Art Policy

June 2026

Intent- what are our curriculum aims?
At Birtley House School, Art is a powerful and valued part of our creative curriculum. We believe that every child is an artist and should have the opportunity to explore, experiment and express themselves through a wide range of artistic experiences. We aim to:

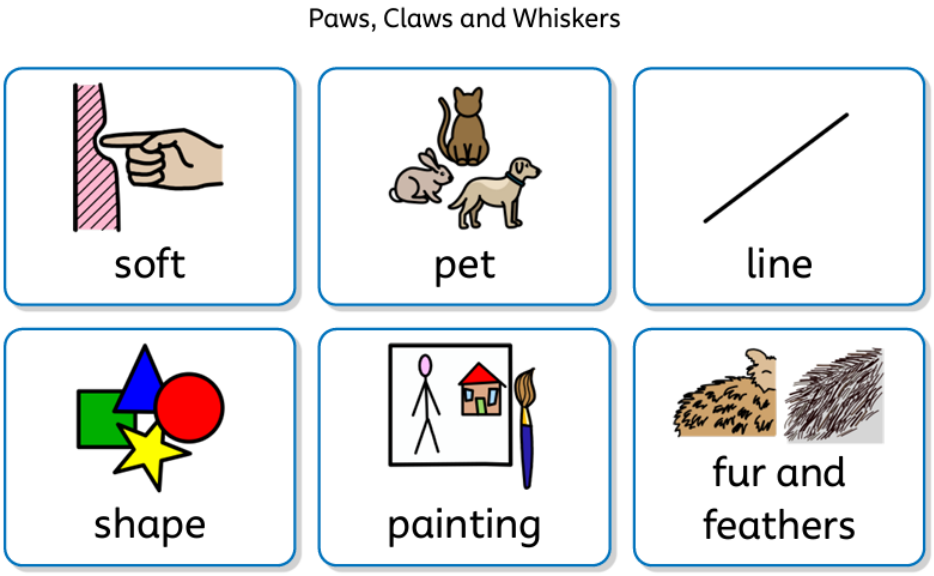
- Provide an imaginative and innovative curriculum which allows the children to become curious, creative and confident.
- Provide children with equal opportunities to develop their skills using a range of media, materials and tools.
- Expose children to a broad selection of artists, cultures, periods and movements.
- Empower resilient learners to take risk and explore in an environment that encourages meaningful and continuous reflection.
- Express children's individual interests, thoughts and ideas whilst developing socially, morally, spiritually and culturally.
- Provide children with opportunities for them to develop their love of Art in a creative and meaningful way, by establishing clear links between Art topics and the overall Curriculum Unit.

Implementation- How do we achieve our aims?
We recognise that our children join us with a range of artistic experiences and natural abilities. Our curriculum ensures that all children have equal access to high-quality art education through a well-sequenced and progressive structure. Our Curriculum also encourages children's individual interests as well as following the Pathways route and structure.
Areas taught within our curriculum include:

- Textiles
- Mixed Media
- Painting
- Drawing
- Sculpture

Within these areas, the children develop a wide range of ideas and creative techniques, using various materials and tools.
Art is used as a tool to develop individuality and resilience. Children are encouraged to consistently stop, critically evaluate and reflect upon their own work and that of others. At Birtley House, our Art, Craft and Design lessons are planned and delivered to promote an environment that allows children to be subjective, take risks and explore their own creative thoughts and ideas. Children are exposed to broad vocabulary which is used within discussion and written form. Each child has access to a vocabulary word mat in each Art lesson based on the topic. The Vocabulary has been chosen by the class teacher and includes vocabulary that the children can read, use and understand.

An example of a vocabulary mat in Amazon class:



Art is taught regularly across all year groups, either weekly or through focused creative blocks. Lessons are based on progression documents, knowledge organisers and vocabulary maps, ensuring skills and knowledge are built upon each year. Children explore the work of a diverse range of artists, designers and craftspeople from different cultures, backgrounds and time periods. Sketchbooks are used from Oceans pathway and Rivers and Waterfall pathway use a Topic book to show all learning. Our school celebrates children's artwork through displays, exhibitions, assemblies and whole-school art projects. We provide cross-curricular opportunities to connect art with other subjects such as history, science and geography, enriching learning and deepening understanding. The curriculum is adapted for our pupils by supporting children who may struggle with Art (for example, by providing supporting materials for children to paint rather than asking children to paint on a blank sheet).

Impact- How will we know we've achieved our aim?
We assess children's progress in art by reviewing their sketchbooks, final pieces and contributions to discussions and evaluations. Formative assessment is ongoing and supports teachers in identifying next steps and recognising achievement. The impact of our Art curriculum is seen in the enthusiasm and engagement of our pupils, the quality and diversity of their work, and their ability to talk confidently about the artistic process. Our ambition is for children to leave Birtley House School with a strong foundation in art and design, an appreciation of creativity, and the confidence to express themselves artistically throughout their lives. At the end of each lesson, teachers complete a Learning Outcome system using RAG rating (Red, Amber, Green). Red symbolises that the child has not understood or followed the learning outcome. Amber shows that they are beginning to understand the learning for that session and Green shows that the child has accessed and completed the learning objective. Teachers use this system as a formative assessment to underpin the next lesson's planning.

The National curriculum states:
The National Curriculum for Art and Design in England outlines the key stages 1 to 2, focusing on developing pupils' techniques, creativity, and critical understanding of art and design. The c

urriculum aims to engage, inspire, and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge a nd skills to experiment, invent, and create their own works of art, craft, and design. By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply, and understand the matters, skills, and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

More information on our Art curriculum, including progression of skills, are on our website which follows the Maestro schemes and progression maps.