

St Andrew's N.S.



Visual Arts Policy

Policy Ratified	8 th January 2020
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Introductory Statement

Our Visual Arts plan was drawn up in collaboration with staff members. Its preparation involved the review of current practice and curriculum documents. The purpose of this plan is to provide an overview of this aspect of learning in our school and to set out our general aims and broad objectives. It also provides frameworks for both long and short term classroom planning as well as information for our teachers, our parents and the Board of Management on the approaches and methodologies adopted by the school when teaching the Visual Arts.

Vision, Aims and Broad Objectives

(a) Vision:

Within St. Andrew's N.S. the Visual Arts Curriculum is taught in a child centred manner, enabling each pupil to develop the aesthetic side of their personality and talents. We regard this area of the curriculum and its integration and linkage with other subject areas as making a unique and vital contribution to the holistic development of the child.

(b) Aims:

We endorse the aims of the Primary School Curriculum for the Visual Arts which are:

- To help the child develop sensitivity to the visual, spatial and tactile world, and to provide for aesthetic experience
- To help the child express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual and tactile forms
- To enable the child to have enjoyable and purposeful experiences of different art media and to have opportunities to explore, experiment, imagine, design and communicate with different art materials
- To promote the child's understanding of and personal response to creative processes involved in making two and three-dimensional art
- To enable the child to develop the skills and techniques necessary for expression, inventiveness and individuality
- To enable the child to experience the excitement and fulfilment of creativity and the achievement of potential through art activities
- To foster sensitivity towards and enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts
- To provide opportunities for the child to explore how the work of artists and craftspeople might relate to his/her own work

The broad objectives of the Visual Arts Curriculum should enable the child to:

- Look at, enjoy and make a personal response to a range of familiar and unfamiliar objects and images in the environment, focusing on their visual attributes
- Explore and begin to develop sensitivity to qualities of line, shape, colour and tone, texture, pattern and rhythm, spatial organisation and the three-dimensional quality of form
- Express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual form and with imagination, enjoyment and a sense of fulfilment

- Experiment in spontaneous, imaginative and increasingly structured ways with a range of art materials, including pencils, paints, crayons, chalks, markers, inks, clay, papier mâché, fabric and fibre, and construction materials
- Explore the expressive and design possibilities of the materials within a range of two and three-dimensional media, including drawing, paint and colour, print, clay, construction, fabric and fibre
- Apply skills and techniques, demonstrating increasing sensitivity to the visual elements in his/her art work
- Look with curiosity and openness at the work of a wide range of artists and craftspeople
- Explore atmosphere, content and impact in the work of artists, especially when they relate to his/her own work
- Identify a variety of visual arts media and describe some of the creative processes involved
- Develop an ability to identify and discuss what he/she considers the most important design elements of individual pieces, especially when they relate to work in hand
- Discuss the preferred design elements in his/her work and in the work of classmates
- Begin to appreciate the context in which great art and artefacts are created and the culture from which they grow
- Respond to visual arts experiences in a variety of imaginative ways
- Use appropriate language in responding

The Visual Arts curriculum focuses on the child who is

- An active agent of her/his own learning
- Provided with a broad range of activities and materials
- Enabled to work with materials throughout his/her primary school years in an age appropriate manner
- Enabled to use language to express opinions and feelings about a variety of art forms

Content of Plan

This Visual Arts plan will be addressed under the following headings:

Curriculum planning

1. Strands and Strand units
2. Methodologies and Approaches
3. Differentiation
4. Linkage and integration
5. Assessment and record keeping
6. Equality of participation and access

Organisational planning

1. Timetable
2. Displays
3. Resources and ICT
4. Health and safety
5. Individual teachers' planning and reporting
6. Staff development
7. Parental involvement
8. Community Links

Curriculum Planning:

The Primary School Curriculum is available on www.ncca.ie

Strands and Strand Units:

For all classes the curriculum for the Visual Arts (formerly known as Arts and Crafts) is divided into specific areas of study which are called Strands. These Strands are in turn sub divided into Strand Units. The curricular objectives for each Strand Unit are set out for each class grouping in The Primary Curriculum available on www.ncca.ie

Teachers at each class level endeavour to provide a broad range of activities for each Strand Unit over the course of the school year/over a two year period.

Please refer to table below for further details.

Strand	Strand Units
Drawing	Making drawings Looking and responding
Paint and Colour	Painting Looking and responding
Print	Printing Looking and responding
Clay	Developing form in clay Looking and responding
Construction	Construction Looking and responding
Fabric and Fibre	Creating in fabric and fibre Looking and responding

The class teachers have agreed to follow the outline as set out in the link below to ensure that the Strands and Strand Units, as set out in the curriculum, are covered over a two year period, i.e. Junior/Senior Infants, First/Second, Third/Fourth and Fifth/Sixth classes.

