St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School

Design & Technology Policy

December 2025

Review: December 2027

"Treat others as you wish to be treated"

1. Rationale

At St. Joseph's R.C Primary School, we believe that Design and Technology (D&T) is an inspiring, rigorous, and practical subject. Through D&T, pupils use creativity and imagination to design and make products that solve real and relevant problems within a variety of contexts. They acquire a broad range of subject knowledge and draw on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing, and art.

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2. Aims

We aim to:

- Deliver a creative, structured, and inclusive Design & Technology curriculum aligned with the National Curriculum.
- Enable children to design, make, and evaluate purposeful products for real users and real-life contexts.
- Teach pupils a broad range of practical and technical skills in construction, textiles, mechanisms, electronics, and food.
- Develop pupils' ability to research, plan, test, and improve ideas through an iterative process.
- Encourage innovation, critical thinking, and problem-solving through hands-on learning.
- Promote cross-curricular links with subjects such as Maths, Science, Computing, and Art.
- Foster environmental awareness, sustainable thinking, and an understanding of how design impacts society.
- Inspire curiosity about how things are made and how design influences our daily lives.

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3. Curriculum & Progression

We follow the Kapow scheme of work as a foundation for our Design & Technology curriculum, incorporating their condensed Art & DT framework. Learning sequences are adapted and personalised to reflect the context of our school and the individual needs of pupils, ensuring both progression of skills and meaningful, creative experiences.

- **EYFS**: Children explore construction, simple tools, materials, and making processes through structured play and adult-led tasks.
- **KS1**: Pupils learn to design purposeful products, build simple structures and mechanisms, and begin to evaluate outcomes.
- **KS2**: Pupils undertake increasingly complex projects, applying knowledge of structures, systems, textiles, and food. They evaluate

their work against design criteria and consider the views of users to improve functionality.
- **Progression** is mapped across all year groups, ensuring pupils revisit key skills and concepts, deepening understanding and building independence.

Please see Appendix 1 (Art & DT Long Term Plan) and Appendices 5 and 6 (Progression of Skills in DT) for our curriculum in more detail.

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4. Teaching & Learning

At our school, we are committed to delivering high-quality, inclusive Design & Technology teaching that equips pupils with the creativity, technical capability, and problem-solving skills they need to understand and shape the world around them. Our approach is grounded in the belief that every child can innovate, experiment, and design with purpose. Through a well-sequenced curriculum, pupils develop technical competence, confidence in practical tasks, and an appreciation of how design influences daily life.

Our teaching and learning in Design & Technology is characterised by:

- **A skills-based approach rooted in purposeful, real-world problem-solving:** Pupils progressively develop a broad range of practical skills across construction, mechanisms, structures, textiles, electrical components, and cooking. Technical knowledge is embedded within meaningful projects that require children to investigate, design, prototype, evaluate, and reflect. Children are encouraged to take risks, try new ideas, and recognise that testing, adapting, and improving are essential parts of the design process.
- **Emphasis on design thinking through questioning:** Teachers promote critical thinking through open-ended questions, guided discussions, and collaborative evaluation. Pupils learn to justify design decisions, analyse products, and articulate their choices using appropriate DT vocabulary.
- **Use of DT Journals (DT books) from Year 1 to Year 6 to support progression:** Children document their ideas, plans, prototypes, and evaluations using design journals or project booklets appropriate to their stage. These serve as working documents where pupils explore concepts, record tests, make adjustments, and reflect on their results. They provide a clear record of progression over time and encourage ownership of the design process rather than focusing solely on the final outcome.
- **Promotion of cross-curricular connections:** Design & Technology is purposefully linked to learning across other subjects, enriching children's understanding and broadening application of skills. Examples include using mathematical measurement in construction, applying scientific principles to mechanisms or electrical systems, developing cultural understanding through textiles, or exploring

nutrition within cooking. These links contextualise DT learning and deepen engagement.

Through this multifaceted approach to teaching and learning, we nurture capable, curious, and resilient designers who can think creatively, solve problems effectively, and take pride in producing high-quality, purposeful outcomes.

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5. Inclusion and Equality

We ensure all children, regardless of ability or background, have equal access to high-quality Design & Technology experiences. Through careful differentiation, adaptive teaching strategies, and a range of materials and tools, we aim to engage and support all learners, including those with SEND and EAL, enabling them to participate fully and achieve success in designing, making, and evaluating.

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6. Assessment

Assessment in Design & Technology is integral to supporting learning, informing future planning, and celebrating pupil progress. It encompasses not only the quality of the final product but also the design process, practical skills, creativity, and problem-solving strategies demonstrated by pupils.

