Design & Technology Policy

Staff Responsible:	**Mrs Sarah Dixon**
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Teaching and Learning in Design & Technology

Subject Identity: Design & Technology

Fingerprint Statement

DT is a subject that focuses on purposeful design, making and evaluating, enabling pupils to develop problem-solving and innovation skills. Throughout lessons, children can apply technical skills and practical knowledge. Children will be involved in iterative design: planning, making, testing and refining as they go. DT also links creativity with real – world needs and constraints.

Core Concepts and Themes

DT is rooted in purposeful creativity and solving real – world problems through design and making.

The key concepts are:

- **Design** – identifying needs and generating purposeful ideas
- **Making** – creating functional products with skill and care
- **Evaluating** – testing, refining and improving solutions
- **Technical Knowledge** – understanding materials, structures and systems
- **Innovation and Impact** – how design choices affect users and society

Together, these concepts support pupils in developing an understanding of designing, making and evaluating purposeful and functional products.

Disciplinary Ways of Thinking

These foundations are brought together through design thinking, which represents the disciplinary approach of Design and Technology. Pupils are taught to understand and shape the made world by applying the key ways of thinking and working that designers, engineers and innovators use.

Design and Technology develops pupils as designers through purposeful problem-solving, making and evaluation. Through an iterative problem-solving process, pupils move from identifying a need, to generating ideas, creating prototypes, and evaluating outcomes. This cycle enables them to refine and improve designs in response to users, functions and contexts.

This includes:

- Identifying needs, opportunities and design criteria
- Generating and communicating creative ideas
- Developing, making and testing prototypes
- Evaluating products against intended purposes and user needs
- Applying technical knowledge, materials and processes to solve problems
- Reflecting on and refining designs through iteration

Through this approach, Design and Technology enables pupils to think critically and creatively about the products, systems and technologies that shape everyday life, supporting them to design innovative solutions, make informed decisions and improve outcomes through continuous evaluation and refinement.

Teaching and Learning Documentation

To ensure clarity, consistency and effective communication across all subject areas, key documentation is developed by the Subject Leader and shared with relevant teaching staff. This documentation includes:

1. **Subject Policy**
2. **Curriculum Rationale**
3. **Unit of Study Overview**
4. **Knowledge and Skills Overview**
5. **Working Plan**

Collectively, these documents outline the intent, coverage and implementation of each wider curriculum subject, supporting high-quality teaching and ensuring a coherent and progressive learning experience for all pupils.

Subject Leadership and Monitoring

Subject Leaders are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their subject throughout the academic year. To ensure this is carried out systematically and with impact, the following key documentation is maintained and reviewed regularly:

1. **Subject Audit**
   An annual audit is completed to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the subject. This includes a RAG rating to identify strengths and areas for development, and to inform priorities for the year ahead.
2. **Subject Action Plan**
   A focused three-point action plan is developed, informed by both the School Development Plan and outcomes from the subject audit. This outlines clear next steps to support ongoing improvement and raise standards within the subject.
3. **Learning Enquiry**
   As part of the school's monitoring cycle, the Learning Enquiry process ensures a robust evaluation of the subject. This includes a range of activities such as book looks, learning walks, planning and resource checks, pupil voice and staff voice. Findings are collated, shared with relevant staff, and used to inform subsequent actions and next steps.

Delivery of Design & Technology

Our curriculum is structured to create purposeful links between subject areas within *The Arts* and *The Humanities*. The following pairings are in place:

- Art & Design and Geography
- History and Design & Technology

This approach ensures that each year group studies one 'Arts' subject alongside one 'Humanities' subject for a block, before alternating to the complementary pairing in the following block. As a result, pupils experience three focused blocks of learning in each subject across the academic year.

The specific structure of delivery varies between year groups to ensure that all subjects are taught at different points across the academy throughout the academic year. This staggered approach supports effective curriculum coverage, resource management and subject leadership oversight.

Lesson Content

To support the development of a secure foundation in DT, key lesson components have been established alongside teaching proformas to ensure consistency and clarity in delivery across all classes.

These components include:

- **"What is DT?" statement**
  At the start of each lesson, pupils are reminded of the definition of the subject: "Design and Technology gives us the opportunity to develop skills, knowledge and understanding of designing and making functional products." This ensures a shared understanding of the discipline.
- **Sequence of lessons –** To support the understanding of the DT process, each lesson will be shown in the full sequence of the unit and highlighted to show which lesson the class are up too – 1. Research, 2. Design, 3. Skills lesson, 4. Make, 5. Evaluate, 6. Edit and improve original product. Children should be carrying out mini evaluations throughout the whole process.
- **Reference to skills of a Technician –** Children are reminded of key skills that are commonly used in this subject area i.e. researching, designing, making and evaluating.
- **Key vocabulary**
  Carefully selected, subject-specific vocabulary is introduced, discussed and clarified within each lesson. Teachers facilitate purposeful talk to ensure pupils can confidently use and apply this terminology.
- **Teaching Toolkit strategies**
  High-quality teaching is underpinned by the effective use of agreed Teaching Toolkit strategies. These include modelling, retrieval practice, adaptive teaching, precise assessment and opportunities for purposeful reflection, all of which support strong learning outcomes.

Performance and Learning Evidence

The systematic collation of evidence is essential in supporting pupils' learning and enabling effective monitoring of teaching and learning by subject leaders and senior leaders. To ensure DT learning is captured consistently and meaningfully across the school, the following approaches are in place:

- **Reception** – Curriculum floorbooks are used to capture shared learning experiences, discussions and outcomes throughout Play 2 Learn sessions.
- **Key Stage 1 (Years 1–2)** – A combination of Team DT floorbooks and Earwig is used to document both collaborative and individual learning.
- **Key Stage 2 (Years 3–6)** – Individual DT portfolios booklets are used alongside Earwig to provide a comprehensive record of pupils' knowledge, skills and progression over time.

Please note: *Earwig is an online platform used to capture and store evidence of learning, including class discussions, activities and outcomes. It supports the documentation of pupils' developing knowledge and skills across the curriculum.*

Assessment

In line with the school's Marking and Feedback Policy, adults are expected to use ongoing formative assessment throughout the learning sequence. This ensures teaching is proactive and responsive to the needs of all pupils. Feedback may be delivered verbally or in written form and should support pupils in making progress within the lesson and over time.

Throughout each unit of DT, assessment comes from photographic evidence from the live work taking place, skills carried out and the result of the final product created. It will also come from the children's self-evaluations of their purposeful product – how successful or unsuccessful it was and how they can critically assess their own skills. This will all inform and support the teacher's assessment of learning over performance.

Pupils identified as 'working below' National Curriculum expectations are recorded within the Wider Curriculum Assessment grids, alongside a brief commentary to support the identification and monitoring of gaps in learning across the curriculum.