

Art and Design Progression

Sparkwell All Saints Primary School

Our Art and Design curriculum builds children's knowledge, practical skills and confidence as artists. Children revisit drawing, painting, printing, sculpture and other creative processes, learning to make increasingly thoughtful choices about materials, techniques and the ideas they want to express.

How learning develops

Progression is about more than producing a finished picture or model. Children learn to observe closely, develop ideas, explore the work of artists and talk about their own creations. As they move through school, they use this knowledge to experiment, refine their work and communicate meaning with greater independence.

Phase	The developing artist
Early Years	Explore materials, colour, marks and shapes through practical experiences. Represent ideas, talk about creations and begin to choose tools for a purpose.
Years 1 and 2	Build control of tools and materials. Use observation, imagination and memory to create artwork, develop simple sketches and describe choices using artistic vocabulary.
Years 3 and 4	Combine techniques and visual elements with greater intention. Use sketchbooks to develop ideas, explore artists and cultures, and suggest improvements.
Years 5 and 6	Refine techniques and make increasingly independent decisions. Explore expression, perspective and meaning, using research, experimentation and feedback to develop personal work.

Reading the progression tables

The following pages show the main learning in each strand from Nursery foundations to Year 6. Nursery describes the early experiences on which Reception learning builds. The statements summarise the progression of skills and key knowledge; they are not a list of individual lessons.

Strands connect across projects. For example, a portrait may draw together observation, colour mixing, knowledge of an artist and evaluation. Familiar techniques are revisited with increasing control, complexity and purpose.

The visual language of art

Children develop their understanding of line, shape, form, colour, pattern, texture and tone. They use these elements to describe artwork and explain their decisions. Form refers to three-dimensional shape; tone describes how light or dark something appears.

Developing ideas and evaluating work

Children move from exploring and talking about their creations to researching, planning and refining artwork with a clear intention.

Stage	Ideas and creation	Evaluation and reflection
Nursery foundations	Represent ideas, sounds, movement and emotions. Explore a range of media, tools and techniques.	Say what they like or dislike about their work.
Reception	Communicate ideas while creating. Make art in different ways around a theme, expressing ideas and feelings.	Share creations and explain intentions, techniques and tools.
Year 1	Communicate ideas before starting. Use discussion and initial sketches; draw on observation, imagination and memory.	Say what they like about their own and others' work, using simple artistic vocabulary.
Year 2	Make simple sketches to explore ideas. Select suitable materials and techniques to develop an idea.	Analyse and evaluate their own and others' work using vocabulary for subject matter, colour, shape, form and texture.
Year 3	Use preliminary sketchbook drawings to communicate ideas and try techniques. Combine visual elements in artwork.	Suggest how to adapt and improve artwork, considering subject matter, composition and technique.
Year 4	Create a series of sketches over time. Experiment with techniques and develop different types of art.	Give constructive feedback, identifying strengths and suggesting specific improvements.
Year 5	Review and revisit sketches. Develop a theme through preliminary sketches or models before producing work.	Compare and comment on ideas, methods and approaches in their own and others' work.
Year 6	Gather and record information using mood boards, montages or annotated sketches. Create innovative work with personal, historical or conceptual meaning.	Adapt and refine work through feedback and reflection. Explain successful choices and identify further improvements.

Drawing and the human form

Drawing develops from exploratory marks to controlled use of line, tone and perspective. Representations of people become more detailed and expressive.

Stage	Drawing with pencil ink and charcoal	Representing people
Nursery foundations	Make continuous lines and closed shapes to represent ideas and simple patterns.	Use marks to represent the human body from observation, imagination or memory.
Reception	Select appropriate tools and media. Explore thick, thin, straight, curved, zigzag and dotted lines.	Represent different parts of the body. Recognise features of the human face.
Year 1	Use soft and hard pencils to create different lines and shapes. Recognise that pencil choice affects the marks made.	Represent a face through drawing, painting, sculpture or collage, with some attention to features. Learn about portraits and self-portraits.
Year 2	Use pencil, ink and charcoal to explore pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space.	Represent the human form, including the face and its features, from observation, imagination or memory.
Year 3	Add tone using hatching, cross-hatching, scumpling and stippling. Use shading to suggest depth and three-dimensional form.	Draw, paint or sculpt figures in different poses using materials such as pencil, charcoal, paint and clay.
Year 4	Use pen, ink and charcoal for different effects. Explore how reduced detail and lighter tones can suggest distance.	Develop three-dimensional art based on the human form, drawing on historical or contemporary starting points.
Year 5	Use pen, ink, chalk and charcoal to add perspective, light and shade to a composition or model.	Explore expression in portraiture and how artists communicate emotion rather than only physical appearance.
Year 6	Use line, tone and shape to record observational detail and perspective.	Use distortion, abstraction and exaggeration to create effects in portraits and figure drawing.

Painting colour and printing

Children build from exploring colour and repeated marks to using colour theory and printmaking deliberately to communicate ideas.

