

# Zoom Access Link: The AccessArt Primary Art Curriculum: Pathway Celebration

**The AccessArt Primary Art Curriculum: Pathway Celebration.**

**Wednesday 9th July, 4.00-5.00pm BST.**

**Free for [AccessArt Members](#).**

Since its launch in 2022, [The AccessArt Primary Art Curriculum](#) has been supporting thousands of teachers and educators to deliver a rich and diverse visual art offering. To celebrate this, and champion inspirational practice, we will be hearing from some AccessArt members about their journey using the curriculum pathways, and what impact these have had in their settings.

In this session, we will be joined by teachers who will share examples of work created from several Primary Art Curriculum pathways to provide visual inspiration for how the pathways can be followed or adapted to suit your setting.

Whether you are already using the AccessArt curriculum or are about to start using it, this session will support you in delivering an exciting curriculum that can be adapted to different learning needs, budgets and settings.

Join us for this inspirational session, share in the journey of fellow teachers and ask any questions you may have!

**Please note that this event is free and open to [AccessArt members](#) only. Please ensure you can log in well before the event so we can help you with any log-in issues. Please**

contact [andrea@accessart.org.uk](mailto:andrea@accessart.org.uk) if you have any problems.

This session will be recorded and available to AccessArt members a few days after the event.

Log in below to access the link to the session.

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Creative practitioners, educators, teachers, parents, learners...

From £3.50

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Schools, Colleges, Arts Organisations: Single and Multi-Users  
From £42

*AccessArt is a UK Charity and we believe everyone has the right to be creative. AccessArt provides inspiration to help us all reach our creative potential.*

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## **Iridescent Insects**

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**Sensory Sculpture inspired by  
Barbara Hepworth**

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**Engaging Audiences Through  
Transportation**

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**Making a Ruler Drawing (of a  
Bag)**

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**Session Recording: Spaces and  
Skills to Nurture Creative  
Thought & Action**

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# Narrative & Messaging

A recording of the presentation given by Paula Briggs, CEO & Creative Director AccessArt, at the April 2025 All Party Parliamentary Group for Art, Craft and Design Education. In this presentation, Paula explores the importance of keeping core values in mind when working towards high-quality visual arts education for all, if we are to avoid the contraction of the further subject area. Paula also shares AccessArt's response to the Interim Curriculum & Assessment Review, and shares some key information about current funding for arts in schools.





## Open Letter to Government: Why Art Education Needs to Change: Inclusion, Wellbeing, Employment & Creative Industries

It is time for us to create a rigorous, fit-for-

purpose, value-led arts education for all pupils. It is time for the government to connect education back to heads, hands and hearts, and value the arts alongside all other subjects, ensuring high quality arts education is a mandatory part of all regular curriculum entitlement for ALL pupils.

As a Subject Association for Art, and as a Registered Arts Education Charity, AccessArt invites you to [sign our open letter](#) to Keir Starmer Prime Minister, Bridget Phillipson Secretary State for Education, Lisa Nandy Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

[Sign Now!](#)

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## What is a Sketchbook?

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## How Do We Adapt our Art Teaching to Include Children with Specific Educational



# Needs?

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## AccessArt response after reading the Curriculum & Assessment Review Interim Report

Whilst AccessArt welcomes many findings in the report, our intention here is not to summarise the [Interim Report](#) – or even comment on the particular findings – but instead, as a Subject Association for Art, to take the opportunity to remain true to AccessArt's charitable aim, ethos and beliefs, and to state (again) the issues we believe we need to address to ensure a high-quality art education for all.

From the offset, it was made clear that there are many areas which sit beyond the scope of the Review. These include an

exploration of pedagogy, teacher training and CPDL, and pupil wellbeing / engagement. Whilst AccessArt accepts that the Review has been tasked with a narrow remit, we wholeheartedly believe that without being willing to explore the interconnectedness of these areas, and other issues, it will be hard to pin down excellence in Curriculum & Assessment. Only a holistic, expansive and collaborative approach can achieve the required level of excellence.

