

Visual Arts Plan

St Josephs NS, Kilcock

1. Introduction

This Visual Arts Plan for St. Joseph's National School has been developed collaboratively by the Principal and teaching staff. It provides a whole-school framework to support high-quality teaching and learning in Visual Arts and reflects the ethos, context and priorities of the school community.

The plan is informed by the **Primary School Curriculum**, the **Primary Curriculum Framework**, and current guidance from the **Department of Education** and the **National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)**. It supports a balanced, creative and inclusive approach to Visual Arts education while allowing flexibility for teachers to respond to children's interests, abilities and local opportunities.

This plan is available to staff, the Board of Management, parents and other interested members of the school community and will be reviewed regularly as part of the school's School Self-Evaluation (SSE) process.

2. Rationale

St. Joseph's NS recognises the uniqueness of each child and the importance of nurturing creativity, imagination and self-expression. Visual Arts plays a central role in supporting children's emotional, social, cultural and cognitive development.

A high-quality Visual Arts programme provides opportunities for children to explore, investigate, invent, design and make using a wide range of materials and processes. It develops children's ability to observe, interpret and respond to the visual world, while fostering confidence, curiosity, creative thinking and aesthetic awareness.

3. Aims

Through engagement with a broad and balanced Visual Arts programme, the school aims to enable each child to:

1. Develop creativity, imagination and confidence through the process of making visual art.
2. Explore and use the elements of art in meaningful and age-appropriate ways.
3. Develop skills, techniques and understanding across a range of media and materials.
4. Express personal ideas, experiences, observations and feelings visually.
5. Look at, respond to and appreciate visual art from a variety of cultures, times and contexts.

4. Objectives

1. In every class in our school the children will be given opportunities to explore and experiment with:
 - A variety of drawing tools
 - Paint and colour materials
 - Printing materials
 - Natural clay and other modelling materials
 - Construction materials
 - Fabrics and fibres
 - Learning the techniques as outlined in the curriculum
2. In every class they will be afforded opportunities to visually represent their experiences, their observations and their imaginary worlds using all of these materials.
3. In every class they will be afforded opportunities to plan their own work, to execute their own work, to discuss their own work and to display it for a variety of audiences through talk, discussion and brainstorming activities.
4. In every class they will be given opportunities to look at and respond to art/art images from a variety of times, places, cultures, and genres- through oral language, images and writing.

5. Content

Our Visual Arts Curriculum is divided into six 'strands' or sections recommended in the Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum. These six strands are:

1. Drawing
2. Paint and Colour
3. Print
4. Clay
5. Construction
6. Fabric and Fibre

The children will experience all six strands in each school year. Each strand's activities are interrelated and involve perceiving and exploring the visual world and making art and looking and responding to the visual world and works of art. This results in the *Making Art* and *Looking and Responding* structure in each strand.

These activities are informed on by the Art elements: *line, shape, form, colour and tone, pattern and rhythm, texture and spatial organisation*. In choosing thematic content, it is advised to draw on the children's experience, imagination, observation and curiosity.

6. Methodologies and Approaches

Teaching and learning in Visual Arts is based on a **guided discovery approach**, which:

- Encourages exploration and experimentation with a range of media and materials
- Supports children in developing their own artistic interpretations
- Develops observation and visual awareness
- Promotes discussion, reflection and response to artwork

Teachers take account of children's stages of artistic development and provide appropriate challenge and support. Emphasis is placed on **process rather than product**, valuing experimentation, risk-taking and progression over time.

Children are encouraged to make choices, collaborate with others, reflect on their work and articulate their ideas. Exposure to artwork from a wide range of cultures, traditions and time periods is central to developing visual literacy.

7. Core Artist and Local Art Experiences

To support progression in **Looking and Responding**, the school has identified a core range of artists and local visual culture experiences for each class level (Appendices 1 and 2).

