

Art & Photography Curriculum Overview

Links to KS2	The Art curriculum provides a coherent five-year journey from Years 7–11, building on Key Stage 2 foundations in the formal elements of art, including line, tone, texture, colour, shape, form, space and pattern. Structured around the GCSE Art and Design assessment objectives, the curriculum develops students' ability to record and develop ideas, experiment with a range of materials, techniques and processes, investigate the work of artists and designers, and create purposeful, personal outcomes. Through revisiting these key strands over time, students become increasingly confident, creative and independent artists.						
	Statement of Intent	The Art curriculum inspires creativity, curiosity and confidence through engagement with art, craft and design from a wide range of cultures and perspectives. Students develop the knowledge and skills to record and develop ideas, experiment with materials and techniques, analyse the work of artists, and create meaningful personal outcomes. Through this process, pupils become reflective, independent learners who can think creatively, communicate visually and appreciate the role of art in shaping cultures, identities and the world around them.					
Art Implementation Year 7	Timeline	Term 1 - 7 Weeks	Term 2 - 7 Weeks	Term 3 - 7 Weeks	Term 4 - 6 Weeks	Term 5 - 5 Weeks	Term 6 - 6 Weeks
	Year Overview	Y7 - Students are introduced to the GCSE Art and Design project structure through the theme of Skulls, Plants and Insects. They develop observational drawing skills by recording skulls, plants and insects, research the work of Travis Biedel, Karl Blossfeldt, Lucy Arnold and Steve Locatelli, and experiment with a range of materials, techniques and processes inspired by these artists. Students use their research, observations and practical investigations to develop ideas for a large-scale final piece that demonstrates their understanding of recording, experimentation, contextual studies and personal response.					
	SOW	Skulls, Plants & Insects		Skulls, Plants & Insects		Skulls, Plants & Insects	
Unit Focus	Students are introduced to the Skulls, Plants and Insects project through a series of observational drawings, developing their understanding of tone, texture and form using tonal pencil techniques. They learn and apply a range of mark-making methods, including stippling, hatching and cross-hatching, to create realistic studies. Students are also introduced to artist research, learning how to analyse and present information effectively while exploring how artists' styles and techniques can be used to inspire and inform their own artwork.			Students build upon their understanding of artist research by investigating a second artist and exploring how their style, techniques and ideas can influence their own work. They experiment with a range of media, including oil pastels, coloured pencils and biro pen, developing technical skills and creative confidence. Through practical investigations, students refine and develop their ideas, producing personal responses inspired by both their artist studies and the project theme.		Students focus on the development and refinement of their ideas through further experimentation with materials, techniques and processes. They build on previous learning to refine compositions and strengthen their personal responses. The unit concludes with the production of a skulls, plants & insects final outcome that demonstrates their understanding of the project theme, artist influence and the key skills of recording, experimentation and presentation.	
Art Implementation Year 8	Year Overview	Y8 - Building on Year 7, students in Year 8 explore the theme of Cultures through Mexican and African art, studying artists such as Frida Kahlo and Romuald Hazoumé. They develop their skills in recording, experimentation, contextual understanding and personal response in line with GCSE assessment objectives. Students create work inspired by cultural traditions using a range of materials, including recycled objects to produce African-style sculptures in the manner of Hazoumé, alongside drawing and mixed media outcomes.					
	SOW	Culture - Mexican Art	Culture - Mexican Art	Culture - African Art	Culture - African Art	Culture - African Art	Culture - African Art
	Unit Focus	Students are introduced to the Cultures project, exploring how different cultures around the world use a variety of styles, materials and processes to create meaningful artwork. They begin by researching the Mexican Day of the Dead and develop skull mask designs inspired by its imagery, symbolism and traditions.	Students develop their understanding of printmaking through the polyblock printing technique, using their own Mexican Day of the Dead skull designs as a starting point. They are also introduced to the work of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo and create artwork inspired by her style, symbolism and use of colour.	Students are introduced to African art and begin by researching its cultural significance and visual traditions. They then complete a series of observational studies of African masks, exploring a range of materials and techniques. This includes developing tonal and textural skills using methods such as stippling, hatching and cross-hatching.	Students are introduced to the African artist Romuald Hazoumé and explore his sculptural work created from recycled materials. They develop a range of design ideas inspired by his style and approach. Students then select their strongest design and produce a large-scale response using oil pastel and wax resist to develop their final sculptural concept.	Students produce a final outcome for the project using their own recycled materials, creating a sculptural piece inspired by the work and processes of African artist Romuald Hazoumé.	