[Is Art Thriving?](#)

[A Discussion about Art, Craft & Design as a Unique Subject Area](#)

[A Discussion About Knowledge](#)

[A Discussion about Assessment's impact upon Pedagogy, and Vice Versa](#)

[A Discussion about Extracurricular](#)

[A Discussion about the Connection between Art and Creative, Critical and Higher-Level Thinking Skills](#)

[A Discussion about teacher and pupil wellbeing and engagement.](#)

## Is Art Thriving?

We can see an example of how looking through a narrow lens will hold us back by exploring how the panel currently perceives the state of art education.

The Review panel considers art and design to be “thriving” due to its numbers showing those taking art at GCSE is broadly stable. This, despite the evidence put before it in the form of the [Art Now](#) report, and other publications, in particular the [Sutton Trust](#) showing the disparities between those accessing high quality creative education and careers, and those missing out on these opportunities.

This is also despite the panels’ own evidence given in the “Polling of key stage 4 and 16 to 19 learners and parents” document, where the panel share:

“For key stage 4 learners, 45% studied an arts subject and 54% did not. For those who did not choose to study an arts subject, 51% did not do so because they did not enjoy them; 45% because they were not very good at them; 38% because they did not think it would be useful to their future...”

AccessArt would like to see the panel demonstrate an appetite and ability to forensically question and challenge the notion that this is somehow good enough; that we can choose to allow the 54% majority who choose not to take art, to leave

school thinking art has no place in their lives. Here we can see how the potential unwillingness to look beyond the scope of the review plays into a blinkered mindset. Despite the panel being tasked with exploring how every child can receive the best education, we have yet to see the rigour and courage needed to ask why 51% of children in KS4 do not think they are good at art. The answer is not only in curriculum, but also in staff training and pedagogy – two areas the panel are not able to consider.

We don't have to, and shouldn't, write those children off. In line with Article 31 of UNESCO Convention for the Rights of the Child, "Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities." We are able to keep a far greater number of children engaged in art. In the AccessArt survey of schools using the curriculum these figures rise considerably. We can do this by enabling and enthusing staff with greater training, by creating relevant curriculum underpinned by rigorous pedagogy which schools can adapt and which give pupils ownership of their learning.

*During the next stage of the review AccessArt, calls for a more joined up and expansive conversation about the interrelationships around curriculum and assessment, and about how we can use this conversation to do better, for every child.*



## **Instances of words in the Interim Report:**

**Maths: 61**

**English: 63**

**Science: 23**

**Art: 5**

**The Arts: 10**

**Music: 8**

**Drama: 5**

**DT: 6**

**Dance: 0**

## **A Discussion about Art, Craft & Design as a Unique Subject Area**

**Whilst the Ofsted Subject Review Art & Design (February 2023) acknowledged that art as a subject requires a unique approach, and that many systems applied to other subjects do not best serve art, there is little reassurance in the Interim Report that this thinking is embraced. Indeed, at our Curriculum & Assessment meeting it was acknowledged that the same metrics had been used for art as other subjects.**

**An example of how the language and approach used in other subjects might limit excellence in an art curriculum is the use of the word “mastery.” The Review panel define “mastery” in this context as “the process of ensuring students understand a particular foundational concept before moving to the next one.” Once again, we cannot use words like mastery within a conversation about**

curriculum without understanding or at least being willing to talk about the pedagogical implications of this word, in the context of art. Making and talking about art is a deeply iterative process. It does not comply with a linear, sequential or tick box progression. Skills do not neatly build in the way the panel hope. All artists understand this. This is not to say we don't believe we should equip pupils with the skills and knowledge they need to enable them to express themselves, but is it appropriate to talk about mastery for pupils of school age? We would like to see the panel demonstrating an understanding of the value of play and exploration in art, alongside opportunity to visit and revisit. Perhaps then the 54% majority who think art is not for them can feel welcome to stay in the room. "Mastery" implies endpoint, which pedagogically speaking can shut down artistic exploration. (Unless of course mastery is in the exploration itself, in which case please let's clarify the language. Semantics are vital if we are to express precise intention).

