

An Introduction to Art, Design and Technology

Intent

Our Faculty offers a unique environment in which students of all abilities are supported, nurtured, and encouraged to reach their full potential across the school's creative and practical subjects: Art, Creative Technologies- Textile Design and Resistant Materials and Food Preparation & Nutrition. Throughout Years 7 and 8, students develop confidence through hands-on learning in specialised environments, while gaining essential knowledge, skills, and understanding specific to each subject. Projects are designed to be exciting and challenging, catering to learners at every level, and aimed at promoting independence, creativity, and innovation.

A key feature of our curriculum is the alignment of Art, Textiles, Resistant Materials and Food through overarching themes, shared creative processes, and cross-curricular connections. These subjects are linked through a common structure that guides students from initial research and idea development through to experimentation, refinement, and final outcomes. This integrated approach supports a coherent learning experience that builds transferable skills and deepens engagement. Our curriculum is also underpinned by strong cultural capital elements. Students explore diverse cultural contexts, materials, and traditions, allowing them to make meaningful connections between their own experiences and the wider world. This ensures that all learners, regardless of background, are able to see value and relevance in their creative education.

By the end of Key Stage 3, students are equipped with the skills and confidence to make informed choices about future study. Those with a particular interest in Art and the Creative Technologies can opt for AQA GCSE Art and Design (Fine Art or Photography) or WJEC Hospitality and Catering at Key Stage 4. These courses offer a skills-based, exploratory approach that nurtures individual strengths, encourages creative thinking, and lays the foundation for continued study at A Level and beyond.

Art

At the Abbey School, our Art curriculum is designed to provide students with a diverse and stimulating experience that challenges learners at all levels. We aim to connect students with both their own culture and the wider world through engaging and thought-provoking projects. Throughout Key Stage 3, our lessons encourage risk-taking, inventiveness, and the development of creative problem-solving and critical thinking skills. We equip students with the discipline, skills, and confidence to create original work while effectively recording their ideas and experiences. By Year 9, students will be proficient in drawing, painting, and 3D techniques, possess an understanding of significant artists, and be able to evaluate and analyse artworks using the language of art and design. At Key Stage 4, we offer GCSE Art and Design, with specialisms in Fine Art, Textiles, and Photography. This course adopts a skills-based approach to artistic development, providing students with a wide range of learning experiences. Through working with various materials and sources, students will explore, develop, and communicate their creative ideas. Our teaching at this stage is designed to stretch and challenge each learner, deepen their artistic strengths and interests, and embed the skills necessary for continued study at A Level and beyond.

Key Stage three Creative Technologies (*Textiles and Resistant Materials*)

In Creative Technology, students develop essential skills, knowledge, and safe working practices while using specialised tools, equipment, and materials. At Key Stage 3, our curriculum challenges students of all abilities, encouraging creativity, engagement, and confidence while building a strong foundation for further study.

ADT subjects are aligned through common creative processes, allowing students to develop a cohesive understanding of design and making that seamlessly progresses into Key Stage 4.

In Year 7, all students study Textiles, where they develop an understanding of the design process while learning hand and machine sewing, fabric printing, appliqué, and heat transfer printing techniques. Students follow the creative journey from research and idea generation through to design development, manufacture, and evaluation.

In Year 8, students study Resistant Materials, building on the same creative processes while developing practical making skills. Students explore Computer Aided Design (CAD), laser cutting, hand tools, electronics, and card construction. Through a range of design-and-make projects, they learn how materials and processes can be used to create functional and creative outcomes.

Throughout both years, students develop their technical knowledge, design thinking, making skills, and ability to evaluate and improve their work. This shared creative structure encourages critical thinking, problem-solving, resilience, and independence.

By Year 9, students are confident in health and safety procedures, competent in the use of a range of tools and equipment, and understand how iterative design processes respond to client needs and project briefs. These essential skills provide excellent preparation for the in-depth study of Fine Art and / or Photography at Key Stage 4.

At Key Stage 4, we offer GCSE Art and Design, with specialisms in Fine Art and Photography. These courses build on the creative processes practiced at Key Stage 3, allowing students to specialise and deepen their expertise. The skills learned—such as drawing, handling materials and equipment, making and evaluation—are applied to more advanced projects, helping students refine their creative and technical abilities.

Food Preparation and Nutrition

In Food Preparation and Nutrition, the curriculum is designed to develop healthy individuals with caring attitudes, empowering them to make positive contributions to their communities. It fosters a love of cooking and nurtures an interest in nutrition, helping students develop essential life skills.

In Year 7, students learn the importance of hygiene and safety, understanding the potential hazards when working in the technical area. They develop a basic understanding of nutrition through the Eatwell Guide, and in practical lessons, they build fundamental cooking skills that will form the foundation for further learning.

In Year 8, students extend their basic knowledge and skills, becoming more independent and confident in all areas of their work. This stage is designed to help them progress and further develop their talents in cooking and nutrition.

By Year 9, students will be equipped with the knowledge, skills, and understanding to create a variety of dishes, showcasing their ability to execute complex techniques. These dishes may include those originating from their own and international cultures, meals tailored to specific medical dietary needs, or dishes designed to support the nutritional requirements of different age groups. The completion of the Level 1/2 Hospitality and Catering Technical Award provides students with the skills and knowledge needed to pursue post-16 options, including diplomas, apprenticeships, or direct experience in a professional kitchen environment.

