

Art Policy – Westbridge Academy

Haven Plus Highly Complex Pathway

Origins of the Curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 Art programme of study has been developed in line with Department for Education guidance on 'GCSE Art & Design Subject Level Conditions and Requirements' document 2022. It reflects our commitment to delivering a high-quality, inclusive education within our Alternative Provision setting. It is designed to ensure that all students, regardless of pathway length, have access to a broad, challenging curriculum that mirrors the standards and expectations of mainstream education. The curriculum aims to complement the learning provided by students' home schools while preparing them for successful progression into post-16 education, training, or employment.

The aim of the Art & Design curriculum is to provide opportunities for learners to actively engage in the creative process of art, craft and design to develop as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds. The curriculum allows students to problem solve and find solutions through practical experiments. They are encouraged to think, make mistakes and learn from solutions. We aim for students to become 'art literate', understanding the arts as a form of visual and tactile communication, building visual intuition and expanding their understanding of the world. Simultaneously, we seek to develop an awareness, appreciation and understanding of the rich, cultural diversity of the arts within society.

At Westbridge Academy we endeavour to re-engage students through skills focused, creative tasks. With high expectations, clear examples and demonstrations, students are encouraged to explore individual ideas and concepts within a set theme or brief. By regularly exploring new media, tools and techniques alongside specific research into the work of artists, we hope to increase student's confidence, creativity and capacity for imaginative and original thought. We celebrate student achievement within school and the wider community on the Raedwald Trust website, with displays and exhibitions.

At Westbridge Academy, we believe that a positive and enriching experience of the arts plays a vital role in supporting the overall wellbeing of our students in Alternative Provision. Engagement with the arts provides a powerful means for students to explore their identity, express their emotions, and develop a deeper understanding of themselves and the world around them.

We are committed to delivering a broad and high-quality arts curriculum that equips students with the creative skills needed to sustain and develop their artistic interests. Our aim is to ensure that every student is taught creative skills for life, fostering an appreciation of the arts in its many forms and encouraging a lifelong engagement with culture. Participation in the arts nurtures self-esteem,

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confidence, and a sense of achievement. Through collaborative projects, students develop essential interpersonal skills such as empathy, negotiation, cooperation, and teamwork. The arts also provide a platform for self-expression, originality, and inventiveness, allowing students to celebrate their individuality and diversity. They are also taught to apply critical and evaluative thinking, enhancing their ability to interpret and appreciate artistic work. Ultimately, we believe that a rich arts education not only enhances personal development but also improves students' prospects, whether through meaningful employment opportunities or fulfilling leisure pursuits.

Our pupils come from a variety of home schools, resulting in them being entered for examinations across a wide range of exam boards. In recognition of this diversity, we have carefully designed our curriculum focusing on key knowledge and skills, rather than aligning with any single exam board. This approach allows us to deliver a broad and balanced programme that focuses on developing key knowledge and skills essential for success across all specifications. Our curriculum is intentionally structured to identify and address gaps in learning, ensuring that pupils are well-prepared and equipped with the foundational understanding needed to achieve the best possible outcomes in their qualification.

Practical skills are prioritised wherever possible, as we recognise that many of our pupils have had limited opportunities to engage in hands-on learning. We also understand the critical role of prior knowledge in building new understanding and skills. However, due to inconsistent attendance or engagement in previous educational settings, gaps in prior knowledge are a common barrier for our learners. To address this, the curriculum has been designed with built-in flexibility, allowing for responsive adjustments to accommodate individual learning needs and to bridge gaps in understanding effectively.

Given the possibility of short-term pupil placements, it is essential to carefully sequence the delivery of the National Curriculum. The sequencing of units are concentric, with skill-based learning through each project or unit to embed key skills. At Westbridge Academy, Art is delivered in a way that is responsive to the individual needs of our cohort. Students attending our pathways have experienced diverse and often disrupted educational journeys, both in the short and long term. As a result, a significant amount of time and effort is dedicated to identifying and addressing gaps in their knowledge, ensuring they receive the support needed to make meaningful progress. Our Alternative

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Provision setting allows teachers the flexibility to adapt the curriculum, guiding students through the assessment objectives in a manner that supports their personal progression.

Content and Sequencing

The curriculum is designed to cover the key knowledge and skill within the National Curriculum whilst being thoughtfully adapted to accommodate the unique and often time-limited nature of placements of our pathways. It incorporates concentric elements to ensure regular opportunities for revisiting and reinforcing key knowledge, supporting long-term retention and understanding. Learning objectives are derived from the National Curriculum and are carefully sequenced to support the progressive development of skills, while also providing regular opportunities to revisit and consolidate prior learning. This approach helps embed and secure knowledge over time. Adaptations are made where necessary to meet the individual needs of pupils, particularly those on fractional placements. Instruction is tailored through the use of scaffolding, modelling, and effective task design, drawing on principles from cognitive science (e.g., Rosenshine; Fiorella & Mayer), to ensure that all lessons are accessible, stimulating, and appropriately challenging for every learner.