*During the next stage of the review, AccessArt would like to see a curiosity towards, and understanding of, the fact that the language which works for one subject, may not work for art. We need to use language precisely if we are to enable teachers and pupils.*

Instances of words in the Interim Report:

Mastery: 12

## Pedagogy: 0

### A Discussion About Knowledge

It is no surprise that the “knowledge-rich” mantra of the past years is retained. Evidence is cited that the recent focus on knowledge is a success reflected in uptake at GCSE and pathways at 16+, although it is recognised that this does not work for all.

The Ofsted Subject Review for Art was useful in its discussion of convergent and divergent knowledge. In addition, AccessArt would suggest a third state: emergent, as being vital to the processes of acquiring knowledge in art. In all stages, it must be understood that where a proportion of knowledge can be “taught,” the majority of knowledge in art needs to be experienced. Thinking about the curriculum only in terms of taught knowledge is a reductionist approach. Again, by embracing pedagogy, we can better appreciate the importance of creating experiences which ensure that knowledge is personally discovered through exploration and meaningfully understood. Added to this, enabling young people to feeling comfortable (and see the value in) being in a space of “not knowing” is vital not only to creative exploration but also to the ways of being in the world.

Pursuing only measurable knowledge, and avoiding immeasurable knowledge (like self-knowledge, or

changed ways of being) is allowing the tail to wag the dog, and again results in a reductionist approach.

*During the next stage of the review, AccessArt would like to see a conversation about the types of knowledge in art, and how we enable them.*

Instances of words in the Interim Report:

Knowledge: 54

Pedagogy: 0

A Discussion about Assessment's impact upon Pedagogy, and Vice Versa

It is outside the remit of *our* response to comment on the value of assessment generally at various stages of education, but in art education, summative assessment in particular can be counterproductive to nurturing a creative curriculum. If we want to enable our learners to feel safe in taking creative risks, and our teachers to feel safe to nurture an exploratory classroom, then we need to be aware that summative assessment can place pressure on these processes.

*During the next stage of the review, AccessArt would like to see a conversation about the impact of assessment on Pedagogy, and vice versa. We cannot ignore the connection.*

Instances of words in the Interim Report:

Assessment: 154



**Pedagogy: 0**

## **A Discussion about Extracurricular**

**“The arts are a good illustration of some of the dilemmas for this Review, in that not all of the issues that have been identified relate to the curriculum or assessment framework. For example, in arts subjects we have heard calls for improvements in equipment, more specialist teachers and better access to extra-curricular activities. These are important issues, and where we received evidence that extends beyond curriculum and assessment, we have passed that on to the Department for Education, who will reflect it in wider work.”**

**Can we tread carefully here? We need to ensure that we do not shrug off our responsibilities to help teachers deliver an excellent art curriculum to all, by making up for lost opportunities in the classroom via an extracurricular offer. We know that it is the most vulnerable who will least access an after-school offer. We already know that a large percentage of Primary Schools only teach art every other half term, due to curriculum pressures. Our efforts should be in ensuring first that all children have access to engaging art curriculum each week.**

***During the next stage of the review, AccessArt would like to be reassured that the new Curriculum does not see an extracurricular offer as a***

*buttress to excuse a part time / carousel type curriculum.*

## **A Discussion about the Connection between Art and Creative, Critical and Higher-Level Thinking Skills**

The Interim Report does not yet demonstrate an understanding of the link between the arts and creative, critical and higher-level thinking skills. This may be because of the lack of interest in talking about pedagogy. Round and round we go. But we do need to make this connection – and to help teachers, parents and pupils to make this connection, if we are to feed this through to the Curriculum.

