



Curriculum Intent for Art and Design

Leigh-on-Sea has long been the inspiration for many generations of artists who have marvelled at its scenic views and nautical history. Over time the area has become a cultural melting pot for artists of all disciplines who are able to share their considerable skills with our local community during art trails, creative workshops, exhibitions and galleries. Our children have been incredibly fortunate to be growing up in and benefiting from such an inspiring and rich artistic environment. At West Leigh, we aim to continue their cultural development as they progress through our school by giving them the opportunity to experiment, create and further their artistic talents in a variety of different disciplines.

'We are artists and designers'



Children experience many pressures in life and art is an important tool not only to give the children a chance to express themselves but also to enhance their well-being whilst at school. Our teachers are encouraged to provide a calm and relaxed artistic environment in order to bring out the best in our children and allow their skills to flourish and grow.

As each year passes the children are able to build on their previous knowledge by integrating new skills and techniques into their growing repertoire. By the time they leave us at the end of Year 6 they will have experienced a wide variety of different materials and media in order to give them a firm base from which to strengthen their abilities as they begin their journey into secondary school.

Art and Design at West Leigh is based upon the following seven main strands that are designed to give the children a fully rounded artistic experience and enable them to expand and develop their skills in an achievable and exciting manner.

- Drawing
- Painting
- Printing
- Sculpture
- Textiles
- Collage
- Digital Art

Sketchbooks

Sketch books are an integral part of every artist's tool kit and our children are no exception. They are allocated a sketchbook in Year 3 that is carried with them throughout their creative journey so that they can track their development and skill progression.

The children are encouraged to be experimental and creative in their sketchbooks, this is a place for ideas to grow and take shape and not a place where perfection is demanded. This is vitally important to their artistic development as the children are able to try out new and unfamiliar techniques without the fear of failure. No one can be expected to master a discipline without trial and error and the children have the opportunity to assess and evaluate their work in order to facilitate quicker progression and mastery.

Their sketchbooks will show the acorns of ideas and how they have grown and expanded into the oaks of final designs. They will also show how and why some ideas withered and died and the choices which led to the children's decisions.

Mastery of Skills

Art and Design is an integral part of our Connected Curriculum and is able to cross the boundary between creativity and academia which allows the children to express their learning in imaginative ways. It gives all children the opportunity to fully immerse themselves into the subject as each Art session takes place over the space of one week. Working this way allows the children a greater period to master particular skills and the time to explore and investigate ideas in the pursuit of their final design.

Core skills such as drawing and painting, which form the basic building blocks of all Art and Design, are revisited each year to embed the children's skills and provide a quicker path to mastery. Other aspects of the subject, such as textiles, sculpture and digital art, are taught as part of a spiral curriculum where children can extend their previous knowledge at intervals throughout their time with us.

All our children are encouraged to master their artistic skills, no matter what level of achievement they are able to reach. As in other subjects, some children will naturally excel but all children are inspired to reach their full potential by enthusiastic and knowledgeable teaching. Progression is attainable for every child as our curriculum is based upon gradual, obtainable steps up the ladder of ability and expertise.

Awesome Art

In addition to our termly art projects, our children take part in Awesome Art weeks which enables them to investigate famous artists from Britain and around the world. This is to broaden their understanding of different artistic styles and introduce them to alternative ways of manipulating varied media.

Once the children have been familiarised with the chosen artist they begin to examine their techniques and style in order to create their own unique artwork. These are important steps in the children's accumulation of skills as it provides them with an opportunity to discover new and ingenious ways of working and thinking. It is not a case of simply copying a famous work of art; it is about learning how it was created and adding the learned expertise to their bank of artistic knowledge.

Year 3

This is the start of the children's artistic journey with us and they are able not only to deepen their understanding of core skills but also venture into new areas of undiscovered expertise and techniques. This is a particularly crucial year for the children as it is when the foundations are laid in preparation for the next three years. They are given their first sketch books and are taught how to use them effectively. Children are assured that mistakes and errors are part of the journey to perfection and should be embraced and built upon rather than being rubbed out or crossed through.

In this foundation year the children begin by producing and using their own printing tools to create animal footprints after visiting Belfairs Woods where they observed and recorded a variety of animal tracks.

The next project sees the children generate landscapes based on the work of John Constable using watercolour techniques and collage. Constable painted a number of very famous works in Essex, even painting our local landmark, Hadleigh Castle.

Later in the year, they combine their newfound knowledge of the Greek islands to produce a stunning 3D collage of the areas landscape using cardboard, paint and paper.

Finally, they finish the year with a study of Claude Monet's famous paintings of the River Thames. Here, the children use oil pastels, paint and pen to mimic a stunning sunset over the world famous London skyline.

Year 4

Art and design in Year 4 has been seamlessly woven into the fabric of the Year 4 Connected Curriculum and looks to build on and embed their knowledge of the exciting topics that are covered.

Whilst studying Ancient Egypt, the children design and create their very own canopic jars using air drying clay. They then add further authenticity by decorating them in an Egyptian influenced style based upon their observational drawings of Ancient Egyptian art and using a limited colour palette.

The children then take a look at the Roman Empire and its impact on Britain. Linking art to maths and symmetry, they study Roman Art, with a particular focus on mosaics, and create their interpretation of a Roman masterpiece both digitally and by hand.

This is followed by a study of Picasso's art where the children build on the previous knowledge of digital art to recreate a work of art using similar techniques to this incredibly prominent artist of the 20th century.

To finish the year the children link the topic of fairgrounds to the work of L.S. Lowry, with a particular focus on his depiction of movement, fairgrounds and entertainment. This is a concentration in brush technique and control with the goal of producing an accurate, but personal, piece of work in the style of Lowry.

Year 5

To link with their topic of fragile earth, Year 5 uses a combination of wax resist and detailed line work to recreate 'The Great Wave off Kanagawa' by Hokusai. They must show an appreciation of the original artwork in order to produce their own interpretation of this famous and thought provoking piece.

Year 5 is also a time to experiment with a variety of different paint application techniques. It is a chance to express themselves by creating natural textures by using tools such as toothbrushes, fingers, brushes or sponges. They combine these skills to create stunning examples of a volcanic eruption.

In their final term of Year 5, the children design and make masks based upon the Mayan civilization. After initially sketching their design they transfer their ideas onto a grid format in preparation to use in Revelation Natural Art, an innovation piece of software which allows the children to work digitally.

Year 6

The children's final artistic year is a celebration of the learning journey and aims to not only embed core skills in preparation for their transition to Year 7 but also allow them to showcase all the knowledge they have assimilated during their time with us.

To link with the topic of rainforests, Year 6 use Henri Rousseau's incredibly famous work 'Tiger in a Tropical Storm'. Using printing, collage, colour studies and observational drawing, the children create vibrant and interesting works based upon this vital and fragile area of the planet.

After investigating a variety of different sculptors from the United Kingdom, the children set about sketching the human figure using correct proportion and detailed observation. This is a real test of their drawing skills as any inconsistencies are easily spotted by the human eye. From this point, they develop their ideas into a sculpture using a wire frame covered in mod-roc to form the human shape.

Linking to their study of the Blitz during the Second World War, the children create their own metaphor art to convey feelings and thoughts from this horrific period in history. Year 6 produce compelling works that depict the terror and dread of war and confrontation basing their efforts on the prolific war artist Paul Nash.