

Key Stage 3 Year 9 Curriculum Overview - Art

Curriculum Intent

The Year 9 Art curriculum is designed to consolidate and extend students' creative, technical and critical skills as they transition towards Key Stage 4. It builds upon prior learning at Key Stage 3 and prepares students for the increased independence, refinement and conceptual thinking required at GCSE level.

Our intent is to develop confident, independent and reflective artists who:

- Demonstrate increasing control and refinement in drawing, painting, mixed media and 3D processes
- Understand how to develop and sustain ideas through investigation, experimentation and annotation
- Analyse and evaluate the work of artists, craftspeople and designers, making informed connections to their own practice
- Take creative risks and respond thoughtfully to feedback
- Develop personal responses that communicate meaning, intention and individuality

Throughout Year 9, students explore a range of historical and contemporary artists from diverse cultures and backgrounds, enabling students to broaden their cultural capital and understand art as a vehicle for identity, social commentary and innovation.

The curriculum is sequenced to ensure progression in four key strands:

1. **Developing Ideas** – Researching, investigating and generating meaningful concepts
2. **Refining Skills** – Mastering materials, techniques and processes
3. **Recording Observations** – Strengthening observational drawing and visual analysis
4. **Presenting Outcomes** – Creating resolved, personal and ambitious final pieces

Literacy and oracy are embedded through structured critique, subject-specific vocabulary, and analytical writing about artists' work. Students are encouraged to articulate their intentions clearly and justify their creative decisions.

By the end of Year 9, students will have produced a body of work that demonstrates technical competence, creative exploration and personal engagement. They will be equipped with the resilience, independence and artistic confidence necessary to successfully embark on GCSE Art and Design.

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

Autumn	Title of unit: Edible Duration: Approx. 12–14 Weeks Main focus: Observational drawing, colour theory, mixed media, artist research, and refining techniques. Aim: To produce a personal portfolio of work, including a final, large-scale, high-quality piece. By the end of this unit students will have learned: Formal elements focus – Line, shape, form, space, texture, tone, colour Advanced Techniques and Skills: Drawing: Observational Drawing: Accuracy, proportion, and perspective. Tonal Modelling: Creating 3D form using highlights, mid-tones, and shadows. Colour Theory: Using complementary or harmonious colours to create mood. Mixed Media: Combining materials (collage, ink and watercolour). Materials and Processes: Still life – Primary observation: Continuous line drawings, gestural drawings, and tonal gradients. Photography: Take high-quality photos of food arrangements, focusing on lighting and angles to use as reference material. Artist Study: Research artists who use food as inspiration: Sarah Graham: Hyperrealist painter (sweets, toys). Wayne Thiebaud: Pop Art style (cakes, pies). Paul Cézanne: Traditional, structured still life. Tjalf Sparnaay: Hyperrealism. Yayoi Kusama (patterns/sculpture). Creative Development: Media Experimentation: Test different materials based on artist research (watercolours, oil pastels, fine liner). Technique Development: Explore techniques such as: Mark-making: Creating texture (e.g., the skin of a fruit, wrapper plastic). Colour Mixing: Using vibrant/unnatural colours (Pop Art) or realistic tones. Development of Ideas: Refine compositions, focusing on creating a personal, creative response. Conceptual Depth: Using food as a symbol for identity, culture, or environmental issues.
Evidence of learning	Students demonstrate progress through a mixture of practical and theoretical outputs: Sketchbook Development: Recording primary and secondary source observations of still life, food textures, forms, and colours using varied media (charcoal, watercolour, oil pastel). Artist Analysis: Written and visual evaluations of artists who use food as a medium or subject. 2D Final Outcome: Producing a large-scale, personal, exhibition-quality final piece (e.g. A2 canvas or painting). 3D Outcome: A realised sculptural piece made from found materials showing mastery of 3D construction and refined material handling. Self-Evaluation: Critical reflection on the creative process, technical challenges and how final pieces met initial intentions.
Links to prior learning	The project revisits and advances foundational skills established earlier in KS3: Formal Elements: Building on Year 7/8 knowledge of line, tone, colour, and texture applied to complex organic shapes. Observational Drawing: Advancing from basic still life to detailed studies of proportion and surface detail in food.

