

Understanding the arts

Learning in this area should include an appropriate balance of focused subject teaching and well-planned opportunities to use, apply and develop knowledge and skills across the whole curriculum.

Curriculum aims

This area of learning contributes to the curriculum aims for all young people to become:

- successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Why is this area of learning important?

The arts provide a wealth of vital experience to excite children's imaginations and develop their creativity. This area of learning encourages them to participate actively, to try out different possibilities, and to make and communicate meaning to different audiences through a variety of media and contexts.

This area of learning includes art and design¹, dance, drama and music and teaches children how to use the arts to express their thoughts and emotions and empathise with others. Through the arts they develop original ideas, explore issues and solve problems².

Participating in a range of art forms helps children become creative, responsive, critical and appreciative. They discover the value of focus, discipline and practice and the importance of working collaboratively. Working as artists³ themselves and responding to the work of other artists helps them to develop an appreciation of aesthetics, and enables insights into different viewpoints, identities and cultures.

Children's understanding of the arts is a source of inspiration, enjoyment and fulfilment. It also enhances their personal, social and emotional development. It enables them to participate in and respond to the creative and cultural life of their communities and different cultures and traditions.

Explanatory text:

1. Art and design includes art, craft and design.
2. This includes the use of new and developing forms and conventions associated with computer graphics, digital photography, animation and film.
3. "Artists" refers to people engaged in any branch of the arts.

1. Essential knowledge

Children should build secure knowledge of the following:

- a. how creative ideas can be developed in response to different stimuli and imaginative thinking
- b. how different art forms communicate and evoke moods, thoughts and ideas
- c. that designing, creating and performing require discipline, control, technique and practice
- d. how and why people from different times and cultures have used the arts to express ideas and communicate meaning
- e. that accepted forms and conventions can give structure and purpose to artistic works but can be adapted and changed.

2. Key skills

These are the skills that children need to learn to make progress:

- a. explore, investigate and experiment roles, techniques, approaches, materials and media, from a range of stimuli and starting points⁴
- b. create, design, devise, compose and choreograph their individual and collective work
- c. improvise, rehearse and refine in order to improve their capability and the quality of their artworks
- d. present, display and perform for a range of audiences, to develop and communicate their ideas and evoke responses
- e. use arts-specific vocabulary to respond to, evaluate, explain, analyse, question and critique their own and other people's artistic works.

3. Breadth of learning

- a. Children should learn about how the arts are created and enjoyed today⁵, how they have changed over time, and the contribution they make to our lives and culture. How the arts are used and valued in different cultures and traditions should also be explored. Children should learn how to combine art forms imaginatively and in complementary and enhancing ways. They should perform and exhibit for a range of audiences, and work with artists in and beyond the classroom. They should be introduced to the appropriate language of the arts.

Explanatory text:

4. Media and techniques include the use of ICT in making images, photographs, films, computer composition and performance, and the associated software skills.
5. Including how ICT is used as a art medium in itself and how it can be used for graphics, animations, videos and sound sequences etc.

- b. In art children should be involved in design, craftwork and fine art on a variety of scales, working in two and three dimensions and using ICT⁶ to explore line, shape, form, colour, texture and pattern. They should develop their understanding through visits to galleries and exhibitions.
- c. In dance⁷, children should create, perform and appreciate dances. They should develop physical skills and the ability to use space imaginatively and creatively and work with others to perform confidently and with expression. They should learn about and experience dance styles from different times, places and cultural contexts and see and participate in live performances.
- d. In drama, children should improvise and work in role plays with other children and with adults, responding to a variety of imagined and real stimuli. They should explore dramatic conventions⁸, areas of personal interest and enjoyment as well as issues of personal, social and global concern. They should devise performances for each other, the school and the wider community, and respond to live and recorded professional theatre performances.
- e. In music, children should learn about and appraise a range of music of different genres and from different cultures including classical, folk and popular traditions. They should work with a range of musicians and watch, listen to and participate in live performances. They should learn to sing rounds and songs, and should play musical instruments to perform melodies and accompaniments by ear and from notations. They should create and compose music by choosing, ordering, combining and controlling sounds and recognising how musical elements⁹ can be used.