Implementation

In the Art, Design, and Technology Faculty, we are committed to continuously reviewing and enhancing our Schemes of Learning, resources, and support materials to maintain high standards and foster a diverse and creative approach to teaching and learning. Our approach is designed to inspire and challenge all students, encouraging engagement and personal growth across all subject areas, and ensuring that students meet the curriculum requirements and go beyond them in their learning journey.

Key features of our approach include:

- **Exciting Projects:** We design projects that challenge students of all abilities, stimulating cognitive engagement in Art, Design, and Technology and encouraging exploration and creativity.
- **Extra-Curricular Enrichment:** We actively promote extra-curricular activities through enrichment opportunities such as after-school clubs, external visits, and workshops led by industry professionals, allowing students to broaden their learning experience and extend their knowledge beyond the classroom.
- **Assessment for Learning (AfL):** We regularly use AfL activities that support students in retaining and applying knowledge over time, reinforcing their understanding of topics as they progress. Our lessons feature challenging questions designed to encourage students to apply their learning in a structured manner, ensuring 100% participation and active engagement. This approach helps students meet and exceed curriculum expectations while preparing them to go beyond the standards outlined in the Schemes of Learning.
- **Safe Practices:** We place a strong emphasis on health and safety, ensuring students are consistently aware of safe practices within Art, Design, and Technology classrooms and workshops.
- **Visually Informative Resources:** Our classrooms are equipped with visual resources that facilitate learning, supporting students as they progress through projects and develop new skills, encouraging them to meet curriculum expectations and take their learning further.
- **Community Engagement:** We provide opportunities to showcase student talent in local competitions and exhibitions, such as those at the Fleur de Lis Museum and EKST Events, helping students connect with the local creative community and take their learning beyond the classroom.
- **Skill Development:** Through our Spiral Curriculum approach, students build on specific skills through repetition and practice (drilling), ensuring they master key techniques and concepts while consistently going beyond the curriculum.
- **Project Support:** Sketchbooks and exercise books are provided to encourage students to take pride in their presentation and support the development of project work, empowering them to go above and beyond the required curriculum standards.
- **Reflection and Evaluation:** We encourage routine reflection and evaluation, fostering self-assessment and peer-assessment activities. This helps students deepen their understanding of key concepts and integrate subject-specific vocabulary into their work, pushing them to go beyond the basic requirements of the curriculum.
- **Creative Design Process:** Lessons engage students with the creative design process, exploring global communities, art, design, food from other cultures, and environmental issues, providing a broader understanding of the subject that takes them beyond the curriculum.
- **Writing Frames:** We create structured writing frames to support students in their evaluative process, helping them articulate their thoughts and analysis effectively, encouraging them to think critically and engage beyond curriculum expectations.
- **Career Pathways:** We actively inform students about career opportunities within the British creative industries, one of the fastest-growing sectors in the UK economy, encouraging them to explore future possibilities and connect their learning with real-world opportunities beyond the classroom.
- **Health and Safety:** Health and safety are paramount, with risk assessments, safety protocols, and regular staff training on machinery and food hygiene. Fire drill protocols are also integrated into our Schemes of Learning to ensure students' safety at all times.

Impact

The Art, Design and Technology Curriculum at The Abbey School is designed as a progressive, cohesive journey from Year 7 through to Year 11, allowing students to accumulate and refine creative skills across disciplines including Fine Art, Textiles, Resistant Materials, Photography, and Food Preparation & Nutrition. As students move through the curriculum, their skills are nurtured and deepened, ensuring that talent is supported and consistently developed across all key stages. Progress is recognised not only when students keep pace with curriculum expectations, but also when they are stretched and challenged to go beyond them. Every lesson is designed to provide students with the necessary resources, structured teacher support, and opportunities to extend

their thinking and creativity—encouraging them to take creative risks and become increasingly independent in their learning.

The impact of our curriculum is measured through a variety of meaningful and consistent assessment methods. These include the quality of practical and written work produced, students' ability to reflect on their progress through structured self- and peer-assessment activities and the regular use of Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies such as questioning, formative feedback, and short assessments. These approaches help ensure students retain and apply knowledge over time and are working toward—if not exceeding—curriculum expectations. Further indicators include in-class assessments mapped against planned outcomes, teacher tracking, and target-setting informed by practical project outcomes.

We also place high value on student voice as a key tool for continuous improvement. Feedback from learners helps shape teaching practices, support structures, and staff professional development across the faculty.

Student achievements are regularly celebrated through the school's House Point system, faculty displays, and awards such as Designer and Chef of the Month. Wider opportunities for recognition and enrichment include open evenings, educational visits, competitions and through EKST collaborations.

Creativity, innovation, and independent idea development are central to all ADT subjects. We prioritise these qualities in our use of PIT (Personal Improvement Time) lessons, helping students refine their work and build resilience through iterative practice. A shared creative structure—Research, Design, Make, Evaluate—runs consistently through Key Stage 3 and underpins learning in Key Stage 4, ensuring students develop transferable thinking and problem-solving skills that prepare them for future success.

Many of our students progress to further education and careers in the creative industries, supported by a curriculum that builds not just practical skill, but cultural capital, critical awareness, and the confidence to innovate.