Art Implementation Year 9	Year Overview	Pop Art project designed to prepare them for GCSE Art and Design. They begin by researching the Pop Art movement and exploring the work of contemporary and influential artists such as Luke Dean and Jean-Michel Basquiat. Students complete a series of observational drawings focusing on popular culture themes, including food and portraiture, using a range of materials and techniques to develop their recording and experimentation skills. They then develop personal design ideas for a large-scale portrait final outcome, drawing inspiration from pop art styles and their artist research. Throughout the year, students build independence, refine technical skills and deepen their understanding of the GCSE assessment objectives.					
	SOW	Pop Art			Pop Art		
	Unit Focus	Students are introduced to the Pop Art movement and explore its distinctive visual characteristics (AO1). They develop observational drawing skills through a series of practical tasks, applying a range of mark-making and colouring techniques, including blending, burnishing, rendering, outlining, shading, hatching, cross-hatching, smudging, and stippling (AO3). Students investigate key artists and themes associated with Pop Art and use their research to create original artworks inspired by the movement (AO1).			Students build upon their understanding of the Pop Art movement by further exploring the work of relevant artists and incorporating stylistic influences into their own practice (AO1). Through experimentation with a range of mixed media processes, including oil pastel, watercolour, collage, and digital techniques, students refine their technical skills and investigate the visual impact of different materials (AO2). They develop and record ideas through research, planning, and preparatory studies, leading to the design of a large-scale Pop Art portrait (AO3). Students then realise their intentions by producing a final large-scale outcome that demonstrates their creative development, technical proficiency, and understanding of Pop Art conventions (AO4).		
Art Implementation Year 10	Year Overview	Artists complete a GCSE coursework project based on the theme of Distortion. Throughout the project, they develop their ability to investigate and analyse the work of artists who use distortion in innovative and expressive ways, including Malena Bozzini, Lee K, Henrietta Harris, and Gillian Lambert (AO1). Students gather and record ideas through a range of observational studies, including photography, drawing, painting, artist studies, design development, and mind mapping, demonstrating increasing confidence in visual recording and critical reflection (AO3).					
	SOW	Distortion		Distortion		Distortion	
	Unit Focus	Artists are introduced to the GCSE coursework project Distortion and develop an understanding of the four GCSE Art & Design Assessment Objectives. They begin the project by creating a range of observational studies exploring distorted skulls, eyes, and the human form, using a variety of materials and techniques to refine their recording skills (AO3). Students investigate the work of Malena Bozzini, analysing her use of distortion and portraiture to inform their own creative practice (AO1). Through photography, oil pastel, and acrylic paint processes, students experiment with media and techniques while producing personal responses inspired by the artist's work (AO2). These activities support the development of ideas and establish a foundation for the wider coursework project (AO1-AO3).		Artists deepen their investigation of the theme Distortion through the study of contemporary artists, including Lee K and Gillian Lambert (AO1). They analyse each artist's approach to distortion, portraiture, and image manipulation, creating practical responses inspired by their work. Through photography, digital editing, and mixed-media processes, students produce personal photoshoots and experimental outcomes that explore the artists' techniques, themes, and visual styles (AO2, AO3). Building on their research and experimentation, students begin to develop independent ideas for a final outcome. They generate mind maps, investigate additional artist influences relevant to their personal interests, and explore a range of design possibilities linked to the theme of distortion (AO1, AO3). Through refining compositions, media choices, and creative intentions, students establish a clear direction for their final response (AO2, AO4).		Students continue to refine and develop imaginative, personal ideas for their final response to the theme Distortion. Drawing upon their artist research, observational studies, and experimental work, they explore and refine the use of colour, composition, materials, processes, and scale to communicate their intentions effectively (AO1, AO2). Through ongoing recording, testing, and evaluation, students strengthen the visual connections between their investigations and final outcome (AO3). The unit culminates in the creation of a personal, meaningful, and technically accomplished final piece or series of pieces that demonstrate a clear creative journey and a confident use of visual language in response to the project theme (AO4).	