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

	Painting: Advancing from basic colour theory and water-based paint 3D Modelling: Reapplying techniques from previous sculpture to the unique properties of edible or perishable media. Conceptual Depth: Moving from literal representation to using food as a symbol for identity, culture, or environmental issues.
Links to future learning	Transition toward more independent GCSE Art studies GCSE Coursework Preparation: Developing a portfolio that meets Assessment Objectives (AOs), specifically AO1 (Artist Research) and AO2 (Experimentation). Specialised Disciplines: Laying groundwork for future studies in Food Preparation and Nutrition (sensory analysis, food properties) or Product Design (iterative modelling, consumer appeal).
Careers links	Food Stylist: Designing and arranging food for professional photography in advertising and media. Cake Decorator/Confectioner: Combining sculptural skills with culinary arts for bespoke events. Food Photographer: Collaborating with stylists to create enticing visual content for cookbooks or social media. Product Designer/Chef: Developing innovative dining experiences through molecular gastronomy or restaurant design.
Protected characteristics	Religion or Belief: Exploring dietary laws (e.g., Halal, Kosher) and how religious festivals (Eid, Diwali, Passover) use edible art as a form of cultural expression. Race & Culture: Studying diverse culinary traditions and global food artists to celebrate multicultural identities. Disability: Ensuring practical tasks are accessible through reasonable adjustments, such as modified tools or alternative media for students with sensory or motor difficulties. Sex & Gender: Challenging stereotypes in the culinary and art worlds by highlighting a diverse range of male, female, and non-binary practitioners.
Spring	Title of unit: Natural environment Duration: Approx. 10- 12 weeks Main focus: Students explore the natural environment through observation, experimentation, and personal interpretation. They investigate artists who respond to nature in diverse ways, from realism to abstraction and environmental art, before producing a final piece that communicates their own viewpoint. Aim: To produce a personal portfolio of work, including a final, large-scale, high-quality piece. By the end of this unit students will have learned: Formal elements focus – Line, shape, form, space, texture, tone, colour Advanced Techniques and Skills: Observational drawing- line, proportion, tone, texture, detail. Colour theory- paint handling, composition, scale, colour blending. Materials and Processes: Observational Drawing Development - Tonal studies of natural forms (pencil + biro). Focus on texture (bark, water, petals, rock). Introduce shading techniques (cross-hatching, blending, stippling). Experimental Media Workshops - Rotation of techniques: Watercolour landscapes, Mono-printing natural textures, Ink and bleach experiments, Collage using recycled/natural materials

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

	Artist Study: David Hockney – expressive landscapes and colour, Georgia O’Keeffe – close-up studies of natural forms, Claude Monet – light, colour and atmosphere in landscapes, Andy Goldsworthy – land art and natural materials, Ernst Haeckel – detailed scientific drawings of natural forms. Creative Development: Risk-taking, experimentation. Developing ideas, annotation. Students create a sustained final outcome in their chosen medium. Conceptual Depth: Environmental Art & Concept - Discuss environmental issues (climate change, pollution, biodiversity), Create concept sketches linking art and message, Annotation explaining intentions
Evidence of learning	Students will demonstrate progress through: Sketchbook Development - Observational drawings showing accurate proportion, tone and texture, Refinement of ideas through annotation and teacher feedback, Artist research and analysis, Material experimentation pages (paint, print, mixed media) Practical Outcomes- Sustained observational study from primary sources, Experimental pieces demonstrating risk-taking, A final outcome that: Shows clear artist influence Communicates a personal response to the natural environment Demonstrates control of materials and composition Oracy & Evaluation- Participation in peer critiques, Use of subject-specific vocabulary (composition, tone, texture, atmosphere), Written evaluation reflecting on strengths and areas for development
Links to prior learning	Links to Prior Learning This unit builds on knowledge and skills developed in: KS2 Art: Basic observational drawing and colour mixing Year 7: Formal elements (line, tone, shape, form, colour, texture) Year 8: Artist analysis, annotation skills, composition planning Previous media workshops (acrylic, watercolour, pencil techniques) Students consolidate technical foundations while increasing independence and conceptual thinking.
Links to future learning	Links to Future Learning This project supports transition into: GCSE Art & Design - Sustained project structure aligned to AO1–AO4, Independent research and contextual understanding, Development, experimentation and refinement, Personal and meaningful final outcomes Skills for KS4 and Beyond - Critical thinking and visual analysis, Confidence in presenting ideas, Creative problem solving, Thematic exploration (environment, sustainability, identity), The emphasis on process, experimentation and refinement mirrors GCSE coursework expectations.
Careers links	Careers Links - This scheme introduces pathways within both creative and environmental sectors. Creative Careers- Fine Artist, Illustrator (e.g., botanical or natural history), Landscape Architect, Exhibition Designer, Gallery Curator

