Design and Technology Policy

Academic Year: 2026–2027
Subject: Design & Technology
Subject Leaders: Miss Newland & Mrs Littlewood
Review Date: July 2027

Introduction

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we recognise Design & Technology as a creative and practical subject that encourages children to think, design, make and solve problems.

We want children to see themselves as designers, makers and problem-solvers who can use their creativity and practical skills to develop solutions to real-life needs. Through Design & Technology, children learn how products are designed and made and develop an understanding of how materials, tools, mechanisms, electrical systems, food and technology can be used to create purposeful products.

We encourage children to make their own design decisions, work collaboratively, develop practical skills and evaluate their finished products. We want children to recognise that Design & Technology is part of everyday life and to understand how designers and engineers can use creativity and innovation to make a positive difference to the world around them.

Design & Technology supports St Nicholas' wider curriculum intent. 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.

Aims

Through our Design & Technology curriculum, we aim to:

- Develop creativity, imagination and problem-solving skills.
- Develop pupils' ability to design purposeful, functional and appealing products.
- Develop practical skills and confidence when using tools, materials and equipment.
- Teach pupils how to select appropriate materials, ingredients and components.
- Develop technical knowledge and understanding.
- Enable pupils to make informed design decisions.
- Develop pupils' ability to investigate and evaluate existing products.
- Provide opportunities to design, make, test and improve products.

- Develop pupils' understanding of structures, mechanisms, electrical systems, textiles, cooking and nutrition and the digital world.
- Encourage pupils to consider the needs of users and the purpose of products.
- Develop awareness of environmental, social and ethical issues associated with design and technology.
- Develop independence, teamwork and communication.
- Develop safe and responsible use of tools, equipment and materials.
- Provide opportunities to encounter designers, engineers and innovators and understand future career opportunities.
- Ensure that all pupils can access and succeed within the Design & Technology 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: Design and Technology 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 Expressive Arts and Design and Physical Development.
- 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

At St Nicholas, Design & Technology is taught through the Kapow Primary Design & Technology scheme of learning, which has been adapted and organised into our own two-year rolling programme to meet the needs and context of our school.

Our curriculum provides children with opportunities to develop their knowledge, creativity and practical skills through a range of Design & Technology disciplines. Children revisit and build on their learning as they progress through the school, developing increasing confidence and independence in designing, making and evaluating products.

Across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, pupils explore:

- Structures.
- Mechanisms and mechanical systems.
- Electrical systems.
- Textiles.
- Cooking and nutrition.
- The digital world.

Across the school, children develop their learning through:

- Design – generating, developing and communicating ideas.
- Make – selecting and using appropriate materials, tools and techniques.
- Evaluate – testing and evaluating products against their purpose and design criteria.
- Technical Knowledge – understanding how materials, mechanisms, structures, electrical systems, food and technologies work.

The Design & Technology progression document provides a clear progression of knowledge and skills from EYFS through to Year 6.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop knowledge and skills relating to design, materials, structures, mechanical systems, electrical systems, computing, cooking, nutrition and seasonality.

Curriculum Implementation

Design & Technology units are taught during the second half of each term, with Art & Design taught during the first half. As long as projects are covered within the appropriate two-year block, they can be taught in different orders where this enables meaningful links with related themes and learning across other areas of the curriculum.

Our two-year rolling programme ensures that all children experience a broad range of Design & Technology disciplines and that key knowledge and skills are revisited and developed over time.

Design, Make and Evaluate

High-quality Design & Technology teaching involves pupils in the process of designing, making and evaluating.

Pupils are encouraged to consider:

- Who the product is for.
- What the product is designed to do.
- The materials, ingredients or components required.
- How the product will function.

- How the product will look.
- Whether the product meets its design criteria.
- How the product could be improved.

Pupils increasingly make independent design decisions and use feedback and evaluation to refine their products.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers should use the Kapow scheme as the basis for planning and teaching. Lessons should provide opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge, skills and understanding through practical experiences.

Teachers should:

- Explicitly teach technical vocabulary.
- Model practical techniques clearly.
- Provide opportunities for pupils to investigate existing products.
- Teach safe and appropriate use of tools and equipment.
- Allow pupils to make meaningful design decisions.
- Provide opportunities to test and evaluate products.
- Revisit previously taught knowledge and skills.
- Provide appropriate challenge and support.
- Ensure required resources are available.

Recording and Evidencing

Design & Technology learning is recorded through a combination of written and practical evidence.

This may include:

- Design briefs.
- Design criteria.
- Annotated designs.
- Sketches and diagrams.
- Prototypes.
- Photographs of practical activities.
- Photographs of finished products.
- Evaluations.
- Quizzes and knowledge checks where appropriate.

This allows pupils' design and making processes, as well as their final outcomes, to be evidenced.

