Clevedon School Art & Photography Curriculum: Statement of Intent

"Learn the rules like a pro, so you can break them like an artist" Pablo Picasso

Our Curriculum gift for all learners:

We aim to develop students understanding of contemporary and traditional Art and Design. Focus is placed on promoting practice that will engage, inspire and challenge students through the study of art history; contextual and cultural studies. We aim to equip all students with fundamental skills that will allow them to engage fully in life by being able to find and express meaning from what surrounds them. We actively develop creative thinking and visual literacy whilst encouraging the use of a range of techniques to increase proficiency in their execution: drawing; painting; sculpture; printmaking; mixed media; photography; architecture; new media (digital image manipulation, CGI; animation and video art).

Students develop technical skills and vocabulary around the 'Formal Elements of Art and Design' (line, tone, shape, form, texture, colour and space) so they have the confidence and terminology to research, analyse, experiment, record, develop and realise ideas. Exposure to work from a wide range of other times and cultures ensures students are exposed to a broad range of spiritual, moral, social and cultural ideas as well as understanding what Art is for. We want students to be artists, placing no limit on them whilst supporting the discovery of mediums in which they can excel. In essence we identify, nurture and celebrate our young artists.

Our topics of study have been carefully selected to expose students to a wide range of perspectives from those with in Clevedon and the wider Bristol area to national, European, Western and global lenses. We explore art through time to help students understand how it never stands still and is a vehicle to tell the story of life, whilst also signposting careers in the British creative industries. Themes covered include: beautiful creatures; still life; natural forms; portraits; landscapes; cultural beliefs; protest; architecture; figurative art; natural & man-made; inside-out; surroundings; human condition.

Art and History go hand in hand. We encourage students to develop their critical thinking skills by evaluating sources of information whilst considering intention, bias and context of work to challenge prejudicial stereotypes as they emerge. We are conscious cultural attitudes and values are constantly evolving along with the ever-growing power of visual messaging and its potential to coerce. Therefore, we want to equip students with the skills to develop and make well informed independent judgements. Promoting the value of rigorous scholarship combined with rich vocabulary, we want students to be able to offer sophisticated explanations and evaluations so they can actively contribute to their community by championing a more socially just and sustainable society.

1. The Clevedon way promotes character, ambition and community in our curriculum:

Kindness and nurture permeate all that we do.

- We aim to deliver our curriculum in a fun yet calm and safe environment enabling all students to engage, access and participate. The wide range of topics, ideas and perspectives covered aim to empower students giving them agency. The opportunity for students to explore, develop and master skills in 2D, 3D, digital or time-based processes aims to enhance self-belief as they identify fields in which they can excel.

- We want students to all discover creative approaches and disciplines that enable them to explore, discover and formulate elements of their personal identity and character.

- We want students to understand that making mistakes are an important part of the learning process and develop resilience; that sticking with something and seeing it through to its conclusion is a worthwhile process.

- We want students to find joy in telling or creating a story; inventing new and funky looks / styles; communicating their own unique perspectives, hopes and dreams; celebrating their heroes, passions, interests, family traditions, beliefs and cultures; designing an original product or environment; finding satisfaction in a well communicated message about an issue or concern; creating for just for the sake of it!

- We want students to know that Art is there as a continual means to enhance and support their wellbeing or to communicate something when words are not enough.

- We want students to further embed the value of kindness by reflecting on a diverse range of perspectives and histories; to respect different social, moral, ethical, cultural attitudes and appreciate British values in context.

- We strongly believe Art is not just on the curriculum as a route into a particular career (which it may well be for some), but to enable students to understand and interact with the surrounding world in a more enriching way adding to their experiences and knowledge.

- We believe our curriculum will help students to feel confident in their cultural capital, broadening horizons whilst opening doors personally, socially and professionally so they can positively contribute to their families, community and wider society as active citizens.

2. Our curriculum is ambitious for all learners:

A relevant & interesting curriculum for all learners with links to careers and real life.

