

Grafton Primary School

Arts Policy



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Introduction

The concept of 'Art' is based on the conscious arrangement of colours, forms, shapes, textures, sounds, movements, words and so on, in order to express or communicate an idea, feeling, emotion or narrative to another person. This could include, for example, art and design, music, dance or drama and activities such as painting, drawing, sculpture, dance, music or literature.

At Grafton, it is our aim to deliver a creative curriculum at Key Stage One and Two, in accordance with the National Curriculum and to use the subject to reinforce child centred learning gained in other school areas. The 'Arts' cross many other curriculum areas. At Grafton we endeavour to bring these subjects together in the form of a related topic, catering for *preferred learning styles* and the fact that some children learn faster when concepts can be explored and presented in visual, auditory or kinaesthetic ways. In cases where children have English as an additional language, the creative curriculum offers another alternative opportunity to develop vocabulary and language skills.

About our school

Grafton School is situated in an area of concentrated social deprivation and on the whole, serves a community with low aspirations, unable to access the arts as a result of financial constraints. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is increasing and is now three times the national average. It is for these reasons that we see the Arts as an essential part of the school curriculum and endeavour to protect and enrich the entitlement of the Arts for every pupil in our school.

The creative curriculum in school is used as the perfect springboard to develop children's self-esteem, self-worth, motivation, stimulation, and discipline. It is a legitimate area of learning that is often organic and nurturing. It allows children to articulate emotion and frustrations in a safe and controlled way, to develop a personal voice, and celebrate their own identity and the identity of others. It can broaden their vision and outlook of the world around them, often in ways other subjects cannot.



We venture to bring together Art and ICT (a highly visual form of communication) to give children access to activities which encourage them to explore, analyse, exchange and present 'art work' creatively and respectfully. The school has recently invested in a number of film-making projects which have involved animation and blue screening techniques to create short films linked to curriculum topics.

The arts are embedded within our whole school philosophy, of self-expression and creativity, which ensures that children across each key stage, regardless of age, gender and ability are given experiences of a wide variety of art forms through an exciting and dynamic arts programme.

At the Foundation Stage, clear planning ensures that all children make progress in creative development. At Key Stages 1 and 2 children are introduced to the four main art forms through discrete subject lessons as well as through cross curricular experiences. The Arts are present throughout the National Core Curriculum and foundation subject areas, including Art and Design, Music, Physical Education, Religious Education and PSHE, through a topic based approach. Children are given a variety of opportunities to develop forms of creative expression including cross art form work using I.C.T. together with artists in residence and educational visits.

Our specific aims:

- To enable pupils to gain an artistic literacy and articulacy: to use and understand art as a form of visual and tactile and auditory communication and to have the confidence and competence in reading/decoding and evaluating visual images, artefacts, texts, compositions or performances.
- To develop particular creative and technical skills so that ideas can be realised and artefacts, texts or compositions produced.
- To develop pupils' aesthetic sensibilities and to enable them to make informed critical judgements and philosophical enquiries of or about art.
- To develop pupils' design and compositional capabilities.
- To develop pupils' capacity for imaginative and original thought and experimentation.
- To develop pupils' capacity to learn about and observe the world in which they live.
- To develop pupils' ability to articulate and communicate ideas, opinions and feelings about their own work and that of others.
- To develop pupil's ability to value the contribution made by creative people and to respond thoughtfully, critically and imaginatively to ideas, images, objects and performances of many kinds and from many cultures.

All of this is has been endorsed by ArtsMark. The school has been awarded ArtsMark Gold four times in succession.

