

Primary Art National Curriculum KS1 & 2

Introduction

AccessArt has many years experience in helping schools, (and the wider community) deliver high quality visual arts teaching. Our core aim is to raise the quality of visual arts teaching and learning through sharing inspirational practice. We are the leading provider of artist-led and artist-inspired teaching and learning resources. We have been recognised for our work by Arts Council England, Nesta, DfES, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, Esmee Fairbairn Foundation, and BIS. We work in partnership with a number of major arts and cultural organisations, schools, museums, galleries and artists.

The guidance below is provided in good faith and based upon our experience. Please use the subject areas below to access further guidance and links to over 850 resources and lesson plans.

New resources are added every week. [Please register here to be kept up to date with our latest resources.](#)

First Things First!

First of all, AccessArt believes all children have a right to an excellent and rigorous art education.

Second of all, we acknowledge that teachers and schools are under incredible pressure, from all sides. We recognise that in many schools, specialist primary art teachers are now a thing of the past, and that many teachers have limited experience in teaching (or studying) art.

We want to make it possible for ALL schools to deliver a great art education for their pupils. We offer the resources below in good faith, and we hope the information below helps less experienced art teachers to feel comfortable and inspired in delivering an exciting art curriculum. We are here to help so please [get in touch!](#)

Advice, information and resources to help teachers plan & deliver the National Curriculum for Art KS 1 & 2

AccessArt Advocates...

That schools consider teaching art & design at Key

Stage 1 and 2 as a distinct subject. Whilst we appreciate many schools approach art in a project or theme-based manner, our experience is that when art is taught as a distinct subject in a skills-based manner there is clearer progression and the teaching and learning is more rigorous. We do appreciate that art provides an excellent way to enrich the curriculum and link to other curriculum areas. Links to themes or projects can still be made, but from a position of far greater strength and understanding.

AccessArt Recommends...

That Art & Design is split into ten subject areas:

1. [Drawing](#)
2. [Sketchbooks](#)
3. [Printmaking](#)
4. [Sculpture](#)
5. [Design](#)
6. [Painting](#)
7. [Craft](#)
8. [Textiles](#)

9. [Multimedia](#)

10. Digital

Please explore each of the subject areas above for further guidance and links to resources/lessons plans.

We Propose...

That teachers and schools to raise their expectations as to what pupils are capable of in the visual arts. This can happen in a very practical way: for example through the introduction of a wider variety of materials from the outset, pupils can and do quickly build their understanding and skills.

We Recommend...

That schools work hard to break down preconceptions amongst teachers and pupils as to what drawing or sculpture (for example) is or might be. Preconceptions can stifle creativity. If we take the lid off art and design we can allow the subject to flourish. Experimentation, risk, and innovation should be encouraged.

We Suggest...

That schools should be less focussed on outcome

and more focussed on the creative journey. When schools work towards a predefined, prescribed outcome (i.e. in the case of a display) the understanding and learning of pupils can be compromised. Ofsted recognises that work which looks great at first glance can often hide poor learning outcomes. Instead schools should work to create confident, independent artists who can articulate and value their own creative journeys.

We suggest that each term children should be given the opportunity to explore a variety of polarities:

1. Traditional skills should be balanced with experimental work.
2. Small scale work should be balanced with large scale work.
3. Quiet reflective study should be balanced with active, dynamic work.
4. Individual work should be balanced with group work.
5. Two dimensional work should be balanced with three dimensional work.
6. Study of historical "great" artists should be balanced with contemporary artists.

In addition children should be given the

opportunity to experience:

- 1. How it feels to take creative risks as opposed to playing it safe**
- 2. That chaos and mess can be productive for some people**
- 3. Both female and male creative role models (including visits from artists/visits to galleries/artists studios)**

Practical Pointers...

- That for many schools, an ongoing exploration of materials will provide an accessible and effective starting point. This exploration (of materials used for drawing, sculpture, painting, printmaking etc) will help the children grow in confidence and understanding and promote self-directed learning. Manipulating materials helps children explore processes, and these in turn can be applied to concepts. Many of the resources in the subject areas (see links above or below) centre around an exploration of materials and processes.**

You might want to consider:

- A whole-school activity. For example, all year groups might explore charcoal. Each**

class and individuals within the class will naturally explore at his or her own level. Fundamental exercises can be experienced by all ages, and repeated by all ages, as part of their practice. There is no need for a “progression of activity” as such – children will naturally progress once they have repeated access to a material, process or concept.

- Pupils or teachers sharing areas of expertise with other classes to build knowledge and confidence within the school.
- That teachers should not be afraid to be seen to be learning alongside the children – in fact this can be a very positive role model for children.

See the AccessArt Exemplar Primary Art Plan

Years 1 to 6, plus after school clubs. [Our exemplar plan provides a rich and inspiring curriculum!](#)

Basic skills are introduced and then built upon, including drawing, printmaking, sketchbooks, painting and making. Skills are revisited and the use of ongoing sketchbook work underpins this process.

AccessArt believes in fostering an open-ended exploration of creativity. Our resources do not follow prescriptive outcomes, instead we believe the role of the teacher is to introduce key skills, materials and ideas to the pupils in such a way that each pupil can then explore his or her own creativity.

By creating a safe and nurturing environment, pupils are encouraged to take creative risks and to learn from the journey, rather than head towards a pre-defined end result.

The resources included are suitable for pupils of all abilities, and can be confidently delivered by specialist and non-specialist teachers alike.

[Read More](#)

Useful Links

[National Curriculum Art & Design](#)

[Drawing Together: Art, Craft & Design in Schools \(Ofsted\)](#)

[Making a Mark: Art, Craft and Design Education \(Ofsted\)](#)

[NSEAD Curriculum Resources](#)

[Axis](#) – Artists database

[BBC Your Paintings](#)

Getty Open Content Programme