We realise it is crucial to root learning in real life, in order to help pupils see the links between school and the world beyond our walls, as well as prepare them for life after Year 11 and 13. All curriculums have been designed with engagement, relatability and exploration of identity at the heart of them to both build self-esteem and help students realise the opportunities available to them. Projects expose students to new Art and Design disciplines via examples of work from practitioners across a wide range of creative fields. Students learn about career and progression routes in the creative industries via lesson presentations, discussions and research or literacy-based homework tasks. Our aim is to give students the opportunity to succeed early in their time with us so confidence and ambition are high by the time options are chosen in Years 8 and 9. We support students through each major decision making phase (Years 8, 9, 11 and 13), giving balanced and up to date information about progression routes and subject combinations enabling students and their families the opportunity to make well informed decisions about their future.

Fostering ambition and brilliance.

We are ambitious for all pupils in every aspect of their life and recognise the importance of connecting students to relatable local success stories as an important part of raising aspirations. We want them to be well rounded kind people who develop positive relationships both personally and professionally throughout their lives. We want to build student resilience by encouraging them to try things without fear of failure; knowing ways to support wellbeing through engagement with the Arts and Culture. We want them to be ambitious in their personal and professional lives with the ability to seek out new experiences and opportunities, fostering a lifelong love for learning.

All pupils included.

Our curriculums regularly zoom in and out from local to national and global contexts ensuring pupils for all backgrounds feel included. We value a personalised approach where students have large elements of choice when selecting source material to inspire their work. We are mindful to be representative of all students in the sources we select and aim to inspire curiosity. We promote academic rigour with high expectations for all; by modelling ambitious levels of oracy and literacy; highlighting the importance of finishing work and meeting deadlines.

We are equally ambitious for all pupils no matter their learning needs, personal challenges or barriers faced; an ethos of equity drives our approach. All projects have a variety of visual access points available so appropriate support, stretch and challenge can be offered sensitively. Curriculums have been designed with the flexibility to take projects in more personalised directions where necessary and offer extension opportunities throughout for all students to access.

3. Our curriculum is sequenced to enable our students to progress to brilliance:

A supportive pathway.

In the early stages of Year 7 students learn technical skills and terminology relating the 'Formal Elements of Art and Design' (line, tone, shape, form, texture, colour and space) which serve as the main tools of visual language. Initial workshops develop practical skills while developing oracy and literacy by responding to artworks from other times and cultures. We encourage students to develop a growth mindset, creative confidence and the importance of identifying the various communication techniques employed by artmakers. Sketchbook journaling is another important skill we develop from the outset, enabling students to present and share ideas while providing a resource to look back on for knowledge retrieval and long-term memorisation of key information.

The curriculum is structured as a progression model building the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to succeed at GCSE, A-Level and beyond. Each project enables students to further their understanding of creative processes and critical creative thinking skills by building of prior learning. Researching; analysing; experimenting; refining; recording; developing; realising; evaluating are the core skills students are supported to develop, with confident and proficient independent practice our ambition for students.

Students opting for GCSE Art and Design courses in Fine Art and/or Photography experience an approach which gradually removes scaffolds to support full independent practice. Projects continue to be sequenced around creative processes via a series of structured workshops to identify and develop technical skills while enhancing self-esteem. For Art Component 1 students respond to the themes 'The Natural & Man Made' and 'Inside Out' to develop their portfolio. In Component 1 Photography students respond to the themes 'Surroundings' and 'Human Condition' to develop their portfolio. For Component 2 in both Art & Photography students produce work in response to the 'Externally Set Assignment'; students select one of the set themes as a starting point for their final project which culminates in outcomes that are realised during 10 hours of 'supervised time'.

Students continuing to A-Level in both Fine Art and Photography begin with a sequence of workshops to develop practical skills and deepen contextual knowledge. At this level there is a far greater emphasis on and expectations around independent practice. Component 1 comprises of the 'Skills Building Element' where exploratory work is creatively presented and reflected upon, before progressing to the 'Personal Investigation' where students choose their own project themes. Component 2 follows the same format as the GCSE 'Externally Set Assignment' with a different range of set themes culminating in 15 hours of 'supervised time' where outcomes are realised.

We aim to continue our strong track record of students progressing to further education, higher education, apprenticeships, training and work within art and design fields as well at the broader creative industries; we champion the successes of our students.