

Subject on a Page: Art & Design



In a nutshell:

Art and Design is an exciting and creative course that allows you to express yourself visually while developing a wide range of artistic skills. It's about **more than just drawing or painting** — you'll learn to **think like an artist: to question, explore, and communicate ideas in personal and imaginative ways**. Over the two years, you'll have the freedom to explore themes that interest you, respond to the world around you, and take inspiration from a wide variety of artists, designers, and cultures. You'll be encouraged to take risks, experiment with new materials and techniques, and develop your own creative voice.

In Art and Design we:

- **Create a personal portfolio of work** by exploring different materials, techniques, and processes — like drawing, painting, photography, printmaking, sculpture, digital art, and mixed media. We take inspiration from artists and themes that interest us, developing our own ideas and producing creative, meaningful outcomes.
- **Use a sketchbook to document our journey** — researching artists, experimenting with media, recording our thoughts, and reflecting on our progress. We show how our ideas evolve over time and how we solve problems visually, building up a strong body of work that tells the story of our creativity.

Think like an artist:

- **Be curious** – Ask questions about the world around you. Why does something look the way it does? How could you express an idea differently? Artists notice things others might overlook.
- **Take creative risks** – Don't be afraid to try something new, even if it might not work. Experimenting helps you discover exciting possibilities.
- **Work through mistakes** – Artists often learn the most when things go wrong. Use 'mistakes' as part of your process — test, reflect, and improve.
- **Develop your own voice** – Think about what matters to you. What do you want to say through your work?

Write and talk like an artist:

- **Use art words** – Talk about materials, techniques, colours, textures, and composition (e.g. "I used bold lines and high contrast to show emotion.")
- **Explain your ideas** – Say what your work is about and why you made certain choices (e.g. "This piece is about identity and feeling disconnected.")
- **Talk about the process** – Describe how your work changed over time and what you learned (e.g. "At first I used paint, but I switched to collage to add more texture.")
- **Refer to artists** – Say who inspired you and how (e.g. "I liked how Barbara Kruger uses text to get a strong message across, so I tried that too.")

Read like an artist:

We have a suggested reading list on our website – scan the qr code to access it.



Revise like an artist:

- **Practise practical skills** – Spend time drawing, painting, editing photos, or experimenting with materials to improve your technique.
- **Review your sketchbook** – Go over past projects to remind yourself how your ideas developed, what worked well, and how you explained your process.
- **Revisit key artists** – Refresh your knowledge of artists you've studied. Try writing or talking about how their work influenced you.
- **Use visual revision** – Make mind maps, flashcards, annotated images, or timelines of your projects and artist research to help remember key points.

Experience it like an artist:

- **Be curious** – Look closely at the world around you. Notice colours, patterns, light, shadows, people, places — inspiration is everywhere.
- **Keep a sketchbook or photo journal** – Collect drawings, photos, textures, words, and ideas. Treat everyday moments like creative opportunities.
- **Feel deeply** – Pay attention to your emotions and thoughts. Artists often turn feelings and experiences into powerful visual ideas.
- **Stay open-minded** – Try new things, visit exhibitions, explore different cultures, music, films, and books. Let these experiences feed your creativity.

Develop transferable skills:

Art and Design helps you develop a range of skills that will help you in other subjects and in future careers.

- **Creativity and originality**
- **Problem-solving**
- **Visual communication**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Independent learning**
- **Resilience and reflection**