

# The Quality of Education: Art - Purpose and Provision

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**St Christopher's:**  
A Church of England Academy

That person is like a tree planted by streams of water,  
which yields its fruit in season  
and whose leaf does not wither-  
whatever they do prospers.

Psalm 1:3

# The Purpose of Study

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Art at St. Christopher's is designed to engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge, skills and resilience to experiment, invent and create. As pupils progress, they are encouraged to think critically and develop a rigorous and informed understanding of the subject. Schemes of learning encourage pupils to appreciate how art and design reflects history and contributes to the culture and diversity of the wider community.

## The intention of art is to:

- actively engage pupils in the creative process of art, craft and design in order to develop as effective and independent learners, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds
- develop creative, imaginative and intuitive capabilities when exploring and making images, artefacts and products
- become confident in taking risks learning by exploring with ideas, processes, media, materials and techniques
- develop critical understanding through investigative, analytical, experimental, practical, technical and expressive skills
- develop and refine ideas and proposals, personal outcomes or solutions with increasing independence
- acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies with purpose and intent
- develop knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures
- develop an awareness of the different roles and individual work practices evident in the production of art, craft and design in the creative and cultural industries
- develop an awareness of the purposes, intentions and functions of art, craft and design in a variety of contexts and as appropriate to students' own work
- demonstrate safe working practices in art and design.

# Complementing the School Purpose

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## Foundation Scripture

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The prosperity of all is at the heart of the art department. When pupils feel well-supported and fulfilled as unique individuals then they are more likely to succeed. The department prides itself on nurturing St. Christopher's pupils and takes great pleasure when they 'yield their fruits'. By encouraging pupils to learn from experimentation and exploration we hope to reduce the opportunity for 'withering' rather reflection and refinement. An environment of mutual respect enables pupils to flourish and grow; it is essential that pupils recognise their own worth and the worth of each person, like true Christians.

## Key Themes

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Schemes of learning are designed to encourage pupils to question and challenge accepted norms within society e.g. 'Creative & Critical Thinking' pupils explore how to create a portrait without physically drawing a person. By analysing the work of traditional and contemporary artists, pupils begin to understand and recognise shifts and changes within society e.g. in the year 8 'Community' project pupils explore developing architectural styles over time. Pupils are encouraged to know themselves through creative processes, learning to recognise their strengths and areas for development, e.g through self, peer, 1:1 and formal assessment.

The celebration of cultural diversity and community develop pupils' opportunity to learn how to live well together. Pupils investigate a range of local and global communities throughout KS3 gaining understanding, respect and appreciation of the values and beliefs of others. During this time pupils are encouraged to work collaboratively, developing their own skills whilst also learning from each other.

Through creative expression and comprehension, we hope that pupils will feel increasingly secure of themselves and gain a understanding, compassion and tolerance of others.

## Christian Virtues

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A key aspect of prosperity in art is based on trust, a learning environment forged from mutual respect and support, fostering creativity and friendship. Pupils need to feel safe to investigate and explore materials, methods and processes. A love for the subject and its possibilities is the ultimate aspiration however intellectual and emotional development for all is integral. It is hoped that all pupils regardless of whether they opt to continue to study art after KS3 will benefit from a greater understanding of the world and its aesthetic value.

## Curriculum Aims

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Knowledge, skills and understanding are embedded into 'Schemes of Learning.' Themes have been selected to support pupils' spiritual and cultural understanding whilst developing their confidence and skills with a range of media and techniques. Key topics consist of 'Creative and Critical Thinking,' Cultural Diversity,' 'Community,' 'Healthy Lifestyles,' 'Global Dimensions' and 'Developing Technologies'.

Through artistic endeavor pupils know what it is to be fully alive, enjoying opportunities to experiment, take risks and appreciate the fulfillment of the creative process.

Pupils learn how to live well together, being encouraged to celebrate their success and support one another's development. Peer and self-assessment allow pupils to reflect on their own progress and to acknowledge the creativity of others. Individual and group work combine, providing the opportunity for individual achievement, collaboration and negotiation.

Art aims to secure wisdom and understanding as skills develop, media and techniques building year on year. Pupils are encouraged to develop a resilient approach, embracing opportunities whilst acknowledging that not every piece of work needs to be beautiful if learning has occurred: the process and intellectual comprehension can be as valuable as the physical outcome.

The study of traditional and contemporary artists inform practice at all key stages. The ability to understand and see work in context is integral to pupil's comprehension of work and its impact.

# Complementing School Provision

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## Teaching Approaches

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Schemes of Learning provide a framework however a strength of the Art department is it's diverse skills set. Colleagues are provided with the creative opportunity to adapt and refine individual lessons to celebrate their specialism, illustrating professional judgements and discernment. We have found that this approach keeps Schemes of Learning fresh and engaging, motivating colleagues and pupils to explore and experiment. Resources and good practice are constantly shared throughout the department (and Art/ Technology staff.) It is an expectation that teachers will model specific outcomes and techniques providing opportunity for pupils to observe and ask questions deepening their knowledge. Open and personalised questioning aims to challenge pupils' understanding and encourages them to justify their thought process. Regular and varied feedback provides guidance for individual development in the form of: 1:1, class discussion, peer and self or formal assessment.

Schemes of Learning themes and intentions are shared with pupils so that they understand the bigger picture and take ownership of their outcome, remaining motivated to attain.

