

Our Art and Design curriculum

A guide for parents

We're delighted to share this guide, which maps out the exciting journey your child will take in **Art and Design** throughout their time at school!

This document is designed to give you a quick and clear look at how your child's creative skills and artistic understanding develop each year. Art is a vital subject that teaches much more than just technique; it fosters **self-expression, critical observation, history, and cultural awareness**.

We've broken down the **main ideas** and **key skills** for each year group so you can easily follow their progression—from making their first marks in Nursery to mastering complex historical techniques and self-exploration in Year 6. We encourage you to explore these concepts with your child and celebrate their creative growth at home!

Art and Design: Year-by-Year Summary for Parents 🎨

Year Group	What Your Child is Learning	Key Skills Developed
Nursery	Focuses on expressing feelings and identity through art. Children explore how the natural world and seasons inspire creativity. The main goal is to introduce art as a way to express self and learn about different materials.	Making marks with various tools, exploring colour mixing and texture, and choosing materials independently.
Year R/1	Study identity through portraiture and nature through sketching and transient art (using natural materials). They learn that artists use line, shape, and colour to represent people and things. They also explore collage using the works of illustrators like Eric Carle.	Observing and drawing simple features, mixing colours including skin tones, and practising to cut, tear, and arrange paper for collage.
Year 1/2	Focuses on the building blocks of drawing (lines, shapes, marks) and foundational colour theory (primary, secondary, tints, tones). They are introduced to abstract art through artists like Hilma af Klint, learning	Holding tools with precision, using lines to show texture, mixing paints to create secondary colours and tints/tones, and shaping clay to create 3D forms.

	that feelings can be shown through colour and shape.	
Year 3	Explores historical art through Prehistoric cave drawings (Lascaux) and the concept of art as storytelling. They learn about creating repeating patterns and are introduced to sculpture as a 3D art form through the challenging work of Ai Weiwei.	Replicating mark-making techniques like smudging and stippling, creating symmetrical patterns, and using materials (clay, wire, card) to construct a 3D sculpture.
Year 4	Develops advanced drawing skills, including one-point perspective to create depth, inspired by artists like Stephen Wiltshire. They explore sculpture using recycled materials and practise the delicate technique of watercolour painting, often focusing on the local environment.	Applying one-point perspective, using shading and cross-hatching to show light, planning and sketching 3D ideas, and controlling a brush for watercolour layering.
Year 5	Studies portraiture and power by comparing traditional styles with contemporary artists like Kehinde Wiley. They learn about printmaking (mono printing) as a form of activism and explore historical sculpture by creating symbolic Egyptian masks.	Painting portraits using controlled blending and layering, applying complementary colours for impact, experimenting with mono printing techniques, and constructing a symmetrical 3D mask.
Year 6	Focuses on deep self-exploration through self-portraiture like Frida Kahlo, learning about facial proportion and symbolism. They study Leonardo da Vinci to combine art and science, mastering observational drawing and techniques like chiaroscuro (light and shadow). They also explore relief carving through Mayan Stelae.	Using accurate proportion for self-portraits, mastering skills like contour, tone, and shading (chiaroscuro), and developing relief carving techniques in 3D form to tell a story.

How you can support your child at home –

- Look out for colour, shape, form when you are out and about or in pictures or books.
- Give your child opportunities to draw, colour, sculpt, build.

- Visit museums, galleries, libraries with your child.