Implementation

At Foundation, children have daily planned opportunities for creative development which include rich adult led and independent experiences. At Key Stages 1 and 2 children follow progressing schemes of work for music, and art and design. Dance planning is included in the P.E. scheme of work and drama is highlighted on the literacy planning and other curriculum areas, such as PSHE, History and Religious Education, in which improvisations of problematic life situations take place. We are working towards a drama scheme of work. Planning is in accordance with curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and the National Curriculum. Learning takes place within the framework of our school's policy on Learning and Teaching. Teaching time for the Arts includes regularly timetabled lessons and planned blocks of time. At Key Stages 1 and 2 a minimum of 15% of available curriculum time is allocated to Arts teaching. This includes educational visits and visitors. For example, children experience music, dance and drama with Juwon Ogungbe, who holds termly workshops for different year groups and helps to coordinate assemblies.

All arts lessons, including Art and Design, Music, Drama and Dance are planned, resourced and delivered in accordance with National Curriculum attainment targets and objectives.

The school employs an Advanced Skills Teacher in Art and Design (also appointed as Specialist Leader of Education) and Artist in Residence and professional musician to teach parts of the curriculum. Children in key stage two are all learning a strings instrument. These members of staff plan their own lessons in accordance with the National Curriculum, often drawing on the foundation subject topics that the children are working on at any given time, or responding to a current popular theme... recycling, green issues or, for example, the National Galleries Take One Picture Initiative which has become a fixture in Grafton's autumn curriculum.

Children at Grafton are given the opportunity to work in a number of different ways and with as many different forms of media as possible. Rich learning experiences and engagement with creative professionals help children to gain value of process. Group projects help children to respect work that may have required them to work co-operatively as a team. Meanwhile, personal art work encourages pupils to take ownership of their own work.

The areas of Art and Design, and Music are taught as discrete subjects, while both Drama and Dance are covered through the English and Physical Education curriculum.

First-hand observational, listening or enquiry skills form the basis and stimulus for most projects, encouraging pupils to 'see', 'hear' or 'feel' more clearly what is around them, with awareness, concentration and control. Children interpret these experiences in a sophisticated way – while being taught the skills to do so. For example, in an observational drawing session, children learn to use pencil, charcoal, paint and such materials in a dextrous and articulate manner.

Appropriate equipment and resources are made available to children to ensure a varied Arts education. Teachers ensure their creative lessons are carefully managed and organised, including the use of aprons and table covers, encouraging children to look after equipment and instruments. Where necessary, Teaching Assistants support teachers and children. These adults are carefully briefed prior to lessons in order for them to support work that is challenging, ensuring the progression and success of every child in the class.

The four main art forms of:

- Literature
- Performing Arts
- Visual Arts, Craft and Design
- Media and multimedia

are covered at the school.

After school arts activities include:

- Choir
- Drama and Dance
- Capoeira
- Fencing
- Street Dance
- Art club
- ICT club
- Poetry club

We also have an LCP Scheme of work written by John Thirwell, a HMI inspector of Art and Design for Staffordshire, which can be used to support non-specialist teachers who may be required to teach the subject. Each scheme of work contains individual lesson plans and resource packs which make clear reference to the National Curriculum objectives. The schemes of work are based on the QCA topics we already have in school and therefore make strong cross-curricular references to what we already teach. They also open up great opportunities to make reference to Art and Design in other subjects. These links are clearly stated on the plans. These can be taught directly from the scheme or more confident teachers and teachers with an Art and Design specialism may adopt ideas and interpret them in different ways.

These schemes reflect good practice and the most up to date ways of teaching Art and Design, with current examples of children's work. All of the schemes of work place emphasis on strong observational drawing, visits to Art Galleries and Institutions, the use of ICT within the Art and Design curriculum and the visual elements of Art and Design – pattern, texture, colour, line, form, shape and space. They encourage experimentation and investigation of materials, media, tools and techniques and processes.

It also places great emphasis on the learning that takes place during children's investigations and production of art work, and less on the visual aesthetics of a piece of work. In other words, what an art work looks like is less important than the skills learned and the knowledge gained from producing, evaluating, interpreting, reviewing and modifying. We aim to teach in a climate where children feel confident about their work and are comfortable with making mistakes. They understand that it is the 'learning process' that is important and not always a 'pretty' or aesthetically 'beautiful' end product.

