replacing teacher interaction.
- Support pupils with SEND and other identified needs where appropriate.

Pupils

- Participate positively in Art & Design.
- Experiment with materials and techniques.
- Develop and communicate their own ideas.
- Take care of equipment and materials.
- Reflect on and evaluate their work.
- Appreciate and respond respectfully to the work of others.

Inclusion

We have high expectations for all pupils and aim to remove barriers to Art & Design through appropriate scaffolding, explicit modelling and carefully planned support. Pupils work towards the same ambitious curriculum objectives wherever appropriate, with adaptations and personalised targets used to support access and progress.

- Pre-teaching and revisiting artistic vocabulary.
- Explicit modelling, demonstrations and worked examples.
- Visual prompts, sentence starters and structured talk.
- Flexible grouping, adult support and targeted questioning.
- Repetition and revisiting of key knowledge, skills and techniques.
- Varied opportunities for pupils to demonstrate understanding, including practical outcomes, discussion and supported recording.
- Diagnostic assessment and targeted intervention for pupils with SEND, EAL or other identified barriers.

A clear assess–plan–do–review approach is used where additional support is required. We work in partnership with the SENCO and families to ensure that pupils with additional needs receive appropriate support while developing independence and confidence as artists.

Professional Development

Staff development is informed by monitoring, assessment and identified curriculum priorities.

Teachers develop their Art & Design practice through curriculum planning, practical classroom experience, professional dialogue and sharing approaches, techniques, resources and examples of pupil work.

Monitoring of sketchbooks and classroom practice provides opportunities to identify where further support or subject-specific CPD may be beneficial. Future development will continue to focus on building staff confidence in teaching a range of artistic techniques and using sketchbooks effectively.

Ofsted and Quality of Education Expectations

The school's provision reflects the principles set out in the National Curriculum and the expectations associated with a high-quality education. The 2019 Education Inspection Framework (EIF) emphasised the importance of a well-sequenced, ambitious curriculum that enables pupils to develop secure knowledge and skills. The school recognises that Ofsted introduced a renewed EIF from November 2025. The school will continue to respond to current Ofsted requirements and guidance as these develop.

In Art & Design, this is reflected through progressive development of artistic knowledge and skills, opportunities to experiment and refine techniques, increasing independence and the effective use of sketchbooks to evidence learning over time.

The intended impact is that pupils develop increasing confidence and independence when using different materials, tools and techniques to communicate their ideas. Pupils develop artistic vocabulary, make creative choices and evaluate their own work.

Monitoring and Review

Art & Design is monitored through:

- Learning walks.
- Sketchbook reviews.
- Review of completed artwork.
- Curriculum and progression checks.
- Pupil voice.
- Displays.
- Assessment information.
- Professional dialogue.

Monitoring considers whether pupils are developing appropriate techniques, experimenting with different materials and recording the development and

refinement of their ideas. Sketchbooks provide valuable evidence of learning and progression over time. Classroom displays provide additional evidence of completed work and celebrate pupils' achievements.

The Art & Design Subject Leaders coordinate the monitoring cycle and report findings to senior leaders. Priorities identified through monitoring inform professional development and curriculum improvement.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance, national expectations or school priorities change.

Policy Review

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