



ST JOSEPH'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

BACUP

ART AND DESIGN

Curriculum Subject Policy

“Jesus is the Centre of our lives”

God wants me to be the best me I can be

Our Mission

Through His teaching we aim to value ourselves and each other as unique and precious individuals created by God; we encourage and develop love and respect for each other and for our world; we strive to promote and deepen our Catholic faith through prayer, work and play; we aim to foster a loving, caring environment in which each child can freely learn and develop to their full potential.

2026–2027

Policy information

Document control	Details
Policy title	Art and Design Policy
Subject leader	J Makin
Review date	Autumn term 2028
Audience	Staff, governors, families and other stakeholders

1. Purpose and scope

This policy sets out St Joseph's approach to art and design from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 2. It applies to all staff involved in planning, teaching, supporting, leading and monitoring the subject and should be read alongside the school curriculum overview and art and design progression document.

2. Catholic life, mission and Gospel values

Art and design provides rich opportunities to recognise creativity as a gift, respond with wonder to creation and communicate ideas, experiences and beliefs. Love, friendship, respect, truth, hope and forgiveness shape the way pupils encounter artists and cultures, share materials, discuss one another's work and grow in confidence as unique and precious individuals created by God.

3. Curriculum intent

Our art and design curriculum stimulates creativity, imagination and curiosity. Pupils develop the knowledge, practical skills and visual language needed to explore ideas, experiment with materials, make purposeful choices and create individual responses. They encounter a broad and carefully chosen range of artists, craft makers and designers, including local, national and international figures from different times, cultures and traditions.

Learning is ambitious and accessible for every pupil. Knowledge and techniques build progressively across drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, textiles and three-dimensional work. Pupils use sketchbooks and other forms of documentation to observe, investigate, practise, develop and revisit ideas. They learn to reflect on their own work and discuss the work of others with accuracy, respect and increasing independence.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils should work with growing confidence and control, explain their choices using appropriate vocabulary, make connections between artists and their own practice, and value art as a means of expression, communication and cultural understanding.

4. Curriculum aims and entitlement

- Produce creative work by exploring ideas and recording experiences.
- Become increasingly proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques.
- Evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design.

- Know about significant artists, craft makers and designers and understand the historical and cultural development of their work.
- Experiment, take creative risks and learn from reflection, revision and purposeful practice.
- Experience a broad range of high-quality materials, processes, artworks and creative opportunities.

5. Curriculum content, progression and sequencing

The art and design progression document defines the knowledge, techniques and vocabulary to be learned. Long-term mapping ensures that pupils revisit and deepen learning across drawing, painting, collage, printmaking, textiles and three-dimensional work, while avoiding unnecessary repetition or gaps in mixed-age classes.

The school uses the Suffolk scheme of work as a principal planning resource. Units are adapted to St Joseph's curriculum, pupils and local context. Plans identify prior learning, artists and cultural contexts, key techniques and vocabulary, opportunities for experimentation, intended outcomes and suitable assessment points. Published resources support, rather than replace, teachers' professional knowledge and creativity.

6. Curriculum implementation

- Teachers establish a meaningful creative purpose and connect new learning to pupils' prior knowledge and experience.
- Techniques and safe use of materials are explicitly taught through clear explanation, demonstration, modelling and guided practice.
- Pupils observe closely, explore materials, practise component skills, generate ideas and make informed creative decisions.
- Sketchbooks are used age-appropriately to record observations, collect visual information, test techniques, annotate thinking and develop ideas; they are working documents rather than presentation books.
- Pupils encounter high-quality images and, where possible, original works, galleries, exhibitions, local artists and creative practitioners.
- Discussion and reflection help pupils compare approaches, explain choices, respond constructively and refine work without imposing one "correct" outcome.

7. Early Years Foundation Stage

Children develop early artistic knowledge and confidence through creating with materials, expressive play and carefully planned provision. They explore colour, line, shape, texture, form and pattern; handle tools and materials safely; represent ideas and experiences; and talk about what they notice and make. Adults model vocabulary and techniques while preserving children's agency, imagination and individual expression.

