

Art at The Mill Academy

Rationale and Intent

At The Mill Academy, we believe that Art is a vital part of the Primary curriculum as it provides a means of expression for all children, regardless of their competence in verbal and written communication.

It is a practical subject which stimulates creativity, imagination and challenge through the use of a wide range of materials. Adding to children's experiences and depth of understanding in other areas of their learning, art is very effective as a cross-curricular link, from creating their own artwork and artefacts, learning about influential artists around the world to the experience of museum's and gallery trips.

Our aim is to allow children to express their individual interests, thoughts and ideas alongside building resilience, creativity, confidence and critical-thinking skills. We equip our children with the knowledge and skills needed to experiment, invent, create and evaluate their own works of art – for both skill building and creating final pieces. It will enable pupils to create art work with a real purpose in terms of displaying and sharing the work they create and showcasing the skills and progress they have made.

They should also know that art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and communities across the world.

Implementation

At The Mill Academy, we take a cross-curricular approach which allows us to embed art across the whole curriculum. Lessons are planned to be purposeful and allow children to express their understanding of a range of subjects, from reading to science, using a range of materials and mediums to do so. Children are taught skills explicitly, in line with our school progression document, and are provided opportunities to apply these skills to final outcomes.

All year groups are provided opportunities to explore and develop skills in the key processes of art, including: painting, drawing, printing, textiles and sculpture. This is also supported through in-depth studies of key artists and their works. Children and their class teachers provide each other with regular feedback and next steps which enable them to annotate and improve their work. The journey children take is evidenced in their sketchbooks and any additional, larger work is photographed and shared.

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Impact

Within art and design, we strive to create a supportive and collaborative ethos for learning by providing investigative and enquiry based learning opportunities. Emphasis is placed on investigative learning opportunities to help children gain a coherent knowledge of understanding of each unit of work covered throughout the school.

Our art and design curriculum is high quality, well thought out and is planned to demonstrate progression. We focus on progression of knowledge and skills and discreet vocabulary progression also form part of the units of work. We measure the impact of our curriculum through the following methods:

- Assessing children's understanding of topic linked vocabulary before and after the unit is taught.
- Summative assessment of pupil discussions about their learning.
- Images and videos of the children's practical learning.
- Interviewing the pupils about their learning (pupil voice).

The consistent use of children's sketchbooks means that children are able to review, modify and develop their initial ideas in order to achieve high quality outcomes. Children learn to understand and apply the key principles of art: line, tone, texture, shape, form, space, pattern, colour, contrast, composition, proportion and perspective. The opportunity for children to refine and develop their techniques over time is supported by effective lesson sequencing and progression between year groups. This also supports children in achieving age related expectations at the end of their cohort year.

Classroom displays reflect the children's sense of pride in their artwork and this is also demonstrated by creative outcomes across the wider curriculum. The school environment also celebrates children's achievements in art and demonstrates the subject's high status in the school, with outcomes, including sculptures, enhancing the outdoor, as well as indoor, environment.

The art subject leader collates examples of children's work at an expected standard for each year group on a termly basis. This is used to create a detailed, annotated guide to help class teachers make informed judgements on the progress of their pupils. Both sketchbook development and final pieces are used and considered and this helps class teachers to identify any areas needing further development.