Design and Technology Policy

Alexander McLeod Primary School

Mission statement:

At Alexander McLeod Primary School, we are passionately committed to providing our pupils with the best possible start in life. We are driven to equip every child with the knowledge, skills and values they need in order to become resilient, responsible and happy citizens of the changing world they live in. We fervently believe that all children deserve to succeed and our ultimate goal is to nurture articulate, well-informed children who are prepared for life's many opportunities and challenges.

Our aims:

- To deliver a relevant and ambitious curriculum that supports our pupils to understand the world around them and encourages them to form and express educated opinions.
- To provide an inclusive and safe environment that equips all children, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, to unlock their full potential.
- To foster inquisitive minds, providing opportunities for all children to question, choose, evaluate and argue rationally.
- To adequately prepare children for the next stage of their educational journey.
- To maintain high expectations of our pupils' behaviour and attitude towards learning in school.
- To establish and maintain positive relationships between everybody in our school community including pupils, staff and parents, recognising each person's worth.
- To maintain a culture of mutual respect and co-operation.

The role of Design and Technology in the curriculum

Design and Technology (DT) is a foundation subject in the primary National Curriculum. DT is the activity by which children develop their research, problem-solving, teamwork and creative thinking skills. It is a vital part of pupils' learning at Alexander McLeod Primary School because it equips our children with an extensive range of practical skills. In addition, it is the first step of many potential future careers in the construction, fashion and design industries. There are significant links between Design and Technology and many other areas of the curriculum, which provides opportunities for children to connect different learning experiences and therefore make better sense of a wide range of concepts.

Design and Technology knowledge

Design Technology knowledge underpins the units that are taught throughout the school. The complexity of design ideas and concepts progresses throughout the school. Children learn to recognise and use key vocabulary relating to a wide range of design concepts, as well as learning from significant designers and products from the past and present.

Design and Technology skills

In this subject, children learn many important and transferable life skills, such as sewing, cooking and 3D design. The level of challenge and the expectation of the children to work as designers and creators increases throughout each key stage. Children are encouraged to communicate and evaluate their ideas and products with clarity and coherence.

Design and Technology values

All of our school values are applicable in DT lessons. By working with others, children put co-operation into practice in a practical way. Collaborative work also requires children to listen to others and treat their peers with respect. As part of their evaluation, pupils are required to reflect on the product they have produced which requires honesty. During STEM week, children have the opportunity to learn about potential careers linked to technology, inspiring them to have high aspirations for their future.

Planning

The teachers plan based on the National Curriculum objectives for Art and Design, taking into account the children's prior learning in other areas of the school. On long term plans, teaching teams outline which units will be taught throughout the academic year and when, making links where possible to other areas of the curriculum in order to make their DT learning as contextualised and meaningful as possible. The next step in the planning process is medium term planning, where teachers plan sequences of lessons and make considerations about differentiation. Teachers plan these lessons using the following planning model:

- Brief
- Research
- Plan
- Create
- Evaluate

At the beginning of each unit, pupils are given a brief which outlines the key expectations for their outcome. The next step is research, when pupils practice techniques and learn more about relevant designers and construction processes. This is followed by the planning stage, in which pupils refine the ideas they have gathered throughout the unit so far and make decisions for their final outcome. Next, the final piece is made and finally evaluated, by either peer or self-assessment. Alongside classroom-based learning, teaching teams also try to plan for memorable learning experiences outside, including on educational visits to museums and galleries.

Differentiation in Design and Technology

The teaching and learning of Design and Technology should appeal to both boys and girls and those of all cultural backgrounds and abilities. Children at our school with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have access to the same learning experiences as others. Activities are planned appropriately to the age and stage of the children. Pupils are encouraged to record their learning in a structure to match their abilities. Children are supported and challenged in the classroom alongside their peers using Kagan structures.

Assessment in Design and Technology

Teachers will assess children's Design and Technology work in a variety of ways to ensure they gain a full understanding of what each child has learnt, and what is needed to progress their understanding. Teachers will observe and then provide written or oral feedback, depending on which they feel is most appropriate. In the Early Years Foundation Stage we assess children's knowledge and understanding according to the relevant aspects of the EYFS framework.