Safety

Safety is an integral part of Design & Technology teaching. Pupils are taught how to use tools, equipment and materials safely and responsibly.

As pupils progress through the school, they develop increasing independence in selecting and using equipment while learning to identify risks and apply appropriate safety procedures. The progression document includes increasingly independent use of tools and equipment, including safe use of saws and assessment of risks associated with different tools and equipment.

Enrichment and Cultural Capital

Design & Technology provides children with opportunities to connect their classroom learning to the real world and future careers.

Across the school, children have opportunities to:

- Explore the work of designers, engineers and innovators.
- Investigate how everyday products are designed and made.
- Work with a range of materials, tools and technologies.
- Develop practical problem-solving skills.
- Make connections between Design & Technology and other curriculum subjects.
- Consider the environmental impact of materials, products and food.
- Understand how design and technology can be used to improve people's lives.

Enrichment opportunities include cultural cooking experiences with families, Healthy Schools Healthy Eating cooking workshops, Catholic Care healthy eating workshops, theatre visits exploring set design and lighting, den building during the Year 5 residential at Nell Bank and enrichment activities involving designing, making and selling products.

Assessment

Assessment in Design & Technology is used to help teachers understand what children know, understand and can do.

Teachers assess learning through:

- Questioning.
- Discussion.
- Observation.
- Practical activities.
- Design work.
- Prototypes.
- Finished products.

- Evaluation.
- Quizzes and knowledge checks where appropriate.

Children's practical work, designs, prototypes and evaluations provide evidence of learning. Teachers assess how effectively pupils apply their knowledge and skills when designing, making and evaluating products.

Assessment information is used to identify gaps, revisit important knowledge and support progression into future units.

Summative assessment takes place throughout the year, with teachers recording pupils' progress and attainment against National Curriculum expectations. Assessment information is analysed to identify trends and gaps and to inform future teaching.

In EYFS, Design & Technology learning is assessed through the Expressive Arts and Design and Physical Development areas of learning.

Roles and Responsibilities

Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team

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

Design & Technology Subject Leaders

- Lead the development and implementation of the curriculum.
- Ensure curriculum coverage and progression.
- Maintain the two-year rolling programme.
- Support teachers with Kapow planning and resources.
- Monitor teaching, learning, books and practical outcomes.
- Monitor assessment and progression.
- Identify strengths and areas for development.
- Coordinate enrichment opportunities.
- Support staff subject knowledge and professional development.
- Ensure appropriate health and safety expectations are understood.

Class Teachers

- Plan and teach high-quality Design & Technology lessons.
- Follow the agreed Kapow curriculum and St Nicholas expectations.
- Teach the Design–Make–Evaluate process explicitly.
- Model practical techniques and safe use of tools.
- Provide appropriate modelling, scaffolding and challenge.

- Assess pupils' knowledge and skills.
- Maintain appropriate records and evidence.
- Ensure pupils have opportunities to make meaningful design decisions.

Teaching Assistants

- Support pupils to access practical activities.
- Provide appropriate scaffolding and prompts.
- Promote independence.
- Support pupils with SEND and other identified needs.

Pupils

- Participate positively in Design & Technology.
- Make thoughtful design decisions.
- Use tools and materials safely.
- Work collaboratively where appropriate.
- Evaluate and improve their products.
- Take responsibility for equipment and resources.

Inclusion

We have high expectations for all pupils and aim to remove barriers to Design & Technology 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 technical 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, models, prototypes 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 designers and makers.

Professional Development

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

Teachers develop their Design & Technology practice through:

- Curriculum planning.
- Practical classroom experience.
- Professional dialogue.
- Sharing resources and good practice.
- Modelling and observing practical techniques.
- Subject-specific CPD where required.
- Review of pupil work and practical outcomes.

Monitoring of teaching, planning, practical work and assessment provides opportunities to identify where further support or subject-specific CPD may be beneficial.

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 Design & Technology, this is reflected through progressive development of technical knowledge and practical skills, opportunities to design, make and evaluate, increasing independence and the application of learning to meaningful and purposeful contexts.

The intended impact is that pupils develop increasing confidence and independence when designing, making and evaluating products and build a repertoire of practical skills and techniques which they can apply appropriately. Children should increasingly see themselves as designers, makers and problem-solvers who can use creativity and practical skills to respond to real-life needs.

Monitoring and Review

Design & Technology is monitored through:

- Learning walks.
- Book and sketchbook scrutiny.
- Review of design briefs and evaluations.
- Review of practical outcomes and photographs.

- Assessment information.
- Curriculum coverage checks.
- Progression checks.
- Pupil voice.
- Displays and examples of completed work.
- Professional dialogue.

Monitoring considers whether pupils are developing appropriate knowledge and skills, making progress through the Design–Make–Evaluate process and increasingly applying their technical knowledge independently.

Monitoring findings are used to identify strengths and areas for development and to 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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