Stage	Painting and colour	Printing
Nursery foundations	Explore colour and apply paint using different tools. Notice that mixing colours makes new colours.	Make simple prints with fingers, hands, feet and found objects.
Reception	Use primary and other colours in different ways. Explore mixing and making colours lighter or darker.	Make prints using a range of tools, including printing blocks and rollers.
Year 1	Identify and use primary and secondary colours. Learn how secondary colours are mixed and placed on a colour wheel.	Make simple prints and patterns with paint and different liquids. Explore textured printing blocks such as collagraphs.
Year 2	Name and mix secondary colours. Make, describe and use a range of hues or variations of colour.	Use materials such as clay or polystyrene to create printing blocks and repeated patterns.
Year 3	Mix and use contrasting colours. Explore complementary colours, neighbouring colours and mixtures that produce tertiary colours.	Make a two-colour print. Understand that raised areas transfer colour in relief printing.
Year 4	Mix and use warm and cool colours to suggest warmth or coolness in a painting.	Combine printing techniques and materials to create a print on a theme, using motifs and patterns.
Year 5	Mix and use tints and shades with paint and other materials. Understand that white creates a tint and black creates a shade.	Add text or printed materials to a photographic background to communicate an idea.
Year 6	Apply knowledge of colour and colour theory to create art. Consider how artists and movements use colour for different effects.	Use the work of a significant printmaker or a printing technique to inform artwork, including exploration of stencil processes.

Sculpture collage and textiles

Children learn how materials behave, then select and combine processes to build forms, surfaces and textures with increasing skill.

Stage	Modelling and sculpture	Paper fabric and mixed media
Nursery foundations	Explore changing the shape and texture of malleable materials.	Use paper and fabric to make images. Explore cutting, tearing and joining.
Reception	Use hands and simple tools to shape malleable materials into different forms.	Cut, tear, fold and join a range of papers and fabrics.
Year 1	Squeeze, pinch, roll, press, flatten and smooth materials. Cut, layer and overlap paper or card to make simple forms.	Use textured materials, including paper and fabric, to make a simple collage.
Year 2	Press objects into malleable materials to create textures, patterns and imprints.	Use the properties of paper and other materials to make different forms, shapes and textures.
Year 3	Create three-dimensional forms using malleable or rigid materials. Explore clay techniques such as coils, pinch pots and joining with slip.	Weave natural or manufactured materials on a simple loom to create pictures or patterns. Learn about warp and weft.
Year 4	Use clay to create a detailed three-dimensional form. Develop construction, joining and surface-marking techniques.	Use stitches to add detail and texture to fabric or mixed-media collages, including running stitch, cross stitch and blanket stitch.
Year 5	Create a relief form using different tools, techniques and materials. Explore how high and low relief project from a surface.	Make and use paper through traditional craft techniques, such as casting, collage, marbling, origami and papermaking.
Year 6	Create a three-dimensional form using malleable materials, informed by a significant artist, architect or designer.	Combine the qualities of paper, fabric and printing techniques to create deliberate textural effects.

Natural art and landscapes

Children progress from exploring natural materials and familiar places to detailed observation, imaginative landscapes and art with an environmental message.

Stage	Natural materials and subjects	Landscape and place
Nursery foundations	Explore natural materials and loose parts to make patterns and images.	Create pictures of places from imagination or experience.
Reception	Use natural materials and loose parts to make two-dimensional and three-dimensional art.	Draw or paint a place from observation or imagination.
Year 1	Make temporary art and patterns with natural and manufactured materials. Learn that photographs can record work that may later change or be cleared away.	Draw or paint a place from memory, imagination or observation. Recognise natural and human-made features in landscapes.
Year 2	Draw, paint and sculpt natural forms from observation, imagination and memory. Notice patterns, shapes and colours in nature.	Draw or paint features of landscapes and seascapes with some attention to detail.
Year 3	Use nature and natural forms as starting points for artwork. Explore marks and patterns made with natural objects.	Draw, collage, paint or photograph an urban landscape, such as a town or city.
Year 4	Represent detailed natural patterns, such as those found in water, weather or animal skins.	Choose an interesting viewpoint for a landscape. Use a viewfinder to frame a view and consider composition.
Year 5	Record and edit natural forms, animals and landscapes using digital photography and graphics software.	Use different materials to create imaginative and fantasy landscapes.
Year 6	Create artwork inspired by an environmental message. Consider how recycled materials can contribute to its meaning.	Create landscape artwork with or without conventional perspective. Understand how perspective can suggest three-dimensional space on a flat surface.

Understanding artists and their work

Children learn to look closely, make comparisons and understand how artists respond to different subjects, times and cultures.

Stage	Comparing and discussing art	Artists artworks and movements
Nursery foundations	Say how their work is the same as or different from someone else's.	Explore and talk about pictures or famous artworks while painting and drawing.
Reception	Discuss similarities and differences in their own and others' work, including colour, subject matter and composition.	Explore work by artists and talk about likes and dislikes. Learn that artists create paintings, sculptures and other forms of art.
Year 1	Identify similarities and differences between artworks. Identify and compare textures.	Describe and explore the work of a significant artist. Examples in the progression include James Rizzi.
Year 2	Describe similarities and differences in artworks on a common theme, including style, composition and colour.	Explain why an artwork or body of work is important. Explore still life and artists such as Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, Claude Monet and Henri Matisse.
Year 3	Compare artists, architects and designers. Identify characteristic features of related artworks, structures and products.	Work in the style of a significant artist, architect, culture or designer. Explore artists such as L S Lowry and how they represent people and places.
Year 4	Compare and contrast artwork from different times and cultures, recognising varied materials, techniques and purposes.	Explain the significance of historical art, architecture or design and use it as inspiration for new work.
Year 5	Discuss how artists and cultures use visual elements. Explore differences in architectural styles and artistic approaches.	Develop artwork using features of a movement, method or genre. Explore examples such as Picasso's continuous line drawings and Munch's Expressionism.
Year 6	Compare artists' use of perspective, abstraction, figurative and conceptual art. Discuss mood, emotional response and meaning as well as visual features.	Explain the significance of artworks and artists from different times and cultures, including Inuit artists and Black artists, and use elements to inform their own work.