The fundamental areas of our curriculum are built on the elements of art: line, colour, texture, shape, space, value, and form. These core components are introduced early and revisited regularly through a sequenced programme that deepens understanding and supports long-term retention. Specific artist references are starting points to discovery; teaching contextual knowledge of the arts and developing understanding of relevant techniques, materials and skills applied. The curriculum allows students opportunities for progression by revisiting and expanding their understanding of the key skills of Develop, Refine, Record and Present with every project. This concentric approach ensures that students can build on prior learning, regardless of the length or continuity of their placement.

Our responsibility is to ensure that all students are taught the creative and technical skills needed to sustain and develop their artistic interests. We aim to instil creative skills for life, fostering an appreciation of the arts in its widest sense and encouraging students to engage with the world around them in thoughtful and imaginative ways. The curriculum also promotes collaboration, encouraging students to work together and develop empathy, negotiation, cooperation, and teamwork. It provides opportunities for self-expression, originality, and inventiveness.

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Where appropriate, students may also work towards an Arts Award, a nationally recognised qualification that celebrates creativity and supports progression into further education, employment, or lifelong engagement with the arts.

It is important to note that this policy is written to reflect the fractional curriculum offer of this pathway. Dependent on a student's prior educational experiences, refinements or adaptations may be made to the curriculum content using the programmes of study to ensure it remains appropriate and responsive to their individual needs and circumstances.

Overview of units of study: Table

	Autumn	Spring	Summer
Year 1	Elements of Art through Natural Forms Study 2D Explorations & Elements of Art through Natural Forms Study 3D Explorations	Surrealism Dali, Magritte and Miro – juxtaposition in art & Waves Hokusai and Hockney – Painting water	Contrasts / Urban Photography Contemporary Urban photographers & Masks across Cultures Artist's masks
Year 2	Abstraction Klari Ries and other contemporary Artists & Abstraction Abstract Sculpture – various artists	Food & Drink Sarah Graham and other artists & Pop Art Warhol, Lichtenstein & Oldenburg	Under the Microscope Ernst Haekel & Photography – Natural Forms Karl Blossfeldt and other photographers

Assessment and Outcomes

Formative assessment is embedded throughout all aspects of Art teaching. Teachers continuously monitor students' progress through a range of classroom activities, discussions, and observations. These ongoing assessments provide immediate feedback and inform responsive teaching.

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Assessment data is used both to evaluate individual student progress and to inform broader curriculum development and instructional practice. Assessment is used to inform future planning and teaching. Gaps in learning and misconceptions are addressed rapidly. Students self-assess each lesson, against the objective, to enable them to develop an understanding of their own knowledge progression.

Art and the Wider Curriculum

SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development)

Art offers a rich and reflective space for personal growth and exploration. Spiritually, art encourages students to express their inner thoughts, emotions, and beliefs, helping them to explore their identity and make sense of their experiences. Morally, it provides opportunities to consider ethical issues, such as environmental sustainability, social justice, and representation, prompting thoughtful discussion and reflection. Social development is fostered through collaborative projects that build communication, empathy, and teamwork, while also encouraging respect for others' perspectives. Culturally, art exposes students to a wide range of artistic traditions, styles, and practices from around the world, promoting appreciation of diversity and a deeper understanding of global heritage.

British Values

The KS4 Art curriculum allows plenty of scope for students to explore British Values. Tolerance is promoted through respect for differing points of view, creative responses and understanding of different cultures and styles within art. Exploring themes of Democracy and the Rule of Law, Individual Liberty, Mutual respect and Tolerance for other faiths and traditions becomes an explicit discussion when exploring the work of artists from different times and cultures. Pupils are encouraged to question and explore sensitive and controversial issues, developing an understanding of how artworks reflect social, political and cultural values. Cultural relationships to British art and the wider world of art are also explored to foster greater understanding of our cultural and historical context. The art curriculum also delivers British values through cultivating a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about the world around them and participating pupils actively in artistic and creative activities.

Cultural Capital

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The curriculum aims to build a critical art vocabulary, providing opportunities to develop understanding and appreciation through exposure to inspirational artists and exemplars. The taught curriculum is enriched with an introduction to a wealth of artists from a range of cultural backgrounds.

Careers

The fast-changing world of work puts even greater demand on all of us to support students in making successful transitions in their lives. In art lessons, we support and encourage pupils to consider and explore careers within the arts and conduct research into future opportunities.

Reading

Students are introduced to subject specialist artist biographies and statements to encourage independent and shared reading. Planned units of instruction for art projects contribute to the development of pupil reading skills across the key stage, including use of subject specialist language in lessons and in marking and feedback. Teacher modelling of descriptive writing, comparative writing, critique and self-evaluative writing throughout each project. The curriculum uses reading to develop student's skills in being able to speculate and wonder about artist's work; to express views and feelings and to consolidate ideas and understanding.

Art and the wider curriculum

The arts present many opportunities to enrich the broader curriculum. Students develop their understanding of numeracy by exploring scale and proportion, measurement, weight, pattern, geometry and symmetry. Study of the arts develops insights in creative thinking and problem solving across the curriculum. Students can gain an understanding of digital image making and its manipulation through use of technology.