Art Implementation Year 11	Year Overview	Year 11 is divided into two components: the Portfolio (coursework) component, completed up to December, and the Externally Set Assignment (ESA), which runs from January to the 10-hour practical examination at the end of April. Students complete their personal response to the Distortion project and then review and refine their coursework portfolio using teacher feedback. This includes further artist research (AO1), experimentation with media and techniques (AO2), recording observations and ideas (AO3), and strengthening final outcomes (AO4). From January, students begin the ESA by selecting a starting point from the exam paper and developing a personal project. They investigate relevant artists and sources (AO1), refine ideas through practical experimentation (AO2), record observations and insights (AO3), and produce a final outcome during the 10-hour examination (AO4).					
	SOW	Distortion		Distortion		Exam project	
	Unit Focus	The unit culminates in the creation of a personal, meaningful, and technically accomplished final piece or series of pieces that demonstrate a clear creative journey and a confident use of visual language in response to the project theme (AO4).		The artists review and refine the coursework project based on detailed teacher marking and feedback to improve their final grade before final submission (AO2).		Students are introduced to the exam paper in the first lesson of the new year. They start exam preparation, recording from observation their initial thoughts, ideas & inspirations using mind maps, drawings, images & photography (AO3). Students research artists and cultures relevant to their chosen exam theme. They produce artwork in the style of the artists and start to develop ideas for the personal response whilst experimenting with materials, colour schemes, composition, techniques and processes (AO1 & AO2). Students create a personal response to the project during the 10-hour exam (AO4).	
Photography Implementation Year 10	Year Overview	Photographers complete a GCSE coursework project based on the themes of Portraits & Surrealism. Throughout the project, they develop their ability to investigate and analyse the work of photographers who use Portraits and Surrealism in innovative and expressive ways, including René Magritte, Ronny Garcia, Seanan Middleton, Marvel Harris, Ben Zank, Brooke Shaden, Claire Lutton, Flora Borsi & Bruce Boyd, (AO1). Students gather and record ideas through a range of drawings, photographs, physical photo editing, photo editing tools, photographer studies, design development, and mind mapping, demonstrating increasing confidence in visual recording and critical reflection (AO3).					
	SOW	Portraits		Portraits		Surrealism	
	Unit Focus	Photographers are introduced to the GCSE coursework project Portraits and develop an understanding of the four GCSE Photography Assessment Objectives. They begin the project by learning about the basic photographic techniques - lighting, rule of thirds, aperture for example. Photographers take a series of photos using these techniques. They move onto using a variety of materials and techniques to refine their recording skills including double exposure, use of text & filtering techniques (AO3). Students investigate the work of Irving Penn, Brooke Shaden & Steve McCurry completing their use of portraiture to inform their own creative practice (AO1). Through photography, cyanotype, and collage, students experiment with media and techniques while producing personal responses inspired by the artist's work (AO2). These activities support the development of ideas and establish a foundation for the wider coursework project (AO1-AO3).		Photographers deepen their investigation of the theme Portraits through the study of contemporary photographers, including Steve McCurry, Marvel Harris, Flora Borsi and Ronny Garcia (AO1). They analyse each artist's approach to portraiture, and image manipulation, creating practical responses inspired by their work. Through photography, digital editing, and mixed-media processes, students produce personal photoshoots and experimental outcomes that explore the photographers' techniques, themes, and visual styles (AO2, AO3). Building on their research and experimentation, students begin to develop independent ideas for a final outcome. They generate mind maps, investigate additional photography influences relevant to their personal interests, and explore a range of design possibilities linked to the theme of portraits (AO1, AO3). Through refining compositions, media choices, and creative intentions, students establish a clear direction for their final response (AO2, AO4).		Students are introduced to the theme of Surrealism alongside advanced macro photography techniques. They participate in a photography field trip to Lacock, where they capture a range of macro images to support their project development. Through research into the work of artist René Magritte and photographer Ben Zank, students investigate relevant sources and contextual influences, developing their understanding of surrealist concepts and their relevance to their personal practice (AO1). They analyse and respond to the artists' use of composition, symbolism, scale, and visual narrative to inform their own creative ideas.	