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

	Environmental & Science-Based Roles- Conservation Officer, Environmental Campaign Designer, Scientific Illustrator (linked to figures such as Ernst Haeckel), Sustainability Consultant Digital & Media Industries- Game Environment Designer, Concept Artist, Digital Landscape Design, Students understand how art connects to sustainability, design industries and global environmental issues.
Protected characteristics	Protected Characteristics Representation- Inclusion of female artist Georgia O’Keeffe, Study of contemporary British artist David Hockney, Exploration of global perspectives on nature and landscape Inclusive Teaching Strategies- Differentiated tasks and scaffolded drawing support, Flexible final outcomes to allow personal expression, Multiple media options to support diverse strengths Cultural & Social Awareness- Exploration of how different cultures interpret the natural world, Discussion of environmental responsibility and global sustainability Respectful critique and valuing diverse viewpoints Accessibility- Adapted resources for SEND learners, Structured modelling and visual exemplars, Extension tasks for higher prior attainers
Summer	Title of unit: Constructed environment Duration: 10-12 weeks Main focus: Students focus on the man-made world, local architecture, urban landscapes, and structural forms. Students will develop skills in perspective, scale, technical drawing, 3D construction, and mixed-media. Aim: To produce a personal portfolio of work, including a final, large-scale, high-quality piece. By the end of this unit students will have learned: Formal elements focus – Line, shape, form, space, texture, tone, colour Advanced Techniques and Skills: Photography: Students photograph local buildings, derelict sites, bridges, or modern architecture, focusing on angles, textures, and line. Drawing Skills: Ability to use perspective, grid methods, and line to record urban structures. Perspective Drawing: Introduction to one-point and two-point perspective drawing of urban scenes. Analytical Drawing: Using fine-liner, pencil, and ink to record structural details, focusing on accuracy. Digital Editing: Using photo software to manipulate urban images, exploring themes of decay or future cities. Materials and Processes: Material Exploration: Working with cardboard, wire, plaster, ink, and digital media. Texture Studies: Rubbings, pen, and wash to record materials like brick, concrete, and metal. Cardboard Construction: Creating 3D models or reliefs, focusing on shape and form. Mixed Media/Collage: Layering photography with printmaking (e.g., poly-printing) or drawing to show structural layers.

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

	Development: Creating a final outcome (e.g., a large-scale drawing, a detailed 3D structure, or a series of paintings) based on the "4 Rs" (Research, Recording, Refinement, Responding). Connection to Artists: Ensuring the final piece shows a clear, personal connection to the artists studied in Phase 2. Evaluation: A final written reflection on the project's success, process, and final outcome. Artist Study: Lee Bul, Stephen Wiltshire, Barbara Hepworth, Hundertwasser, Zaha Hadid, Bernd and Hilla Becher. Creative Development: Development of Ideas: Refine compositions, focusing on creating a personal, creative response. Critical Analysis: Analyze how these artists communicate ideas about urban living, structure, and decay. Conceptual Depth:
Evidence of learning	Students will demonstrate progress through practical work, sketchbooks, discussion, and written reflection. Evidence will include: Observational Drawings – Accurate one-point and two-point perspective drawings of buildings and urban spaces, showing understanding of proportion, scale, and depth. Photography & Visual Recording – A series of primary source photographs exploring line, texture, pattern, and structure in the local environment. Artist Research & Annotation – Analytical studies referencing artists such as Stephen Wiltshire, Zaha Hadid, Lee Bul, and Friedensreich Hundertwasser, demonstrating understanding of context and visual language. Material Experimentation – Trials using cardboard construction, collage, printmaking, pen and wash, and/or digital editing to explore structure and surface. Development Work – Refinement of ideas based on feedback, showing clear progression from initial concept to final design. Final Outcome – A sustained personal response (2D, 3D, or mixed media) linked clearly to research and experimentation. Evaluation – A written or verbal reflection assessing strengths, challenges, and future improvements using subject-specific vocabulary. Progress will be measured against GCSE-style Assessment Objectives to prepare students for KS4.
Links to prior learning	This scheme builds upon Key Stage 3 foundations, including: Formal Elements – Line, tone, texture, form, and composition explored in earlier projects (e.g., Natural Forms, Portraiture, Landscapes). Observational Drawing Skills – Shading, proportion, and recording from direct observation. Colour Theory – Understanding harmony, contrast, and mood. 3D Processes – Previous experience with clay, cardboard, or relief techniques. Artist Analysis Skills – Basic annotation and discussion of meaning and style. Students extend these skills through more technical drawing methods (perspective), architectural concepts, and sustained independent development.

