



Art Curriculum Rationale

At Oreston Community Academy, we use the Arts as an opportunity for all children to exercise their creative minds through the study of Art and artists, the acquisition of a wide range of skills and freedom of expression. We define The Arts as Art, Music, Drama and Dance. We see Art as a diverse visual language that can be used to explore many other subjects and topics as well as communicate the ideas and emotions of the young artist. Art is an important part of children's education and has a significant and valuable role in the taught curriculum, as well as the exciting extra-curricular opportunities we offer.

Intent

The teaching of Art at Oreston, supports the belief that we are responsible for the development of the 'whole' child and we provide a safe and supportive environment for the children to learn and grow at a pace that suits their unique abilities. We encourage the children to take responsibility for bettering their own skills by modelling patience and self-reflection on a regular basis. This desire for improvement creates passionate lifelong learners. Through the teaching of Art, we aim to exercise the children's adaptability by encouraging them to work both independently and collaboratively and with a wide range of media. We strive to equip every child with a set of transferrable skills which will enable them to explore a vast range of cultural topics through a creative medium. The children are exposed to a range of skills and techniques used for both visual and expressive forms of Art which they gain and practise progressively throughout their school career. We understand the importance of critical evaluation and we value the informed opinions of our children by encouraging them to respond to the works of others and express preference when studying the works of established artists. From the start, the children will develop an understanding of the importance of reflection, opinion and feedback. These critical thinking and evaluation skills will be used by all children both within and beyond their school life.

Implementation

At Oreston, we know that creative expression plays a key role in a student's emotional development and this is why our Art sessions are carefully planned but also give children the space to explore and innovate. Our Art curriculum is based on three main strands: thematic art, artist studies and practise and play. This broad coverage allows the children to reach their full potential by gaining a wider understanding of and appreciation for the Arts.

Our thematic art sessions are based on the current theme of each individual year group. Our broad and exciting curriculum lends itself to rich opportunities for creating visual and expressive arts.

Each term, the children study a different established artist. This artist may be directly linked to their theme or may be a specialist in the form of art that the children are practising. For example, in Early Years they study the works of Xiao Bai who uses watercolour to paint flowers, in Year 2 they study Salvador Dali and in Year 4, they study Judith Scott whose work was centred around 'Fibre art'. Throughout their time at Oreston, all children will study a range of local, international and historical artists that will give the children cultural context and teach them the basics of renowned artistic movements.

Our practise and play sessions provide the opportunity for all children to better their own skills by allowing time for short yet regular art sessions which are purely skills based; for example, sketching, colour mixing, experimenting with brush strokes or line drawing. Practise and Play sessions are a key aspect of the vision of Art teaching at Oreston where the emphasis is upon process rather than product.

In the process of creating our Statement of Commitment for the Artsmark award, Arts leaders identified multiple ways to raise the profile of Arts and creativity in the school. Arts leaders continue to search for ways for the school to be involved in city wide Arts and cultural events and continue to look for opportunities for the entire school. Oreston have their own Arts Ambassadors pupil voice group and this group meet at least once every half term. The group includes one representative from each year group from Year 1 up to Year 6. The Arts Ambassadors discuss Art lessons, resources, whole school projects and ways to share their artwork. They support each other in feeding back to their year groups. Oreston continues to network and build partnerships with established Arts organisations in the city of Plymouth, for example the Theatre Royal and Ocean Studios. The children can experience trips and visitors throughout their time at Oreston. The Arts feature heavily in the extra-curricular activities that we provide for our children. They can enjoy Art club, Drama, Dance, Choir, Cards and Crafts and can even elect to have 1:1 music lessons with an external teacher.

Sketch books are used by the children across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and provide a running record of the children's art sessions. The children's sketch books demonstrate the explorative nature of our art curriculum; not solely focusing on an end product, but on the acquisition of a wide range of skills. Teachers are constantly using formative assessment and give individual feedback orally throughout every art session. Children actively seek out this instant feedback as they enjoy seeing the development and improvement of their own work even within one session. The children take their sketch book with them through each year at Oreston and enjoy looking back at all they have achieved. Art work is shared with parents and the local community through learning challenges, assemblies, productions, celebration evenings and school fairs.

Impact

Our teachers aim to make a creative environment where their students can thrive and explore the Arts with confidence. Effective art teaching contributes to the development of a child's ability to work both independently and collaboratively, express themselves freely, focus on a task, learn from constructive feedback and be objective about their work. The children show an openness to new influences and concepts. All of these skills can be applied to many other subjects and situations not just at school but in their lives beyond the classroom.