



KIRKHAM  
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

JUNIOR, INFANT AND PRE-SCHOOL HEADMISTRESS: KIRSTEN O'DONOGHUE BA (HONS)

17 January 2022

Dear Parents,

*'Woodwork is active learning at its best'*

*Tina Bruce, CBE*

I am delighted to share with you details of our enhanced Design and Technology curriculum area: 'Creative Woodwork', which will now be part of our Pre-School and Infant pupils' learning experience. The classrooms are now equipped with some height-adjusted and purpose-built woodwork benches featuring two vices, as well as toolboxes containing real tools designed for little hands. We are all very excited and can't wait to get started!

#### **Why have we chosen Creative Woodwork?**

Woodwork as a curriculum area provides a valuable and special learning experience. The smell and feel of using real wood, working with natural materials and the sounds of hammering and sawing are quite unique. It is an opportunity for the hands and mind to work together to express imagination as well as solve problems. Woodwork is also a powerful medium for building self-esteem and confidence. We believe that our pupils will feel empowered and trusted by being given the opportunity to work with real tools; and in addition they will achieve things that they may initially perceive to be challenging. This will impart a 'can-do' attitude; an important value that we try to instil in our pupils from a young age. Children are natural constructors and woodwork is all about children making, experimenting and doing. Additionally, woodwork is an excellent means of supporting fine and gross motor strength and development, which underpins all parts of the curriculum. The positive benefits to this curriculum area are boundless, some of which are listed below:

- Taking risks
- Feeling valued
- Trying new experiences
- Gaining new skills
- Being motivated
- Developing independence
- Developing confidence
- Developing persistence
- Concentration and engagement
- Developing resilience
- Therapeutic benefits and mindfulness
- Developing social skills and collaboration
- Perspective and empathy
- Self-regulation, self-care and awareness of others

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- Pride in their achievements
- Metacognition
- Cause and effect
- STEM opportunities
- Equal opportunities
- Developing hand-eye coordination, core strength, dexterity, manipulative skills and muscular strength

### **How will our sessions run?**

Initially our pupils will be taught how to use the tools within small groups and under close supervision. Once this has been mastered, and still under close supervision, the pupils will be free to make their own creations: they will not be set projects whereby they all create the same object. We are aiming for the pupils to follow their own interests and solve their own problems to create their work. The emphasis is on the process rather than the product and is much more meaningful when led by the children. We will also have lots of resources available for 'tinkering' and will combine wood with fabric, corks, buttons and string etc. Pupils may even extend their models by painting or gluing them. The sky is the limit in terms of their creations!

### **Health and Safety**

Of course, keeping the pupils safe whilst woodworking is our prime objective. Woodwork provides children with a valuable opportunity to learn about making judgements, avoiding hazards and managing risk in a controlled environment. We can't eliminate risk completely, but we believe that by exposing them to assess risk themselves, they become less likely to succumb to accidents in the future. Woodwork offers a way for us to teach our pupils respect for things that can be harmful and to take care in certain situations. Pupils will wear safety glasses at all times and shoes will always be worn; they will be kept under close supervision. A detailed and comprehensive risk assessment has been carried out (please see attached) and will be regularly reinforced at the start of all sessions.

We are excited to commence this valuable learning opportunity; one that will empower them as makers, sculptors, tinkerers, engineers and architects. Please look out for our progress on Social Media.

Kind regards,



Mrs K Aldeen  
Deputy Head (Academic)