*During the next stage of the review, AccessArt would like to see a conversation about how art can help learners cultivate Creative, Critical and Higher-Level Thinking Skills, at all ages.*

**Instances of words in the Interim Report:**

**Creative Thinking: 1**

**Oracy: 0**

**Critical Thinking: 1 (With reference to AI)**

**Creativity 2: (Both with reference to the last review of the curriculum between 2011-2013)**

**A Discussion about teacher and pupil wellbeing and engagement.**

**We understand wellbeing and engagement are outside**

the remit of the Review, and yet, if our pupils do not attend, and our teachers leave, it won't matter how shiny and polished our Curriculum is.

At this point, the Review does not communicate an interest in the love of learning and love of teaching. There is a movement (outside the Review) to acknowledge as a whole that this is where we need to turn our attention. With regard to art education, we do need to help pupils and teachers hold the subject with joy, so that it is a personally meaningful experience. This is not difficult, if again, we truly understand pedagogical mechanisms. By exploring the how and the why, as well as the what, we can embrace everything that art education has to offer, including what we learn through art, as well as about art, and truly embrace how art education can help shape our next generation.

Instances of words in the Interim Report:

Wellbeing: 1

Enjoyment: 0

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/curriculum-and-assessment-review-interim-report>

Paula Briggs, CEO & Creative Director AccessArt,  
March 2025



## Open Letter to Government: Why Art Education Needs to Change: Inclusion, Wellbeing, Employment & Creative Industries

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purpose, value-led arts education for all pupils. It is time for the government to connect education back to heads, hands and hearts, and value the arts alongside all other subjects, ensuring high quality arts education is a mandatory part of all regular curriculum entitlement for ALL pupils.

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[Sign Now!](#)

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## Making a Cardboard Sketchbook

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## Fair Processing Notice

This Fair Processing notice refers specifically to AccessArt's use of your personal data collected through our [open letter of March 2025](#). We will use your personal data to include your name, organisation and/or interest in the open letter (if you select this option).

We collect four types of information about you:

1. Your name
2. Your Title
3. Your interest in the issue
4. Your email address

### **Your name**

- We ask for your name so we know to whom to address communications.
- We ask you for your name so we can identify who has signed the letter.
- We ask you to specifically opt in for us to share your name, you can choose to remain anonymous.
- We intend to publish this letter on our website and social media accounts.
- We are also seeking publication in the national media.
- The letter may also be reproduced in international media.
- If you opt in for us to share your name you will be identifiable in all these environments as a signatory to this letter.

### **Organisation or job title**

- We ask you to supply information relating to your job title or organisation (if applicable).
- This information may appear alongside your name when the letter is published if you opt in for us to share your name.

## Interest

- We ask you to select your role when signing the form (Teacher, Creative or in Industry). You do not have to choose one of these, but it will help our understanding of who is signing the letter if you choose to do so.
- This information may appear alongside your name and title when the letter is published or will be shared as an alternative to a name or title if you opt to remain anonymous.

## Your email address

- We ask you to supply your email address so we can stay in touch with you about this campaign by electronic means.
- When you give us your email address, you are giving us your consent in accordance with data protection legislation to receive electronic communications from us about this campaign.
- We will not share your email address with any other party (except for data backup purposes with our appointed contractor).

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We will retain your information for as long as this campaign is active. We will delete securely any personal data we hold once we decide to close this campaign.

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# **Open Letter to Government: Why Art Education Needs to Change: Inclusion, Wellbeing, Employment & Creative Industries**

As a Subject Association for Art, and as a Registered Arts Education Charity, AccessArt invites you to sign the open letter below. We currently have over 1300 signatures and will be sending our letter

to the press very soon. Please do sign now – our combined voice will carry greater weight.

Please do share this page within your networks and on social media, thank you.

[Please find our Fair Processing Policy here.](#)

Please note if you leave a comment on this page below, that is not the same as signing the letter (pls use the form to sign).