The lesson plans include recommended questions that can be asked of pupils in plenaries and verbal critiques.

Every lesson plan makes reference to artists, designers and crafts-people. The resource packs include photographs of these suggested examples of work. The problem of a lack of

resources and the financial capacity to buy in these resources is resolved with use of flipcharts and websites accessible through Activstudio and the internet. This provides a very powerful way of looking at Art on the Interactive Whiteboards in every classroom from all of the major collections from around the world.



Arts Facilities

The school has a small hall, which is often used for Arts activities and theatre productions. All classrooms have sinks and designated art areas. A role play area provides the youngest children with opportunities for drama.

The school has a fully functioning art room and has recently refurbished its ICT suite with Apple Macintosh technology. This will revolutionise the learning opportunities on offer at the school, enabling teachers to expose young people to industry standard hardware and software and experience of stop frame animation and blue screen projects, film making and editing, digital imaging and photographic manipulation,

A growing collection of Arts books are kept in a small library in the resource room. Some are also kept in the children's library and are readily available for them to access.



Assessment

Arts lessons include verbal feedback during lesson times, and an opportunity for children to talk about and discuss their work with authority, using an appropriate critical vocabulary. This can take the form of a verbal critique or assessment, allowing children and teachers to evaluate and assess their progress during a project.

Art and Design lessons at Grafton are continually assessed, through personal work books, observation and verbal assessment, and this information is communicated to parents through termly parent consultation evenings and school reports. Children's work and class displays are also regularly monitored by the Art and Design coordinator. There is a summative assessment which records the children's progress at the end of key stages and this helps to identify *more able and talented* children.

A cyclical assessment and evaluation procedure of our Art and Design curriculum is made on a regular 3-4 year basis through our ArtsMark application and the following arts inspections which are endorsed by the Arts Council for England.

Display

Children are encouraged to value and celebrate their work through display, classroom discussion, and regular assemblies.

Artwork is displayed around the school in a manner that is appropriate to each project. For example, three-dimensional artefacts should stand or hang; transparent work can be displayed on windows and so on. Our commitment to high quality display ensures that the spirit and ethos of the school is visible everywhere. This contributes to our role as a 'healthy school'.

* Please refer to the 'Guidance for Classroom Displays and Environments' document for teachers.



Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

In accordance with the school's own policy for Special Educational Needs and Disability, provision and differentiation is made for the pupils in this category. Where necessary, pupils on the SEND register will receive work and tasks differentiated to meet the requirements of each child's Individual Education Plan, and the assistance of an adult if needed. However, this subject is often an area where children with Special Educational Needs gain an opportunity to shine, including those with severe motor difficulties.

All children regardless of gender, cultural, intellectual or social differences have access to a rich and diverse Arts curriculum. It is highly encouraged in the school to celebrate each of the pupils' differences and uniqueness. In creative lessons, children are given the opportunity to speak about themselves, their opinions, their background, culture and ideas, thereby, bringing positive attitudes to school and originality to their work. Where an art project of a particular theme is concerned, pupils with many varied cultural heritages are given the opportunity to talk from their own perspective, and tackle the work in their own unique way. We celebrate the cultural diversity of our area through arts lessons and this reflects community cohesion. It is our aim to make sure that children do not feel intimidated, daunted or left out and instead develop a confidence in their own capabilities and gain a strong sense of their own identity. This can often accelerate the learning of children with EAL and supports the expectations found in the *Every Child Matters* agenda. As a result, our children are respectful of each other and value one and others' differences.

Continuing Professional Development, Artists in Residence and External Partnerships

Our school has developed an apprenticeship approach, whereby non-specialist teachers work alongside experts. New skills are disseminated through observation, team teaching and demonstration. Our staff has become highly skilled and through this process we continue to build capacity.