Please see Glance Cards.

<http://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/allstrandsvisualarts.pdf>

To ensure that there is a continuity and progression in the study of Artists and their works of Art, the following Artists are to be studied in each year. Teachers may choose to look at other artists for inspiration, ideas and techniques of art.

List of Artists to be studied in each class level	
Class level	Artists
Junior Infants	Piet Mondrian
Senior Infants	Wessily Kandinsky
First Class	Georges Seurat
Second Class	Paul Klee
Third Class	Vincent Van Gogh
Fourth Class	Claude Monet
Fifth Class	Andy Warhol
Sixth Class	Paul Cezanne

Methodologies and Approaches

We support the recommendation that guided discovery is the most appropriate teaching method for the for the Visual Arts as it encourages the pupils to:

- Explore the expressive potential of various media and experiment with them.
- Cultivate their own artistic interpretation of their world.
- Observe their visual environment.
- Express significant aspects of their lives in visual form and to appraise art works.

The teacher's awareness and acceptance of a broad range of visual imagery, both in pupil's work and in the work of artists is also important. Emphasis will be placed on the process rather than the product and the uniqueness of each pupil's artwork.

The Visual Arts Curriculum is structured so that activities for art stem from the pupil's life experiences, imagination, observations, questioning, development of their own ideas and creativity. The children experience a variety of approaches, e.g. receive a stimulus and then create, experiment, discover, engage in whole class work, individual work, pairs, groups, projects, theme work and integration. At each class group level, pupils are provided with opportunities to view and respond to a wide variety of artists whether local national or international and with a gender balance. Within the activity, pupils are allowed to personalise their interpretation, e.g. a poem on spring might suggest hills and lambs to one pupil, flowers to another, and the third might use colour abstractly to reflect his/her interpretation of spring. Class teachers regularly use a lesson structure which provides pupils with a stimulus to create/respond followed by a choice as to the medium for this.

We also encourage linkage of the six Visual Art strands as this emphasises the inter-related nature of arts activities. This incorporates linking Strand with Strand (printing on fabric), linking Strand with Strand unit (construction activity leading to looking and responding to constructions in the environment) or linking Strands by using a theme.

One of the primary principles of learning as promoted by the Primary School Curriculum is the central role which language plays in the learning and development of the child. All pupils are afforded opportunities to discuss and respond to their own and the work of others.

Children should be afforded the opportunity to look and talk about his/her work, other children's work and artist's work. By discussing the children's work and the work of other artists, the teacher can informally draw attention to the visual elements of line, shape, colour and tone, texture, pattern and rhythm, form and spatial organisation. Below are some of the questions we use to help develop the children's sensitivity to the visual elements:

Line: What kind of line do you see? Are they straight /curved? What effects are created by the lines?

Shape: What shapes do you see? Are they curved? What effects do these shapes create?

Colour and Tone: What colours do you see in the picture? Why did the artist use these colours? What effects are created?

Texture: What does the surface feel like? What materials are used?

Pattern and Rhythm: Can you see any patterns? Where are the patterns?

Form: Can you see any 2-D shapes (triangle, square etc.) 3-D shapes?

Spatial Organisation: Is there a lot of space/depth in the picture?

Differentiation

St. Andrew's N.S. has a comprehensive policy on the inclusion of pupils of various ability levels (please refer to the Whole School Policy on Support Teaching.) Specifically within the area of the Visual Arts, teachers use a variety of teaching and learning activities when differentiating learning. These include:

- A mixture of whole class and group activity with set tasks of varying complexity.
- Peer tutoring
- Planning topics to provide opportunities for further intergration with other areas of the curriculum
- Choosing more accessible or more demanding media
- Planning for the use of a wide range of communication skills from display to individual and or group presentations

Linkage and Integration

By its very structure the Primary School Curriculum is integrated in nature, consequently topics covered in one area of study may fulfil the objectives of a number of different Strands and Strand Units within the particular curricular area and also those in other subject areas simultaneously.

Within their short term planning templates, all teachers specify how a particular activity or topic will be linked and integrated to/with other activities or curricular areas. This helps to reduce curricular overload and unnecessary repetition.

There are many opportunities for integration of Visual Arts with other subjects. Theme and seasonal based activities will also be used to support integration, thus enabling the children to use their creativity in understanding both Visual Arts and other subjects. Some examples of where integration may occur are:

Language-English : Drawing from our experience to illustrate a story

SESE: Constructing a model of something from the past.

Drawing from imagination a character from History

Leaf prints

Observational drawing

Looking and responding to our environment

SPHE: Portraits of classmates or self portraits

Mathematics: Using print patterns to explore tessellation

Language-Gaeilge: Pictiuirí a chruthú chun tuiscint a léiriú.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Please refer to the school's Data Protection Policy.