Photography Implementation Year 11	Year Overview	Year 11 is divided into two components: the Portfolio (coursework) component, completed up to December, and the Externally Set Assignment (ESA), which runs from January to the 10-hour examination in April. Students complete their personal response to the Surrealism project and then review and refine their coursework portfolio using teacher feedback. This includes further photography research (AO1), experimentation with editing, media and techniques (AO2), recording observations and ideas (AO3), and strengthening final outcomes (AO4). From January, students begin the ESA by selecting a starting point from the exam paper and developing a personal project. They investigate relevant photographers and sources (AO1), refine ideas through experimentation (AO2), record observations and insights (AO3), and produce a final outcome during the 10-hour examination (AO4).					
	SOW	Surrealism		Surrealism		Exam project	
	Unit Focus	The unit culminates in the creation of a personal, meaningful, and technically accomplished final piece or series of pieces that demonstrate a clear creative journey and a confident use of visual language in response to the project Surrealism (AO4).		The photographers review and refine the coursework projects based on detailed teacher marking and feedback to improve their final grade before final submission (AO2).		Students are introduced to the exam paper in the first lesson of the new year. They start exam preparation, recording from observation their initial thoughts, ideas & inspirations using mind maps, drawings, photography, photo editing & physical editing (AO3). Students research photographers and cultures relevant to their chosen exam theme. They produce photographs in the style of the photographers and start to develop ideas for the personal response whilst experimenting with materials, colour schemes, composition, techniques and processes (AO1 & AO2). Students create personal response/s to the project during the 10-hour exam (AO4).	
Enrichment Opportunities	Art & photography students will be invited to visit Bristol Wake the Tiger in year 10, London Tate museum & the National Portrait Gallery at the start of year 11. Year 10 photographers will also go on a trip to Lacock Abbey at the end of year 10. The department offers enrichment clubs after school and during lunchtime as well as a range of competitions to get involved with including Inktober, Royal Academy Young Portraits Artist, Rotary Club Photographers competition & the school Christmas Card Competition.						
Assessment	Milestone Assessments will be completed each term - this will be in line with the GCSE Assessment Objectives. Each assessment will be based on one of the 4 assessment objectives. This will ensure students are confident with the demands of GCSE and give KS3 a taster for the options process. Once students have completed their assessment, each student will receive feedback in their sketchbooks using the assessment sheet. All students will receive a WWW, HTI and MAC. During the following lessons students will have time to review their assessments and have time to act on their MAC's. Diagnostic, Therapy and Testing will take place for each assessment and help inform planning for the next lessons. During lessons questioning and use of mini-whiteboards allow all staff to check understanding and set on feedback during the lesson, along with self and peer assessment.						
Literacy and Numeracy links	Students all have glossaries of keywords relating to the topics with specialist art vocabulary. Extensive scaffolding is provided to enable students to develop their writing skills around artist research and annotations. Active reading skills are modelled & promoted. Topic texts will be incorporated into schemes of work. Numeracy is included in all schemes of work through the use of grid work, enlargement and measurement. Shape & pattern are used in most lessons.						
How It Is Used / Skills Set Developed / Outcomes	Students will develop a comprehensive understanding of the four Photography Assessment Objectives (AO1, AO2, AO3, and AO4) throughout Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. From Years 7–11, the curriculum follows a consistent structure and framework that progressively prepares students for GCSE study and success. Through a range of engaging, contemporary, and relevant projects, students will strengthen their creative thinking and problem-solving skills while exploring the work of diverse artists, designers, and craftpeople. They will gain experience with a wide variety of materials, processes, and techniques, developing confidence in selecting and applying appropriate artistic methods.						
Careers in the Curriculum	Students will learn how to research, investigate, experiment, and refine ideas to create imaginative and personal responses. They will develop observational, analytical, and evaluative skills, enabling them to communicate ideas effectively through visual language. Through the study of Photography, students develop a wide range of transferable skills that are highly valued by employers and applicable across many career sectors. These include creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, communication, visual literacy, resilience, independence, and project management.						
	Photography provides a strong foundation for further study, with many students choosing to progress to A Level Photography and other creative qualifications. Throughout the curriculum, students are introduced to the diverse career opportunities available within the creative industries and related fields, helping them to make informed decisions about future pathways.						
	Potential career routes include animation, set design, printmaking, digital art, game design, tattoo and henna artistry, mural painting, graphic design, print and textile design, fashion design, architecture, gallery curation, interior design, jewellery design, floristry, photography, illustration, photojournalism, film editing, cartography, and pyrotechnics. Students gain an understanding of how artistic skills can be applied on a wide variety of professional contexts, highlighting the value and relevance of art.						