These provide minimum agreed experiences to ensure breadth and continuity across the school. Teachers may explore additional artists and local art opportunities, provided progression across class levels is respected. Artists are explored through materials, techniques, themes and ideas rather than imitation of finished work.

8. Strand Plans (Refer to Appendices 3 - 8 for detailed plans)

Drawing

Children in all classes will have opportunities to:

- Explore a variety of drawing tools and surfaces
- Draw from experience, observation and imagination
- Develop awareness of the elements of art through drawing
- Talk about and respond to their own drawings and those of others
- Look at and respond to drawings by artists

Progression is supported through increasing variety in tools, materials, subject matter and complexity of ideas, appropriate to each class level.

Paint and Colour

Children will be provided with opportunities to:

- Explore and experiment with a range of paint and colour materials
- Work on a variety of surfaces
- Use colour to represent ideas, experiences and observations
- Explore colour mixing, pattern, texture and abstract approaches
- Look at and respond to how artists use paint and colour

Primary colours, black and white are emphasised to support colour mixing and understanding. Paint and colour activities are integrated across other strands where appropriate.

Print

Children will have opportunities to:

- Explore a variety of print-making tools and techniques
- Use printing to represent experiences, observations and imagination
- Develop understanding of pattern, repetition and design
- Look at and respond to prints in the environment and the work of artists

Print-making techniques become progressively more complex as children move through the school, building on prior experience.

Clay

Children will be provided with opportunities to:

- Experiment with natural clay and other modelling materials
- Explore form, texture and structure
- Use clay to represent ideas, experiences and observations
- Develop pottery and construction techniques appropriate to their stage
- Look at and respond to ceramic and sculptural work

Construction

Children will have opportunities to:

- Explore a wide range of construction materials
- Create imaginative and representational structures
- Work collaboratively on construction projects
- Look at and respond to natural, built and sculptural constructions

Construction activities support problem-solving, spatial awareness and creativity.

Fabric and Fibre

Children will be provided with opportunities to:

- Explore and manipulate a variety of fabrics and fibres
- Change and create fabric surfaces
- Construct with fabric and fibres
- Use textiles to represent ideas, experiences and imagination
- Look at and respond to textile art and design

Skills and techniques progress from simple exploration to more complex textile processes as children advance through the school.

9. Classroom Planning

Each class teacher will be responsible for designing a yearly programme that ensures that each child in his/her care regularly experiences art activities using a variety of materials outlined above. To ensure this, each teacher may decide to plan to explore a particular theme each term and different aspects of this theme will be explored using a different material. The yearly programme must ensure that the child covers all strands of The Arts Curriculum.

On occasion, seasonal and festival themes will be explored using a variety of art materials.

10. Managing Art Resources

Each class teacher will ensure that her/his classroom is equipped with the basic art materials as follows:

- Basic drawing tools.
- A variety of papers and card.
- Paint in the primary colours.
- Paint palettes and colour mixing trays.
- A supply of good quality paint brushes.
- Scissors, glue and glue sticks.

A central store of other art materials for shared use among all teachers will be available and managed by postholder

These materials will include:

- Printing ink and printing rollers.
- Clay tools and clay boards.
- Fabric scissors and shears.
- Shared fabrics such as Hessian.

11. Timetable

In every class in our school, each child will receive a minimum of one hour of Visual Arts Education per week. The breadth of the subject and its practical nature should also be taken into account when allocating time. Blocked time for project work, for integrated studies or for exploring a particular aspect of the programme may sometimes be an efficient way of managing time. Teachers who wish to use some discretionary time in which to extend the one-hour period allotted to Visual Arts may do so as required.

12. Display

Each class should have access to display boards/areas in their classroom and in the greater school area, e.g. along the corridors. Every child should have his work displayed regularly during the year and discussion of art displays should be viewed as part of the Visual Arts Programme. When opportunity allows, children's artwork should be displayed in the greater community or on the front monitor.