Explanatory text:

- 6. These activities should include drawing, painting, sculpting and modelling, printing, and using textiles, film and photography, graphics, and video and photo-editing software.
- 7. Dance is also included in the area of learning *Understanding physical development, health and wellbeing*.
- 8. For example, improvisation, mime, hot-seating, tableau, freeze-frame, thought-tracking, conscience alley, role on the wall, collective role, teacher in role, forum theatre, image theatre, performance carousel, eavesdropping, voice collage, narration.
- 9. Musical elements include pitch, duration, tempo, timbre, texture and silence.

4. Curriculum progression

The overall breadth of learning should be used when planning curriculum progression. Children should be taught:



Across the area of learning

- E1. to explore a wide range of media and materials to create artworks, improvise and depict imagined worlds, and model the real world through the arts
- E2. to try out a range of tools and techniques with a range of materials for artistic purposes¹¹
- E3. to explore movement skills and create movement patterns in response to stimuli¹²
- E4. to use role-play to engage and empathise with characters, situations and events from known stories and stories they create together
- E5. to sing songs and play musical instruments with expression and control¹³, listening and observing carefully¹⁴
- E6. to listen and observe carefully, taking account of simple instructions¹⁴
- E7. to experiment with designs, shapes, colours and sounds¹⁵, using ICT where appropriate
- E8. to choose and record images and sounds using ICT.

Explanatory text:

- 10. Each area of learning should build on children's experiences and development in the Early Years Foundation Stage to ensure continuity of curriculum provision and their continuing progress.
- 11. This includes making images and artefacts using appropriate tools (e.g. brushes, sponges, crayons, rollers etc) and using materials including paper, card, textiles, clay, wire etc., and using ICT as a medium in itself and to explore other art forms. This includes 2D, 3D and technologies such as computer art and graphics, animations, electronic compositions, videos and so on.
- 12. Including whole body actions that vary speed, strength, shape, size and direction of travel.
- 13. This includes identifying and controlling how sounds can be made and changed, for example using the voice confidently and with expression in a variety of ways, and playing tuned and untuned instruments.
- 14. This includes copying, mime, and musical sound: repeating musical patterns, using call and response, making changes to musical elements, and being aware of how each person contributes to the whole.
- 15. Through editing and formatting techniques, for example, changing the size, order, shape, speed of digital information such as photos, sound sequences and graphics.

- M1. to use their senses and the world around them to stimulate and develop imaginative ideas that inform their creative work individually and working with others
- M2. to explore how the arts can evoke and express feelings and ideas, and how this can be enhanced through combining the arts
- M3. to explore alternative approaches to develop and refine performances and communications using ICT where appropriate
- M4. to create and present work in a variety of digital forms¹⁶
- M5. about the role of the arts¹⁷ in their life, their locality and wider society.

Explanatory text:

- 16. Including computer graphics, presentations, animations, sound sequences, videos etc.
- 17. This includes public art galleries, libraries, museums, theatres, concerts, the built environment or objects they buy and use.

- L1. to work individually and with others to use each art form by itself and in combination to create and to perform for different audiences
- L2. about the diverse roles of the arts within the cultures of their locality and the wider world
- L3. to select and use appropriate ICT tools and techniques to develop and refine their ideas across the arts.

Art and design

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| <p>M6. to explore a range of techniques, materials, processes and media, including digital media, to draw, sculpt, model, design, paint and print</p> <p>M7. to design and create images and artefacts in response to their personal ideas and for clearly defined purposes</p> <p>M8. to refine their use of techniques, materials and media.</p> | <p>L4. to investigate, explore and record²⁸ information, to appreciate aesthetic qualities and generate imaginative ideas</p> <p>L5. to design and create images and artefacts in response to their personal ideas and for clearly defined purposes</p> <p>L6. to select, develop and refine techniques and the use of materials and media to represent their ideas and express themselves.</p> |
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Dance