## Pupil Attitudes

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Pupil voice feedback and footfall within the department at lunchtime and afterschool sessions illustrate the popularity of the subject amongst pupils. The department prides itself on its inclusivity, taking time to get to know individuals and to adapt and refine Schemes of Learning to bring out the best of them, 'like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season.' Our learning environment is safe and nurturing both inside and outside of lessons, retention at KS4 and KS5 is reflective of pupil attitudes and opinions.

The aim of the department is ultimately to create well informed and resilient practitioners, but also to foster a love of the subject and a comprehension of the aesthetic that will increase pupil awareness and understanding of themselves, their environment and the global community.

Schemes of learning build on the National Curriculum equipping pupils with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. The department works hard to keep schemes of learning challenging and stimulating at all levels. **'The journey of exploration through the stages of development and refinement had been carefully planned and sequenced....The course of study had given the students the confidence to work independently and they responded well throughout' AQA GCSE Moderator 2019, 'It was clear tutors had gone out of their way in order to stretch and challenge the students with a broad and exciting course.' AQA A Level Moderator 2019.**

Engagement during the lockdown periods has been encouraging with many pupils embracing the opportunity to observe demonstrations and ask questions during live lessons, later developing their responses independently and resourcefully, taking a well-earned break from screen time. Department staff made themselves available to pupils through the use of school email and Synergy. With individual feedback pupils celebrated their successes or were provided with further guidance. An online gallery was created to promote interaction allowing pupils the opportunity to observe the work of others and take pride in their own creations, this can be viewed from the school website.

## Extra-Curricular and Enrichment

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Educational visits and artist workshops have been developed to enrich the specification. Visits and workshops provide pupils with the opportunity to experience and interact with artists and artwork, for example KS4 regularly attend Albert Docks to study the work on display in Tate Liverpool whilst a selection of KS4 pupils join L6 students for artist workshops from the RA or other prestigious artists (Ian Murphy). All A level students have the option of visiting the country's capital, observing work in Tate Modern as a minimum but also Tate Britain and the V&A Museum. The department has also been involved in 'Design Lab Nation.'

During the lockdown period pupils were encouraged to use their time for daily exercise productively, gathering primary sources, fostering increased awareness of the world around them, and promoting good mental health, staff created guidance videos and tutorials.

The art rooms are open every lunchtime and after school for two hours on a Friday and focus groups are being developed by department colleagues to nurture the disadvantaged or support the spiritual development of pupils with a key focus on KS3.

Prior to lockdown students have also worked together at A level to provide stimulus for the Altham branch of 'Age UK.' They considered a range of compositions that would trigger memories and start conversations for people struggling in the local community. Landmarks formed the main focus with a selection of mills and religious buildings combining to great effect. This piece is currently on display in the Common Room of the charity and was embarked upon with the support of subject ambassadors.

Critical studies form an integral part of a well-rounded art education therefore during the lockdown period pupils were guided to take advantage of a range of online exhibitions and artist developed resources. Acclaimed artist Alistair Gordon joined KS5 students for a Teams meeting, providing a live, interactive tour of his current portfolio and studio workspace.

# Meeting the Needs of All

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## Whole School / Cross Curricular Elements

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Department staff have each contributed towards the school T&L Hubs (GAN challenging the most able, SPN Year 6-7 transition, JBE PPE). GAN has also completed GCE moderator training and joined the AQA team, this has enabled her to gain a deeper understanding of the specification and provided opportunity to observe in other centers. Standardising sessions have been developed internally to support colleagues in their marking and the application of the exam board specification at GCSE & GCE (including APR and AMN, who are now delivering art specifications in graphics and textiles.)

SPN has a lead role helping pupils transition from year 6 –7 and has worked with the 2021 intake during the summer holidays. JBE worked collaboratively with the Well-Being Team to develop an art therapy group to support and engage PPE and SEND pupils. With the return to more normal routines the department intends to continue the work of SDA developing links within the local community to celebrate art and its spiritual value alongside the RE department. As a department we are working to use metacognitive and cognitive approaches to enhance pupils' retrieval and comprehension skills whilst illustrating their knowledge and understanding with a focus on selected artists. Tasks have been designed to build at each key stage developing pupils' understanding and appropriate reading around the topics investigated. The aim is for pupils to be selective, analytical and relevant in the information transferred.

## Meeting the needs of all

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The department is constantly reviewing and refining schemes of learning to suit the ability and need of its individual classes and welcomes the return of SAN, a trusted colleague to cover JBE's maternity leave. The aim is to make every lesson count, engaging and stimulating pupils. PP funding is used to ensure all pupils can fully engage with the curriculum, developing coursework and homework independently, accessing the required specialist materials, this additional funding allows all art pupils to experience the curriculum enhancing educational visits. We pride ourselves on being inclusive in our approach with department staff prepared to go the extra mile for their pupils, for example JBE has enabled a SEND pupil to continue to assess GCSE Art by working with her in the home environment, this pupil outperformed her FFT predictions at GCSE, successfully joining the 6th Form to complete A level courses.


The department is working hard to restore successful pre-lockdown routines. Afterschool sessions are open to all but have specific focus during key periods of the term, enhancing coursework, challenging the most able, aiming for A/A\*. The safe learning environment provided by the department encourages pupils to support and learn from each other, becoming increasingly independent. Lunchtimes are also put to beneficial use, supporting KS4 pupils to bridge the gaps that have in some cases developed during successive isolation periods and lockdown. It is widespread practice for passed A level students to return to the department, sharing their experiences of university and the world of work to motivate and support developing talent, this has also been an asset in reassuring KS5 students apply for university places during this period of Covid adjustment.





# Ad Gloriam Dei

## To the Glory of God



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