- **Formative assessment** is embedded throughout lessons, allowing teachers to respond to pupils' needs in real time. This includes careful observation, targeted questioning, modelling, and constructive feedback to guide improvements and deepen understanding.
- **Design journals and project booklets** serve as a record of progression, capturing children's ideas, planning, experimentation, prototyping, and evaluation. These provide evidence of creative thinking, technical development, and reflective learning over time.
- **Summative assessment** is conducted at the end of each unit. Pupils are assessed against age-related expectations and criteria aligned with the National Curriculum, considering both the effectiveness of their final product and the thought processes, decision-making, and problem-solving demonstrated throughout the project.
- **Assessment records** are systematically logged on Arbor and reviewed regularly by the subject leader. This enables the tracking of individual and cohort progress across the school and supports identification of strengths and areas for development.
- **Subject leader monitoring** includes a range of quality assurance strategies such as pupil voice interviews, scrutiny of design journals and completed work, and lesson observations. This ensures

assessment is consistent, accurate, and used effectively to enhance teaching, learning, and curriculum development.

Through this comprehensive approach, assessment in DT not only measures attainment but also celebrates creativity, resilience, and the development of key practical and evaluative skills.

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7. Design Journals

From Year 1 onwards, children use design journals (DT books) as a central tool to support their learning and document their design process. Design journals enable pupils to:

- **Record their research, ideas, planning, diagrams, and evaluations:** Pupils document each stage of the design process, from initial investigations and inspiration to planning, prototyping, and testing. This provides a clear record of their thinking and development over time.
- **Reflect on their learning journey and product development:** Journals encourage children to consider the effectiveness of their ideas and decisions, identifying what worked well and what could be improved. Reflection fosters resilience, problem-solving, and iterative thinking.
- **Demonstrate key technical and creative skills:** Through diagrams, annotations, and practical notes, pupils showcase their understanding of materials, tools, techniques, and design principles, highlighting progression in both creativity and technical competence.

Design journals **travel with the child throughout their time at school**, ensuring continuity of learning and a comprehensive record of progression across year groups.

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8. Resources

High-quality resources are essential for delivering an engaging, practical, and creative Design & Technology curriculum. They enable pupils to explore ideas, develop skills, and produce purposeful outcomes with confidence.

- **Age-appropriate, safe, and well-organised materials:** All resources are carefully selected to ensure safety and suitability for each year group. Materials are stored clearly to promote independence, responsibility, and self-directed learning.
- **A broad and diverse range of tools and materials:** Pupils have access to a variety of resources, including construction kits, textiles, mechanisms, electrical components, and cooking equipment. This

variety allows for the development of technical skills, creativity, and problem-solving across a wide spectrum of DT projects.
- **Utilising local facilities:** To broaden learning opportunities and access specialist equipment, pupils make use of local facilities, such as high school DT suites for using sewing machines or other advanced tools. This enables children to gain hands-on experience with equipment not available in the primary setting and supports skill progression.
- **Displays and working walls:** Classroom displays showcase current and completed projects, celebrate pupil achievement, and reinforce key vocabulary, techniques, and processes. These visual tools support learning, reflection, and discussion within lessons.
- **Strategic management by the subject leader:** The DT subject leader regularly audits, replenishes, and organises resources to maintain high-quality provision and ensure equitable access for all pupils. This careful management ensures that resources support a wide range of creative and practical experiences and align with curriculum priorities.

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9. Roles & Responsibilities

Class Teachers

Class teachers are responsible for the day-to-day delivery of the Design & Technology curriculum and for creating engaging, purposeful learning experiences. Their responsibilities include:

- Planning and teaching DT units in line with the school's long-term plan, ensuring lessons are appropriately sequenced and differentiated to meet the needs of all learners.
- Facilitating the full design–make–evaluate process, encouraging pupils to investigate, plan, create, test, and reflect on their work.
- Supporting children in using tools, materials, and equipment safely, effectively, and skilfully, modelling best practice and reinforcing safety procedures.
- Using formative and summative assessment to inform teaching, identify individual and group progress, and adapt lessons to support learning.
- Liaising with the DT subject leader regarding resources, planning, assessment, and continuing professional development (CPD) to enhance teaching quality.

Design & Technology Subject Leader

The DT subject leader is responsible for the strategic development, management, and quality assurance of the subject across the school. Their responsibilities include:

- Leading the development and review of the DT curriculum, ensuring intent, implementation, and impact are clearly defined and align with national and school priorities.
- Monitoring curriculum coverage, progression, and teaching quality across year groups through lesson observations, work scrutiny, pupil voice, and assessment data.
- Providing guidance, advice, and CPD for staff, modelling best practice and supporting teachers' confidence in delivering high-quality DT lessons.
- Overseeing resource management, ensuring equipment and materials are appropriate, well-maintained, and accessible to all pupils, and planning enrichment opportunities such as workshops, competitions, and local partnerships.
- Championing DT as a vital area of the curriculum, promoting pupil engagement, creativity, and enterprise through initiatives, displays, and school events.

Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors

SLT and governors provide strategic oversight of DT within the school's wider curriculum framework. Their responsibilities include:

- Ensuring DT is prioritised and supported as part of the school's vision for creativity, innovation, and practical learning.
- Monitoring the impact of the DT curriculum through reports, visits, work scrutiny, and analysis of assessment data.
- Supporting staff by allocating resources, identifying training opportunities, and fostering professional development to maintain high-quality teaching and learning.
- Promoting a culture of creativity, enterprise, problem-solving, and innovation across the curriculum, highlighting the importance of DT in preparing pupils with practical skills for the future.

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10. Monitoring & Evaluation

The Design & Technology subject leader is responsible for leading the monitoring and evaluation of DT across the school, ensuring consistently high standards and supporting continuous improvement in teaching, learning, and curriculum development. Monitoring and evaluation aim to ensure that all pupils experience a broad, progressive, and engaging DT curriculum.

This includes:

- **Reviewing planning, DT journals, and displays:** Scrutinising short-term and long-term plans, design journals and classroom displays to ensure curriculum coverage, progression of skills, and opportunities for creativity and practical application.

- **Gathering pupil voice:** Consulting pupils to gain insight into their engagement, enjoyment, and understanding of DT, as well as their reflections on their learning journey, challenges, and achievements.
- **Conducting learning walks, lesson observations, and staff discussions:** Observing teaching and learning to assess the quality of instruction, use of resources, pupil engagement, and implementation of the design–make–evaluate process. Engaging with staff to share feedback, discuss practice, and identify areas for support.
- **Identifying strengths and areas for development:** Analysing findings to highlight successful approaches, recognise good practice, and pinpoint areas for improvement or additional support.
- **Leading curriculum innovation and enrichment:** Supporting the introduction of new initiatives, tools, techniques, and enrichment events, such as workshops, competitions, and external partnerships, to enhance learning and broaden pupil experiences.
- **Reporting to SLT and Governors:** Providing regular reports on curriculum impact, standards, progression, and engagement to inform strategic decision-making and resourcing.
- **Reviewing the DT policy annually:** Ensuring the policy reflects best practice, national guidance, and school priorities, and is updated to respond to developments in teaching, learning, and assessment in Design & Technology.

Through this comprehensive monitoring and evaluation process, the subject leader ensures that the DT curriculum remains high-quality, inclusive, and continuously evolving to meet the needs and aspirations of all pupils.

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11. Community & Cultural Enrichment

Design & Technology at our school aims to extend learning beyond the classroom and provide pupils with meaningful, real-world experiences. While our programme of community and cultural enrichment is currently developing, we are committed to expanding opportunities for pupils to engage with the wider world of design, technology, and enterprise.

- **Visits and guest speakers:** Where possible, we welcome visits from engineers, architects, designers, chefs, and other professionals to provide pupils with insight into different careers, inspire creativity, and raise aspirations.
- **Participation in design challenges and competitions:** Pupils are encouraged to engage with local or national design and STEM challenges, helping to celebrate innovation, teamwork, and practical problem-solving.
- **Enterprise and creative projects:** Opportunities are provided for pupils to experience the design–make–market process, building entrepreneurial, organisational, and financial skills through small-scale projects within school.

- **Cross-curricular events and STEM days:** DT is showcased in cross-curricular contexts, linking learning to real-life applications and highlighting the relevance of design and technology in everyday life.
- **Community and business links:** We are developing connections with local businesses, organisations, and community groups to provide authentic design briefs, collaborative projects, and enrichment experiences.

As our enrichment programme grows, we aim to broaden pupils' experiences, enabling them to see the impact of design and technology in the wider community and supporting their personal, social, and creative development.

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12. Health & Safety

We prioritise the health and safety of all pupils during Design & Technology activities, ensuring that practical learning is conducted in a safe and controlled environment. Pupils are explicitly taught to:

- **Use tools and equipment correctly and responsibly:** Children are guided on the safe handling of all materials and equipment, understanding potential risks and the correct techniques for use.
- **Wear appropriate protective clothing:** Pupils wear safety equipment such as aprons, gloves, goggles, or other protective items when necessary to prevent injury or contamination.
- **Follow routines for safe setup, hygiene, and clean-up:** This includes careful preparation of workspaces, attention to hygiene standards (particularly in food technology), and responsible clearing and storage of materials and tools.
- **Respect shared spaces and work areas:** Pupils are encouraged to be aware of their surroundings, avoid hazards, and work cooperatively to maintain a safe and organised environment.

Teachers provide close supervision during all practical work, with particular vigilance when pupils use potentially hazardous tools such as saws, hot glue guns, scissors, or knives. All activities, workshops, and trips involving DT are subject to thorough **risk assessments**, which are reviewed and updated as required to ensure safety.

Through this proactive approach, pupils not only develop practical skills and independence but also build awareness of safety, responsibility, and best practice in all aspects of Design & Technology.

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13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed yearly, or earlier if required, by the subject leader in consultation with staff, governors, and pupils.