13. Children with Additional Educational Needs

We acknowledge that each individual child has particular needs and all are at different stages of their personal development. We also recognise that some children with special needs may function at a younger stage to their peers. Children with co-ordination problems may have particular difficulties with grip and control of certain media such as scissors. Every attempt, often with the valued assistance of additional staff (SNA), will be made to ensure that every child's experience of the Visual Arts Curriculum is maximised.

Equality of Participation and Access

We promote the needs of all pupils regardless of ability, culture, gender or aptitude. Quality work to the best of the children's ability is the target for everyone. Every child will have access to all Visual Art activities provided by the school and lack of financial resources on behalf of the child will not hinder their participation.

14. Linkage and Integration

Every attempt will be made to link the various strands of the Visual Arts Curriculum and to integrate the other subject areas with Visual Arts, where appropriate. This will be facilitated by each teacher planning their yearly scheme in Visual Arts using a thematic approach.

English (Story, Poetry, Oral Language): Clay, Looking and Responding.

Gaeilge, English, History, Geography, Music: Drawing, Paint and Colour, Print.

Maths (2D and 3D Constructions; Shape and Space): Construction, Print.

History, Geography: Looking and responding to the work of artists, examples of local architecture.

Drama: Fabric and Fibre (costume design, puppets), Construction (dioramas)

15. Staff Development

Teachers have access to reference books, resource materials, shared art and computer equipment. All staff members are encouraged to suggest additional resources which may be required, review new resources or bring new methodologies to the attention of staff. Teachers are encouraged to attend in-service courses and to share the expertise acquired at these courses. When needed, time is allocated at staff meetings to discuss aspects of the Visual Arts Curriculum. Teachers work together to maximise children's learning e.g. teachers sharing the teaching of the Visual Arts Curriculum and other subject areas or other aspects of the Visual Arts Curriculum.

16. Communication to Parents

Parents will be kept informed about projects/tours in which the children may be involved and about children's usage of the internet and computer for the Visual Arts, through emails home and/or the school newsletter. Requests may be made of parents for the collection of junk materials and fabric scraps which can be used during the art class. Parents with particular expertise in any area of the Visual Arts Curriculum (artists, architects, photographers, fashion designers), and who would like to be involved in visual art activities or contribute their knowledge/skills will always be welcomed by the staff.

17. Use of ICT

Information and communication technology may be integrated with Visual Arts through the use of ICT. Software programmes are available as well as websites dedicated to famous artists, educational art resources, professional development and links to famous art galleries for virtual tours.

18. Local Opportunities

Every effort will be made to link the Visual Arts Curriculum with local places of interest, pieces of architecture, art galleries and community arts initiatives. **Third Class** will visit Kilcock Gallery each year. Appendix 2 lists local sites in Kilcock that each class must visit each year and below are some other ideas:

- Looking and responding to local examples of Architecture and/or sculpture: Maynooth Castle, Trim Castle, St. Coca's Church, Kilcock, Castletown House (Celbridge), Kildare County Council Offices (Naas).
- Visits to Art Galleries: Kilcock Art Gallery, Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), National Gallery and the National Museum of Ireland (Collins Barracks).
- Participating in Local Arts Programmes such as the 'I Am an Artist' Initiative operated by Kildare County Council.
- Inviting local artists to come to the school and discuss their art with the children.

- Integrating the Visual Arts Programme with school drama performances at Christmas, Saint Patrick's Day Parade, First Holy Communion and Confirmation Ceremonies, Green Schools Programme and other school projects that arise.

19. School Policy on Art Competitions

It is Saint Joseph's NS school policy that it will **not participate** in art competitions or colouring competitions which are **commercially driven** and which seek to promote a particular product or service by a company.