While no formal assessment takes place in this area of the curriculum, where the individuality of each child's response and creativity is promoted and encouraged, teachers engage in ongoing assessment as to the perceptual awareness, expressive ability, critical skills and disposition towards Visual Art.

Teachers may make use of some of the following as indicators of a child's overall progress/development

- Teacher observation
- Teacher-designed tasks
- Work samples, portfolios, projects
- Curriculum profiles

The information gathered through the assessment of the pupils' work is used to inform and self evaluate the curricular content and teaching methodologies used in this area. It will also form an invaluable data source for formal School Self Evaluation in the near future.

Pupils' work is on regular display in the classroom, in the school's Large Hall and in corridors for viewing by all members of the school community.

Equality of Participation and Access

All pupils in St Andrew's are afforded equality of access to all areas of the curriculum including all Strands in Visual Arts. Class and Support Teachers differentiate their level of expectations, teaching methodologies or format of activities provided with the above in mind. For example, teachers may provide alternative materials/equipment to promote inclusivity and maximise participation by all pupils.

Class and Support Teachers forward plan to ensure that children are exposed to a rich variety of art inspired by the work of those from other ethnic background and cultures. The specific language needed to respond to art is directly taught where necessary.

Organisation

Time

3 hrs per week (2.5 hrs in the Infant Classes) is allowed for the area of the arts: Music, Drama and the Visual Arts. Through linkage and integration the time allocated to the Visual Arts can be blocked together for instance when engaging in project work. An equal amount of time is allocated to each Strand over the course of the year. The Visual Arts forms a key component of school plays, exhibitions and parent visits to the school.

Display

Within each classroom and throughout the school corridors a focus on the display of children's work is evident. Classes often share their work with their peers both in their own and in other classrooms.

ICT

Pupils have access to ICT for animation, clip art etc particularly in the senior classes. YouTube is also used as a teaching resource when discussing famous artists, buildings and to access art from other cultures/eras.

The school has developed a comprehensive Acceptable Use Policy for internet use.

Health and Safety

The school has a comprehensive Health and Safety Policy. All art supplies are purchased with the issue of health and safety uppermost in our minds. For example, child safety scissors are provided. Classrooms must be ventilated when using paints with a strong odour with varnishing being applied outdoors. These procedures also apply to Extra Curricular Activities.

Individual Teachers Planning and Reporting

Individual Teachers compile their long and short term plans in line with the Primary School Curriculum as set out in this policy. They collaborate with a view to providing a variety of experiences for pupils over the course of the school year. Teachers are also free to make use of a thematic approach to this curricular area. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their work in their Cuntas Miosúil.

Particularly in the area of the arts, the Primary School Curriculum is structured so that teachers can revisit particular themes and topics as the child progresses through the primary school. For example, pupils will work with clay on a number of occasions from Junior Infants to Sixth Class, with a different emphasis and approach to take account of their age and stage of development. In summary this characteristic of the curriculum is termed as being “spiral” in nature. To promote this “spiral” aspect of the curriculum, while at the same time avoiding unnecessary repetition of particular topics, staff have agreed to use the schedule of topics as set out in Appendix 1 to inform their planning.

Staff development

Good practice and ideas for use within the Visual arts are shared collaboratively at staff meetings. Staff regularly visit each others’ classroom to share ideas.

Teachers are encouraged to attend CPD in all areas of the curriculum, including the Visual Arts, and to share course content with colleagues at staff meetings.

When opportunities arise, outside expertise is welcomed to the school to work with classes and groups of children e.g. artists. Class teachers avail of opportunities for collaborative teaching where appropriate.

Parental involvement

Our PTA funds the supply of Art materials and equipment for the Visual Arts are provided for the school. Parents are welcome visit the school on a regular basis and on specific occasions to view their children’s work.

Community Links

The school has established links with members of the local community with whom we communicate on a regular basis regarding local initiatives and events. When time and resources permit, the children’s art is displayed in local venues and entered into community wide competitions and exhibitions.

Success Criteria

The success of this plan and our work with the Visual Arts will be evidenced:

- In the display of children’s work throughout the school and beyond
- Through staff feedback/collaboration, both formally through SSE and incidentally among colleagues
- Through the provision of a rich and varied Visual Arts Programme for the children as set out in this plan

Implementation

All teaching colleagues are responsible for the implementation of this plan and for providing feedback for review of this policy/plan as the need arises.

Review

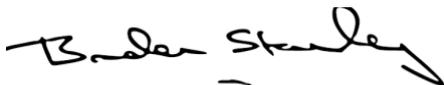
This plan will be reviewed as the need arises.

Ratification and Communication

The Visual Arts policy and whole school plan is uploaded onto the school's website and on display in hard copy format in the school foyer.

The plan was discussed and ratified by the BOM during the meeting on the 8th January 2020.

Signed:



Chairperson BOM

Date: 8th January 2020