

NEWTON BLUECOAT CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

ART & DESIGN CURRICULUM

Whole-School Overview 2026–27

EXPLORE • EXPERIMENT • CREATE • REFLECT

“Shine from the inside out”

Finding a voice through colour, line, texture, form, pattern and imagination.

Our Art & Design Vision

At Newton Bluecoat, Art & Design gives every child opportunities to observe, imagine, experiment, create and communicate. We want children to enjoy the visual arts, develop confidence in their own creative voice and understand that ideas grow through exploration, practice, reflection and refinement.

Our curriculum is predominantly skills-based and deliberately revisits techniques so that knowledge and control deepen over time.

Sketchbooks are central to this journey: they are working spaces where pupils can collect ideas, experiment, take creative risks, receive feedback and revisit or refine their thinking.

By the end of Year 6, our artists will...

- generate, record, develop and refine ideas confidently in sketchbooks;
- select and use a growing range of materials, tools and techniques with control and purpose;
- demonstrate increasing proficiency in drawing, painting, sculpture, collage, textiles and printing;
- use the visual language of line, colour, tone, texture, shape, form, pattern and space to communicate ideas;
- talk thoughtfully about their own work and the work of others using increasingly precise artistic vocabulary;
- know about a range of artists, craft makers, designers and artistic traditions from different times and cultures;
- make connections between artists' approaches and their own creative choices without simply copying outcomes;
- evaluate, adapt and refine work, showing resilience when ideas or techniques need to change.

The Creative Process

OBSERVE	EXPLORE	DEVELOP	CREATE	REFLECT
Look closely; gather ideas and inspiration	Experiment with media, techniques and possibilities	Practise, record, adapt and refine	Make purposeful artistic choices	Evaluate, discuss and identify next steps

Whole-School Art & Design Journey

The progression document organises learning through connected artistic strands. These are revisited with increasing depth and challenge so that pupils build practical, theoretical and disciplinary knowledge over time.

STRAND	PROGRESSION JOURNEY
Exploring & Developing Ideas	From responding to starting points and trying materials to independently researching, questioning, refining and critically reviewing ideas in sketchbooks.
Drawing	From line, shape, pattern and varied drawing materials to tone, light, shadow, texture, perspective, movement, hatching and cross-hatching.
Painting	From primary/secondary colour mixing, brush control, tints and shades to purposeful palettes, texture, mood and increasingly sophisticated paint choices.
Sculpture	From manipulating and joining simple natural, recycled and manufactured materials to planning, carving, shaping, texturing and constructing more complex 3D forms.
Collage	From cutting, tearing, sorting and arranging to overlapping, tessellation, mosaic, montage, mixed media and precisely planned compositions.
Textiles	From weaving, dyeing and simple decoration to stitching, joining, layering and increasingly purposeful use of fabric and texture.
Printing	From rolling, pressing, stamping and rubbing to layered colour, handmade blocks, repeated pattern, mono, block and relief printing.
Artists, Craft Makers & Designers	From describing and expressing opinions about artists to comparing techniques, analysing choices and using artists' work as informed inspiration.

Sketchbook Journey

- Year 1: begin to use sketchbooks to collect ideas, explore starting points and record simple observations.
- Years 2–3: use sketchbooks more routinely to collect information, practise techniques, annotate ideas and respond to feedback.
- Years 4–5: review and revisit ideas, experiment with materials and techniques, make predictions and refine work with increasing independence.
- Year 6: use sketchbooks as a personal creative workspace for research, experimentation, critical thinking, design decisions and purposeful refinement.

Progression in Artistic Knowledge

KS1 foundations: Explore materials freely but purposefully; learn basic artistic vocabulary; develop control of tools; notice similarities and differences; begin to explain choices and preferences; learn that artists make work in different ways.

Lower KS2 development: Experiment more deliberately; combine techniques; use sketchbooks to develop ideas; make increasingly controlled choices about materials, colour, tone, texture and composition; compare artists and explain effects.

Upper KS2 depth: Select techniques independently; manipulate materials for intended effects; use perspective, movement, complex colour and mixed media; critically review and refine ideas; make informed connections to artists, craftspeople and designers.

Practical, Theoretical & Disciplinary Knowledge

DOMAIN	WHAT THIS MEANS AT NEWTON BLUECOAT
Practical knowledge	How to use tools, materials and techniques: drawing, painting, sculpture, collage, textiles and printing.
Theoretical knowledge	Knowledge of artists, craftspeople, designers, artistic traditions, media and the visual elements of art.
Disciplinary knowledge	How artists think and work: observing, experimenting, selecting, combining, interpreting, evaluating, discussing and refining.

Thinking Like an Artist

- What do I notice? What draws my attention and why?
- What happens if I change the material, tool, scale, colour, line or texture?
- What am I trying to communicate or make the viewer feel?
- Which techniques or artists might help me develop this idea?
- What is working well? What could I alter, practise or refine?
- Can I explain and justify my artistic choices using appropriate vocabulary?

Artists, Cultures & Creative Influences

The revised overview makes this an explicit knowledge thread so pupils encounter art from different periods, disciplines and cultures.

YEAR	ARTISTS / CREATIVE INFLUENCES IDENTIFIED IN CURRENT PROGRESSION
Year 1	Monet; Van Gogh
Year 2	Picasso; Paul Klee; Maasai art/culture
Year 3	Cezanne; illustrator Laura Carlin; historical illustrator Robert Hooke; Roman art
Year 4	Mexican art/culture; Jean-Michel Basquiat; Matisse; Cezanne; Monet; glass craftspeople; Aboriginal art
Year 5	Historical craftspeople; graphic design/book illustration; NASA photography; Monica Aiello; traditional craftspeople; Ancient Greek art
Year 6	Picasso; Viking art/culture; modern artists using collage; scientific illustration and photography

Core Vocabulary Progression

PHASE	EXAMPLES OF CORE ARTISTIC VOCABULARY
KS1	work of art, observe, idea, improve, portrait, self-portrait, line, detail, landscape, pattern, texture, primary, secondary, tint, shade, sculpture, model, 3D, collage, mosaic, fabric, weaving, dye, printmaking
Lower KS2	sketchbook, refine, tone, shadow, foreground, middle ground, background, abstract, emotion, form, architect, mosaic, montage, stitch, thread, block printing, relief, pattern, texture
Upper KS2	perspective, reflection, hatching, cross-hatching, blend, palette, impressionism, structure, cast, mixed media, layering, mono printing, collograph, composition, refine, evaluate

“ART GIVES CHILDREN A WAY TO SEE, FEEL, THINK AND EXPRESS WHAT WORDS ALONE CANNOT.”