20. Health and Safety

All teachers should follow the safety guidelines set out in the school's Health and Safety Policy. Care and attention should be given to the following:

- Art materials used should be non-toxic including fungicide free wallpaper paste.
- Structured skills development in the correct use of scissors and strict supervision when using cutting and clay tools.
- Sharp fabric shears or craft knives should only be used by the class teacher.
- Access to and transport of art equipment.
- Amount of space for children to engage in art activities.
- Hidden dangers if children are moving around the classroom.
- Ventilation of the classrooms.

21. Roles and Responsibilities

The principal and the leadership team will co-ordinate the progress of the Visual Arts Plan and encourage and accept feedback on its implementation. All teachers will be invited and encouraged to inform the Leadership Team of any amendments they think should be made to the policy. Each teacher is responsible for implementing this policy with his/her own class.

Ratification and Communication

Parents and staff are welcome to view this policy prior to ratification by the BOM on 5/2/26

Adopted by BOM on 5/02/26.

Chairperson BOM: [Signature]

Review Date: 2028

Appendix 1

<u>Class</u>	<u>Artist</u>	<u>Links</u>
Junior Infants	Matisse	https://www.tate.org.uk/kids/explore/who-is/who-henri-matisse
	Fiona Roche	http://www.fionarocheartist.ie/
Senior Infants	Andy Goldsworthy	http://www.artnet.com/artists/andy-goldsworthy/
	Eoin O'Connor	https://eoinoconnor.com/
First Class	Kandinsky	https://www.wassilykandinsky.net/
	Audrey Hamilton	https://www.audreyhamiltonart.com/
Second Class	Van Gogh	https://www.vangoghgallery.com/
	Carla Daly	http://www.carladalyart.ie/
Third Class	Picasso	https://www.pablopicasso.org/
	Philip Treacy	https://www.philiptreacy.co.uk/en
Fourth Class	Mondrian	https://www.piet-mondrian.org/
	Orla Kiely	https://orkiely.com/
Fifth Class	Andy Warhol	https://www.tate.org.uk/kids/explore/who-is/who-andy-warhol
	Francis Bacon	https://www.francis-bacon.com/
Sixth Class	LS Lowry	https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/ls-lowry-1533
	Yeats	https://www.nationalgallery.ie/jack-b-yeats-1871-1957

Appendix 2

Local Art to be covered annually

Class	Local Art
Junior Infants	School Art, pebble dash
Senior Infants	School Art, leaf art
1 st Class	Canal Art
2 nd Class	Church Art (stained glass)
3 rd Class	Visit to Kilcock Gallery Square Shop Fronts *
4 th Class	Bridges in Kilcock - try to include the 4 parallel lines of road, rail, canal & river
5 th Class	Old graveyard near St. Coca's Church
6 th Class	Little Church over the Meath Bridge

Appendix 3 - Drawing

Strand Unit: Drawing	Infants	1st-2nd Class	3rd-4th Class	5th-6th Class
Exploration & Materials	Explore drawing using large crayons, chalks, fingers, sand	Use finer crayons, pencils, markers, charcoal pencils	Use compressed charcoal, chalk pastels	Use oil pastels, stick charcoal, inks, drawing pens
Drawing from Experience	Draw familiar people, objects and events	Draw personal experiences with increasing detail	Represent experiences with greater control and intention	Develop detailed, expressive drawings based on experience
Drawing from Observation	Observe and draw simple objects	Draw objects and environments with more awareness of shape	Observe proportion, detail and placement	Use observation to create accurate and expressive drawings
Imaginative Drawing	Create drawings from imagination	Develop imaginative ideas visually	Plan and develop imaginative compositions	Refine imaginative ideas using drawing as visual thinking
Looking & Responding	Talk about own drawings	Talk and write about own and others' drawings	Discuss drawings using visual language	Analyse and respond to drawings by peers and artists
Elements of Art	Explore line and shape	Explore line, shape, texture	Explore tone, pattern, proportion	Use line, tone, texture and composition deliberately

