

Notre Dame High School Art Department

Curriculum Aims & Intent:

Our intent is to provide all students with opportunities to learn about themselves and the wider world around them; through the traditions, skills and languages of Art & Design. We strive to teach students that they can create, conceive ideas and tap into their own imagination to develop and refine their ideas and artefacts. We aim to challenge the commonly held notion that making art is only for the 'talented'. We strive to provide projects that are accessible, relevant, and engaging and which help all students to be proud of what they can achieve.

In Key Stage Three our projects build skills and knowledge in ways that are accessible to all. We aim to cover a broad range of themes, materials and methods. We recognise the challenge of increasing the diversity of our frame of reference and we strive to explore artists and traditions that reflect the diversity of the students we work with.

At Key Stage Three our projects range from the technical but accessible portrait project to the imaginative and inventive Mythical Creature and Architecture Projects. Through these projects we hope to provide a foundation in key skills for those who will pursue Art and Design beyond Key Stage Three, while at the same time providing worthwhile learning and a broad experience of Art and Design for those who will not.

At Key Stage Three, the learning objectives underpinning the curriculum can be simply expressed as:

1. **Researching,**
2. **Experimenting**
3. **Making**

Key Stage Four and Five: Our curricula at Key Stage Four and Five are based on the holistic creative practice described by the specifications for GCSE and A Level Art & Design and Photography. These principles are elegantly expressed by the four assessment objectives summarised below:

AO1: Researching, analysing and responding to the work of Artists and practitioners to inform own creative work.

AO2: Learning through experimentation, testing materials and methods, evaluating and refining skills and ideas

AO3: Recording ideas in visual, written or other forms through drawing, making, annotation and photography.

AO4: Responding: Using the creative processes to produce a personal response and outcomes.

These objectives promote a way of learning that can be applied to diverse subjects within the curriculum. Our aim is to teach creative practice as much as content. Through our Key Stage Four and Key Stage Five courses in Art and Photography, students are at first introduced to and taught these practices, and then increasingly encouraged to work independently. Students of differing abilities can be supported in this to a greater or lesser degree, and as their confidence and ability in working independently increases, students can take more and more responsibility of setting their own aims and mastering skills that suit their preferences and lived experience.



What makes our Pedagogy Distinctive?

Our style of teaching and learning focusses on demonstration and guided practise. We typically demonstrate and explain, then support students in applying skills and techniques. Students are introduced to knowledge about Artists, Photographers and Cultural Practises, they are taught how to analyse and critically evaluate other's work and then encouraged to pursue research increasingly independently as they progress through the Key Stages. Students are taught to experiment with and explore the properties of media, then make increasingly independent decisions about media and techniques as they progress. Our approach to curriculum is adaptable allowing us to guide and support students in choosing approaches which suit their interests and strengths. This allows us to meet the needs of diverse learners especially in KS4 and 5. Assessment is on-going. Formative assessment through frequent teacher and peer feedback as well as student self-evaluation helps guide students to improve their skills and responses. We encourage students to experiment and try out ideas, we encourage students to learn through experimentation. Supporting students in evaluating possible solutions rather than inculcating answers and solutions. This is frequently challenging for students. Our aim is to promote understanding and eventual mastery of practice which in turn can enable students to develop insight and understanding of subject content as well as mastery of selected skills and media. Art & Design and Photography courses allow students to develop technical skills in selected media, research and analytical skills and an opportunity to self-realise through individualised creative exploration and creation.