

Art Policy

The purpose of the Art policy

The policy is a working document for Elm House School. In this document the term educators is used to describe teachers, teaching assistants and learning support assistants. It describes the school's fundamental understanding of the purpose of art education and the way art contributes to students learning.

It describes 'How we do it here' and is therefore written in consultation with the staff to reflect their knowledge, skills and understanding of art. It reflects an understanding of the National Curriculum for Art and any specific requirements of Elm House School.

It also advises social workers, directors and inspectors of the principle aims of the teaching of art in the school and how those aims are put into practice.

Aim

The school believes that art is a vital part of the education of all students. The child's use and understanding of the visual language of art needs to be developed by effective teaching and by a considered sequence of experiences.

The school's aim is to provide an art curriculum which will enable each child to reach their full potential in learning in art, through investigating and making, through research and the development of skills and through their evaluation of their own art and that made by others.

Curriculum content and planning

Elm House School plans a range of activities in art which provide opportunities, as required by the National Curriculum for Art, for students to:

- Record responses to experience and imagination and to observations of the natural and made environment
- Gather resources and materials, using them to stimulate and develop ideas
- Explore and use two and three dimensional media, working on a variety of scales
- Review and modify their work as it progresses
- Develop understanding of the work of artists, craftspeople and designers from a range of times and cultures and apply this to their work
- Respond to and evaluate art, craft and design, including their own and the work of others.

They will achieve this through developing an understanding of the use of the eight art elements as outlined in the National Curriculum: line and shape; colour and tone; pattern and texture; form and space

Classroom management

Materials, equipment and resources for art are organized to promote effective use by students. They are clearly marked or labelled to allow actual or visual access to the students.

Teaching staff demonstrate the ways in which specific materials, tools and processes are organized and students are expected to take an increasing level of responsibility for that organization.

To ensure consistency and development of practice across the school, there are agreed procedures for common activities: the usage and mixing of powder paint, for example. This contributes to the development of understanding and confidence in the use of such procedures by both teaching staff and students.

Teaching

Whilst art will at times be related to other subjects through cross curricular links, teachers also plan specific activities to provide development of the skills, knowledge and understanding of art.

These activities will take account of students previous experience in art.

Teachers will ensure that the objectives of the lessons and the criteria for achievement are clear to all students.

Where the supervision of art activities is delegated to teaching assistants, they will have access to training and be able to support students effectively.

Progression and continuity

Progression and continuity are ensured by reference to the whole school map or scheme of work for art, and by each educator's awareness of the activities they should be presenting to their students and how these build on the previous art experience of their students.

Assessment and recording

Assessment procedures are followed which relate to the school's overall policy for assessment, and to the end of Key Stage Descriptions for National Curriculum Art.

Assessment relates to the learning objectives for each art activity.

Assessment procedures can include some of the following:

- A common task at the beginning or end of each school year, an observational drawing of a plant, person or object, for example
- Individual art portfolios containing selected, dated, annotated pieces
- Individual sketchbooks containing dated, annotated pieces
- A whole class discussion about work at the end of each stage of its development
- A structured approach

Recording is kept to the minimum but is sufficient to note an individual's progress and to provide guidance for future learning and teaching.

Special needs and equal opportunities

Making art is a way to communicate and respond to experience. Every child's response is unique and activities in art are planned which allow students to respond according to their abilities, with appropriate differentiation by support, resources and outcome.

Teaching staff will provide instruction and guidance on technical processes to take account of individual needs.

In line with the school's equal opportunities policy, all students will have an entitlement to all aspects of the art curriculum.

Resources

A range of basic resources for drawing, painting and working in three-dimensions is available in each classroom. They are presented in such a way that they are accessible, attractive and are maintained in good order.

Additional, less frequently used resources are kept centrally. It is the responsibility of each teacher to ensure that these are maintained to the same high standard as those in the individual classrooms.

Books and other visual materials to support learning about artists, designers and craftspeople are available in the classrooms.

The school has a range of natural and made objects from a range of cultures for use as a stimulus for work from observation and imagination.

When appropriate the school uses outside resources, such as gallery visits and visits to the school by artists and craftspeople to support pupil's learning in art.

Display and presentation

The school recognizes that care in the effective display and presentation of pupil's work and of resource materials, and the efficient organization and presentation of materials and equipment, has a positive effect on pupil's learning and on their respect for the subject.

Health and Safety

All students will be taught to use materials, tools and techniques for practical work safely and in accordance with health and safety requirements. All adults working with students in art will be made aware of the health and safety implications, will have access to any guidelines used by the school, and will be aware of the school's First Aid policy.

The school may decide that it will make its own specific ruling on the use of certain tools or processes.

Particular care needs to be taken with following:

Plaster of Paris

Plaster of Paris is frequently used to make casts in clay or sand. This is a very satisfying process and a stimulating way to pursue an understanding of pattern, form and texture.

However, Plaster of Paris when mixed with water and left to harden emits heat. No students should be allowed to place their hands or any part of their body in the mixture as it hardens. This can cause severe burning.

When mixing the plaster with water it is advisable to use a stick rather than the hand, and for those students with skin allergies it is advisable that they should wear Nitrile (non-allergenic) gloves.

This process should be used only with adult supervision.

Plaster of Paris is of course used for setting fractured bones but in such cases it is never put in direct contact with the skin. In addition, it is used in relatively thin layers so the heat can dissipate.

Craft knives, saws and other sharp tools

The school will make a risk assessment of the above tools and advise on the way they may be used to make art. Students need to be shown how to use these tools safely to construct with card and wood to make sculptures.

Policy review

This policy document will be reviewed by the Executive Headteacher on an annual basis to ensure it is up to date with current legislation and best practice.

Date approved: April 2014

Date last reviewed: September 2024

Next review (or before): September 2025

Signed: 

Position: Education Director

Staff Acknowledgement

In signing this document I am confirming I have read the information and have an understanding of the procedures outlined within the information provided.

I have had the opportunity to discuss this document with a Senior Leadership member of staff to gain further clarity.

I also know that if I feel I need further guidance I know I can access through the Executive Headteacher or Head of Education.

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Staff member name:

Position:

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