Appendix 4 – Paint & Colour

Strand Unit: Paint & Colour	Infants	1st–2nd Class	3rd–4th Class	5th–6th Class
Exploration of Materials	Explore paint using fingers and simple tools	Use brushes and alternative tools	Explore a wider range of paints and surfaces	Use a variety of paints including inks and specialist paints
Colour Mixing	Work mainly with primary colours, black and white	Begin mixing colours	Mix colours with increasing control	Use colour mixing intentionally and expressively
Techniques	Paint with fingers, found tools, wet paper	Try resist, simple collage and pattern work	Explore mono printing, collage, textured paint	Combine techniques: batik, fabric painting, advanced resist
Representational & Abstract Work	Paint experiences and imaginative ideas	Represent experiences and explore pattern	Balance representational and abstract work	Use paint to express ideas, mood and meaning
Looking & Responding	Talk about own work	Discuss work of peers	Respond to artists' use of colour	Analyse artists' techniques and colour choices
Elements of Art	Explore colour and texture	Develop awareness of colour and pattern	Explore tone and contrast	Use colour, tone and texture purposefully

Appendix 5 – Print

Strand Unit: Print	Infants	1st-2nd Class	3rd-4th Class	5th-6th Class
Exploration	Print with found and natural objects	Develop images using found objects	Create representational prints	Refine skills across a range of techniques
Techniques	Impressed prints, masks, fold-over printing	Relief printing, stencilling, rubbings	Mono printing, multiple stencils, transfers	Lino printing, silk screen, photograms
Pattern & Image	Explore pattern and repetition	Combine patterns to make images	Design posters and images	Design and produce complex prints
Materials & Surfaces	Print on paper	Combine printed papers	Print on varied surfaces	Print on fabric and mixed media
Looking & Responding	Talk about own prints	Respond to prints in environment	Discuss artists' prints	Analyse printmaking processes

Appendix 6 – Clay

Strand Unit: Clay	Infants	1st-2nd Class	3rd-4th Class	5th-6th Class
Exploration	Explore clay, playdough and marla	Make simple forms and figures	Develop more refined forms	Create detailed models and structures
Techniques	Pull, join, mark surfaces	Pinch and thumb pots, simple joining	Coil pots, scored and slipped joins	Slab pottery, supported structures
Form & Structure	Flat and standing forms	Low relief tiles	Theme-based structures	Human head and figure modelling
Decoration	Surface mark making	Incised decoration	Relief, colour and texture	Refined decorative techniques
Looking & Responding	Talk about own work	Discuss peers' work	Respond to pottery and ceramics	Analyse form and structure in ceramics

Appendix 7 – Construction

Strand Unit: Construction	Infants	1st-2nd Class	3rd-4th Class	5th-6th Class
Exploration	Free play with construction toys	Construct simple models	Build complex models	Design imaginative structures
Materials	Found materials, card	Dioramas, collage, mosaics	Papier maché, wire, wood	Paper sculpture, moving parts
Structures	Simple stabiles and masks	Representational models	Relief sculptures, mobiles	Functional and freestanding sculptures
Integration	Discuss local environment	Respond to buildings	Study architects	Integrate with Science and design
Looking & Responding	Talk about constructions	Discuss local structures	Respond to famous architects	Analyse sculpture and architecture

Appendix 8 – Fabric & Fibre

Strand Unit: Fabric & Fibre	Infants	1st-2nd Class	3rd-4th Class	5th-6th Class
Exploration	Sort, deconstruct and discuss fabrics	Weave, tie, knot and decorate	Use looms, knit and crochet	Combine advanced techniques
Techniques	Simple collage, dressing up	Stitching, weaving, puppetry	Appliqué, dyeing, printing	Batik, silkscreen, complex stitching
Construction	Simple fabric collages	Costumes and puppets	Soft toys and costume design	Tapestries, wall hangings
Surface Design	Explore texture	Draw, paint and print on fabric	Decorative stitching	Advanced colouring techniques
Integration & Response	Talk about clothing	Discuss materials	Integrate with Science	Explore fashion and history