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**Open Letter to Keir Starmer Prime Minister, Bridget Phillipson Secretary State for Education, Lisa Nandy Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport**

**Dear Members of Parliament,**

**With the Interim Report of the Curriculum and Assessment Review imminent, experts and advocates of arts education understand the significance of this opportunity. Will the government demonstrate that they have listened to the powerful, combined voices of experts in the field, and understood the unified message: that the current Curriculum**

approach – the “knowledge-rich” mantra, the unnecessarily stringent approaches to testing, and the unfair bias placed on schools by the EBacc and Progress 8 – is failing to provide all pupils with a fit-for-purpose arts education.

We are deeply concerned that if the Review decides the arts in schools are “good enough” then a once in a lifetime opportunity will be missed and the Government will fail to meet its own commitments.

We need to hold Keir Starmer, Bridget Phillipson and Lisa Nandy to account, and remind them; we are looking to them to demonstrate the curiosity, courage and creative thinking we so badly need to nurture in our children to responsibly prepare them for their futures.

We remind the government of their verbal commitments:

### Inclusion

*“... A review of the curriculum to put arts, sports and music back at the heart of our schools and communities where it belongs.”* <sup>[i]</sup>

*“The arts, creativity, drama, music – they must be available to every child, to us all. Excellence is for everyone, and background must be no barrier to opportunity.”* <sup>[ii]</sup>

*‘I will help working-class pupils defy the odds to succeed – just as I did’* <sup>[iii]</sup>

## Wellbeing

*“That’s why thriving and belonging will feature so prominently in our work in the opportunity mission, hand in hand with attainment... Healthy, happy children coming to school ready to learn – if we get this right, those children will achieve time and again... The best schools understand this. They also understand that it’s not easy, it’s not soft.”* [iv]

## Employment

Alongside CEO’s of AI companies, the government’s own website says that in preparing for the workforce of the future, “creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence are still absolutely vital.” [v]

## Creative Industries

*“Labour will deliver a broader curriculum, to tap into the unbelievable creative talent of all our young people.”* [vi]

*“Every young person must have access to music, art, design and drama. That is our mission. Because we know that for our creative industries to flourish, every child needs to be given a chance.”* [vii]

It is time for us to create a rigorous, fit-for-purpose, value-led arts education for all pupils. It is time for the government to connect education



**back to heads, hands and hearts, and value the arts alongside all other subjects, ensuring high quality arts education is a mandatory part of all regular curriculum entitlement for ALL pupils.**

***Where people are feeling fear, art can help people process and express.***

***Where people are feeling fragmented, art can help people connect.***

***Where people are feeling despair, art can create optimism.***

***Where people are feeling disempowered and unheard, art can empower.***

***Paula Briggs, Co-Founder, CEO and Creative Director AccessArt***

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[i] Lisa Nandy, Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, September 2024

[ii] Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, X, 14th August, 2023

[iii] Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, The Guardian, 20 July 2024

[iv] Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, Confederation of School Trusts' Conference, November 2024

[v] <https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2025/01/what-ai-means-for-jobs-and-how-were-preparing-the-workforce/>

[vi] Bridget Phillipson, Secretary of State for Education, The Rest is Politics, June 2024

[vii] Keir Starmer, March 2024

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# **“Acts of Kindness” Workshop**

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## **Collage: Deconstructing, Reconstructing and Abstracting**

### **What We Like About This Resource...**

*“I really like how this playful resource helps us to make a creative response inspired by a stimulus, ensuring that the stimulus is only an entry point into an outcome that will look totally different. Exploring the themes of colour, texture and composition through the lens of different artists also helps us see how we can interpret (and re-interpret) colours and materials in a meaningful way. Viewfinders and collage are also great tools for those who experience ‘fear of the white page’ and will allow learners to make conscious creative decisions as they go.” – Tobi, AccessArt*

# You May Also Like

**Adapting AccessArt: Colour and Composition**



**Cut Paper Collage Still Life**



**Cooking with collage**



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## **Session Recording: The Tiny Art School Movement: Spotlight**

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## **Tiny Art Schools: The Little Makery**

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# **Tiny Art Schools: Creative Days**

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**Zoom Access Link: Artist Educator Spotlight**

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**Zoom Access Link: AccessArt and International Schools**