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

Links to future learning	Links to Future Learning This project prepares students for: GCSE Art & Design – Developing work across the four Assessment Objectives (research, refine, record, present). Externally Set Assignment (ESA) – Building independence in developing a personal response to a theme. A-Level Art & Design – Strengthening analytical writing, conceptual thinking, and ambitious outcomes. Specialist pathways such as Fine Art, Graphic Communication, 3D Design, Photography, and Architecture-related studies. The emphasis on critical thinking, experimentation, and refinement supports long-term creative confidence and resilience.
Careers links	Careers Links The Built Environment theme introduces a wide range of creative and technical career pathways: Architecture & Urban Design – Inspired by architects such as Zaha Hadid. Architectural Illustration – Linked to detailed cityscapes like those by Stephen Wiltshire. Sculpture & Installation Art – Exploring structural forms similar to Lee Bul. Civil & Structural Engineering – Applying understanding of materials and construction. Interior & Set Design – Designing built spaces for theatre, film, or events. Game & Concept Art Design – Creating imagined cities and environments. Urban Planning & Environmental Design – Considering sustainability and community impact. Discussion of pathways may include GCSE options, A-Level study, apprenticeships, university routes, and creative industry careers.
Protected characteristics	Protected Characteristics (Equality, Diversity & Inclusion) This scheme supports equality and inclusion in line with the Equality Act 2010 by: Representation of Diverse Practitioners – Studying artists and architects from different genders, cultures, and backgrounds, including Zaha Hadid and Lee Bul. Cultural Awareness – Exploring global architecture styles, housing issues, and urban diversity. Student Voice & Identity – Encouraging students to respond to their own local environments and lived experiences. Accessibility & SEND Support – Differentiated perspective guides, scaffolds, visual examples, adaptive tools, and flexible outcomes (2D, 3D, or digital). Discussion of Social Themes – Considering housing inequality, sustainability, and community identity in a respectful and age-appropriate way. The scheme promotes respect, empathy, and appreciation of different environments and communities while ensuring all learners can access and succeed in the curriculum.
Reading in the curriculum (Literacy & Vocabulary) Opportunities to develop and enhance reading in Art include - Reading (LO, SC, keywords) aloud to class. Subject specific vocabulary shared, follow me tasks, researching and reading about artists we are studying, peer marking, displays to support projects, art library.	

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

Safeguarding including safety in the curriculum

Safeguarding students in art lessons involves several key practices. Firstly, ensure the classroom is equipped with proper ventilation and safety equipment like aprons, first aid kit and washing facilities. We teach students how to handle tools and materials correctly, emphasizing safe practices with items like scissors, knives, paint, adhesives and clay. We supervise activities closely, providing clear instructions and demonstrations. Additionally, we implement a no-running policy to prevent accidents and regularly inspect and maintain equipment to ensure it is in good condition. Within the art department we foster an inclusive and respectful environment, addressing any issues promptly. This comprehensive approach ensures a safe and supportive art education experience.

Values across the curriculum

The art curriculum promotes and develops many of our Holywell values regularly - Equality, Courage, Responsibility, Resilience, Self- worth and Self-Regulation, Respect, Joy and Peace. Each project has a focus on two or three other values. These are woven into individual lesson plans to promote our values further.

Spirituality in the curriculum

The art curriculum explores artists and themes that develop an understanding and belief that art is bigger than us in the classroom.

Art is ... everywhere for everyone! Art is creation, innovation, expression, emotional, empathetic. Art is design, music, poetry and history. Art is yours.

We explore why artists create - Personal, religious and political belief. Wars, conflicts, and consumerism. Through personal experiences, struggles, expression and representation. Artists examine their own beliefs and try to make sense of the current moment.

The art curriculum allows us to explore ourselves, others and the world with wonder and creativity and art can shape how we live our lives. It develops key life skills (see below) that are transferable across the curriculum.

Art develops a sense of awe and wonder- Seeing beauty in the mundane. Noticing patterns, colours in nature and design.

Pupils work in a calm, caring, stimulating and inspiring environment and produce work for meaning and enjoyment.

How we track your progress

[Summary for parents on how the students' progress is measured](#)

Linking to the progress descriptors all students' progress is tracked through the work they produce and contribute to in class, homework, end of unit assessments and in class assessments/quizzes.

Parents/Carers can support their child by:

Sharing your artistic preferences with your child, going to art galleries, supporting your child in creating art at home and encouraging your child to attend an extra-curricular art club.

The following websites are useful for supporting your child with KS3 curriculum Art.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/z8tnvcw>

<https://www.tate.org.uk/kids>

<https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/>

<https://www.theartstory.org/>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/>

Holywell School Curriculum Overview

Sustainability within the subject Looking at artists who use natural materials to create art. Year 8 Fast fashion- consumerism and demand. Our ocean project- Plastic rubbish Recycling old books and magazines into art Reusing scrap paper Recycling bins in room		
Transferable life skills developed through art Creativity Observation Self-expression Focus and Discipline Patience and Perseverance Collaboration Risk taking Imagination Curiosity		

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/sweet-dreams-food-in-art-project-ks3-art-and-design-14-16-weeks-13330777#:~:text=pptx%2C%2013.42%20MB-,Sweet%20Dreams%20%E2%80%93%20Food%20in%20Art%20Project%20%7C%20KS3%20Art%20&%20Design,editable%2C%20flexible%2C%20and%20classroom%20tested>

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/abstract-still-life-painting-scheme-of-work-12219376>

<https://theartyteacher.com/downloads/cezanne-unit-of-work/>