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| <p>M9. to explore a range of actions, movements, space and relationships, and how to create dance motifs¹⁸ and compose simple dances</p> <p>M10. to learn, practice, refine and perform dance phrases with physical control, expression, rhythmic timing, musicality¹⁹ and an awareness of other performers</p> <p>M11. to describe and interpret their own work and the work of others.</p> | <p>L7. to draw upon different dance styles to compose dances and communicate meaning</p> <p>L8. to develop and refine their movement repertoire and show understanding of artistic meanings and intentions when they dance</p> <p>L9. to analyse, compare and evaluate dances and aesthetic qualities²⁹ using appropriate dance vocabulary.</p> |
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Explanatory text:

18. A simple motif is several movements linked together smoothly to create a sequence (or phrase) that symbolises or communicates an idea or feeling.

19. This includes performing with a sense of rhythm, flow, emphasis and, where appropriate, with an awareness of music or other sounds.

Explanatory text:

28. This includes using sketch books, journals, photographs, mood boards, ICT, video.

29. For example, the sensory and expressive qualities of dance phrases and how these convey feelings, ideas and meaning.

Drama

M12. to adopt, sustain and develop a range of roles for different purposes²⁰

M13. to use and develop a range of dramatic conventions²¹

M14. to create and perform in order to make and convey meaning.

L10. to create roles and devise performances that sustain characters, plots and intentions

L11. how facial expressions, body language, movement and space can communicate different emotions and characteristics of behaviour

L12. to select and experiment with a broad range of drama conventions and forms for different purposes³⁰ and effects.

Music

M15. to listen carefully, recognise and use repeated patterns and increase aural memory

M16. to perform²² with control and awareness²³ of audience and what others are playing or singing

M17. to recognise different musical elements²⁴ and how they can be used together to compose music²⁵

M18. how to compose and perform²⁶ simple melodies and accompaniments²⁷

M19. to recall, plan and explore sounds using symbols and ICT.

L13. to listen carefully, developing and demonstrating musical understanding and increasing aural memory

L14. to perform by ear and use notations and ICT to support creative work

L15. to compose their own instrumental and vocal music and perform their own and others' compositions³¹ in ways that reflect their meaning and intentions³²

L16. to describe and compare different kinds of music using appropriate musical vocabulary.

Explanatory text:

20. Purposes include exploring real and imaginary situations, feelings and issues of human significance.

21. Conventions at this stage might include freeze frame, hot seating and tableau.

22. This includes use of the voice, use of musical instruments and improvisation.

23. This includes maintaining a simple part within an ensemble, working with several layers of sound and having an awareness of the combined effect of that sound, as well as recognising the importance of articulating words to communicate meaning to an audience.

24. Musical elements include rhythm, pitch, tempo, timbre and dynamics.

25. This includes choosing, ordering, combining and controlling sounds with awareness of their combined effect and sometimes combining sounds with movement and narrative.

26. Opportunities should be made available for children to learn to play a musical instrument.

27. This includes rhythmic or tuned accompaniment to a main melody.

Explanatory text:

30. For example, to explore issues of human significance.

31. Including recognising and making creative use of the way sounds can be changed, organised, controlled and layered to develop melodic and rhythmic phrases for effect including rhythmic or tuned accompaniments to a main melody.

32. This includes singing and playing with increasing technical control, accuracy of pitch, expression and awareness of breathing, diction, dynamics and phrasing as well as communicating effectively with each other and their audience to achieve an overall effect.

5. Cross-curricular studies

Children should have opportunities:

- a. to develop and apply skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT, particularly through speaking and listening in drama, mathematical ordering and patterns in music and design, and using ICT to try out ideas, create, refine and present work across the arts
- b. to extend their personal, emotional and social development, particularly through exploring feelings and emotions in drama, developing physical poise through dance, working cooperatively with others in music, and giving constructive feedback and support across the arts
- c. to enhance their understanding of the arts through links to other areas of learning and to wider issues of interest and importance, particularly in exploring the past through paintings and drama, finding out about other cultures through their music and drama, and learning about different communities from the way the arts are organised and used.