The school endeavours to make strong bonds with outside agencies and individual artists, designers and crafts-people. As a result of this, children are exposed to work and ideas that might otherwise be beyond their understanding. It is essential that children gain a broad understanding of how their art and design education can be implemented in the 'real' world, in both the broad sense of 'life' experience and in 'vocational' activities.

Much of this is a legacy of our engagement with the 'Creative Partnerships' programme - a government funded organisation, governed by the 'Arts Council'. Sums of money were given to chosen schools to fund larger-scale projects, which would not normally be possible with a restricted school budget. The aim of this project was to build strong and continuing relationships between the 'Creative Sector' and the 'Education Sector', two groups which have in the past, failed to have any kind of dialogue with each other. Through this our school is now very outward looking and keen to engage young people in the 'real world'.

It is the school's aim to continue these dialogues with these partnerships and to raise the profile of the Visual and Expressive Arts in education. Grafton is committed to raising standards in Art Education and to delivering a rich and broad art and design curriculum.

The school is committed to further training of staff and Governors. Details of courses can be found in the school office.

Our Advanced Skills Teacher for Art and Design has developed a programme of INREACH work to develop the creative skills of non-specialist teachers.



Art Co-ordination

The development of Art and Design teaching at Grafton is ensured through regular discussion, monitoring, observation and INSET for all staff. The Art and Design coordinator delivers teacher training sessions to fulfil general and specific requirements. This includes guidance for teachers at FOUNDATION level, but also advice on how creativity can be integrated into the whole school day. Art is taught to National Curriculum expectations, preparing all children for Key Stage Three.

Teachers are given guidance on how to use equipment and how to teach Art and Design in agreement with national safety stipulations. Every classroom has a stock of basic art equipment and more specialist resources are kept in the Art cupboard. It is the responsibility of the Resources Co-ordinator to make sure these consumables are replenished when necessary, and for the Leader of Art and Design to order specialist art equipment.

A library of Art and Design books is kept in the resources cupboard, for staff use. These are regularly added to and provision is made for this growing collection through the Art and Design budget.

Art and design themed trips (galleries, workshops, themed places of stimulus) are arranged for every year group in the school, termly, and practising artists are employed regularly. This helps to place art and design in context with the working world. Regular weekly after school art and design lessons are taught as part of the school's extra curriculum time-table. These encourage and celebrate individual excellence and help to identify children who wish to explore the subject further or who may be **gifted** or **talented** in this particular subject area. **Gifted and Talented** children receive extra exposure to Art and Design through specially designed art club with the Art Co-ordinator and through visits to Art Institutions. We also have a school choir which encourages the most enthusiastic singers to perform. We recognise and celebrate the achievements of all children, including those who show particular ability in the arts. Planning is in accordance with our Gifted and Talented Pupil policy.



A Future vision of the 'Arts' within Grafton Primary School

Grafton School has an Art and Design AST who teaches across the Key Stages in every classroom. There is an 'Art Room', and the school has plans to develop further learning spaces for the Arts. Work done with specialist teachers means that children are also given a period of concentrated, highly focussed work. Children develop better skills and learn more innovative techniques. The Art and Design AST has also undertaken training for Philosophy for Children, which will once again revolutionise the culture of enquiry and feedback between children in the school, helping to develop pupil voice.

Grafton School aims to:

- become a school with an *enhanced* ability for teaching through creativity, with a commitment to providing further opportunities for pupils to work with creative practitioners – artists, designers, craftspeople, makers, performers and writers with an awareness for male **and** *female* practitioners from a wide variety of cultures.
- further develop the quality of art teaching by specialist and non-specialist art teachers within the school.
- develop the 'Art' *Learning* space within the school and to create more opportunities for children to work with specialist teachers.
- give children further opportunities to exhibit or publish work, to develop self-esteem, self-worth, motivation, stimulation and discipline – most importantly to provide children with a 'creative voice'.

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