8. Inclusion, SEND and equality

Every pupil is entitled to participate meaningfully and make strong progress. Teachers identify barriers and make responsive adaptations such as modified tools and grips, accessible workspaces, sensory alternatives, pre-teaching vocabulary, visual and step-by-step prompts, additional modelling, adjusted scale or media, supported decision-making and alternative ways to communicate an artistic response. Adaptation does not reduce curriculum ambition or replace creative choice.

The curriculum represents artists, craft makers, designers, traditions and contemporary practices with breadth and respect. Resources avoid tokenism and stereotypes, place work in appropriate cultural context and enable pupils to encounter perspectives beyond their immediate experience.

9. Literacy, oracy, reading and visual vocabulary

Teachers explicitly teach and revisit subject vocabulary relating to the formal elements, materials, techniques, processes and evaluation. Pupils learn to look closely, ask questions, listen to different interpretations and explain intentions and decisions. Reading, artist research, annotation and purposeful writing support artistic thinking without allowing written outcomes to displace practical art learning.

10. Assessment and feedback

Assessment is closely aligned with the intended curriculum and focuses on what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers use observation, questioning, discussion, sketchbooks, practical processes, finished work and pupil reflection to identify prior learning, misconceptions, developing control and the quality of creative decision-making.

Assessment recognises experimentation, improvement and individuality rather than judging work by a single aesthetic preference. Teacher judgements are recorded through the school's agreed system and moderated where helpful. Assessment information informs subsequent teaching and curriculum review. Feedback is timely, specific and follows the school's feedback policy.

11. Enrichment, cultural capital and wider curriculum

Visits to galleries and exhibitions, visiting artists, local creative links, outdoor work, displays and exhibitions broaden pupils' experiences and raise aspirations. Authentic links with English, mathematics, religious education, history, geography, computing, PSHE and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are made where they strengthen artistic or wider learning; art also retains its integrity as a distinct subject.

12. Resources, digital technology and health and safety

Pupils use a wide range of good-quality, age-appropriate materials, tools and digital processes. Resources are organised so that pupils can work safely and increasingly independently. Digital images and artist research are selected for accuracy, suitability, copyright awareness and safe online use.

Teachers check tools, materials and work areas before use, explicitly teach safe handling and establish routines for distribution, hygiene, cleaning, storage and disposal. Materials are suitable for primary-aged pupils and substances are used in line with manufacturer instructions and relevant risk assessment. Appropriate protective clothing or equipment is provided where the assessed activity requires it. Activities, visitors and visits follow the school's health and safety, safeguarding and educational visits procedures.

13. Roles and responsibilities

- The art and design subject leader develops curriculum coherence, supports staff, oversees resources, monitors provision and standards, identifies professional development and reports findings and priorities to senior leaders and governors.
- Class teachers plan and teach the agreed curriculum, model techniques and safe practice, adapt responsively, assess learning and contribute to evaluation and improvement.

- Support staff work with teachers to promote access, independence, creative decision-making, vocabulary and safe participation.
- Senior leaders and governors provide strategic oversight, appropriate challenge, resources and accountability.

14. Professional development

The subject leader supports colleagues to develop subject knowledge, confidence with techniques, knowledge of artists and inclusive practice. Development needs are identified through dialogue and monitoring and addressed through coaching, demonstration, collaborative planning, networks, gallery or practitioner links and relevant training.

15. Monitoring, evaluation and impact

The subject leader and senior leaders evaluate curriculum implementation and impact through a proportionate range of evidence, which may include curriculum and planning review, pupil voice, sketchbook and work scrutiny, displays, assessment information, learning walks and professional dialogue. No single source is used in isolation. Findings lead to clear actions, support and curriculum improvement.

Impact is evident when pupils remember and apply important knowledge, use tools and materials with increasing control and safety, experiment and refine ideas, make purposeful creative choices, discuss artists and artworks with growing insight, and communicate individual responses with confidence.

16. Related documents

- School curriculum overview
- Art and design progression document and long-term plan
- SEND policy and equality information and objectives
- Safeguarding and online safety policies
- Health and safety and educational visits policies

17. Approval and review

This policy will be reviewed by the art and design subject leader and senior leadership team, approved through the school's agreed governance process and reviewed by the date shown in the document-control table, or sooner if curriculum or statutory requirements change.