

Creative Industries Faculty

Art

Our intent

Our mission is driven by a profound and shared ambition to motivate and enable every young person to fulfil their potential through a rich and meaningful art education. Through making, exploring and reflecting, students develop confidence, resilience, curiosity and the courage to think independently. Our curriculum encourages learners to express their own ideas, understand the perspectives of others and engage thoughtfully with the world around them.

At Millbay Academy, our subject vision for Art and Design aligns seamlessly with our school's overarching mission to inspire young people to "Think like a creative" and contribute positively to the world around them and be Creative Industry ready learners. Drawing from our pedagogical approach based on the Creative Cycle of Discover, Experiment, Create, Perform, and Evaluate, we strive to nurture ambitious, broad, and powerful knowledge in every learner.

The visual arts have always served as a powerful tool for expressing attitudes towards society, often mirroring the context of people's lives. We believe that all learners regardless of age, nationality or background, are entitled to an art education that deeply connects them to their world and their cultural history. At Millbay Academy, our Art & Design curriculum strives to provide our young learners with a culturally enriched, contemporary, and thought-provoking experience. Through this, we aim to empower our students to utilise the visual arts as a means to articulate their own perspectives on the modern world.

At Millbay, our student population is incredibly diverse. The Art & Design curriculum aims to uphold our school's principles on inclusivity and diversity through representing diverse groups, teaching them about other cultures, historical contexts and critical social issues. This approach prepares our students to be well-rounded global citizens, sensitive to the world's challenges and capable of contributing to positive change. With access

to a quality visual arts curriculum, we aim to develop our students' ability to think critically and challenge misconceptions.

Whether students opt to pursue Art & Design at GCSE or beyond, our primary objective is to instil in all young minds the awareness that every creation in this world stems from the ingenuity of a creative soul. Whether our students engage in art for sheer enjoyment, for enhancing their well-being, or merely out of curiosity about the intricacies of its making, the fostering of students' artistic creativity is our mission.

Think Like A Creative: We believe strongly in our curriculum pedagogy 'Think Like A Creative'.

The stages of this are as follows: *Discover, Experiment, Create, Perform, Evaluate*. Some examples of how we embed this pedagogy in our subject are as follows:



- **Discover:** Exposure to different artists, designers and craftspeople and external visits and visiting creatives - Students will discover knowledge and gain key skills and uncover where Art & Design could lead. WAGOLL examples to show success (images, modelling, sketchbooks, displays).
- **Experiment:** Students will be taught how to handle materials, techniques and processes and be given time to purposefully play and experiment - explore possibilities of materials and see what they can do and be encouraged to make mistakes.
- **Create:** Students will be able to refine their experimentation and be shown how to develop a personal and meaningful response to realise their intentions..
- **Perform:** Students will showcase their learning through professional presentation, whether that is their learning journey throughout the sketchbook or the final outcome to form part of a school display, in an end of term exhibition or in a portfolio ready for interview.

- **Evaluate:** Students will continually evaluate their work and the work of others through class feedback, group critiques or individual tutorials.

Key Stage 3 Curriculum

Purpose of Study

The Key Stage 3 curriculum develops students' understanding of art as a form of creative enquiry. Through sustained engagement with artists, ideas, materials and processes, students learn how art communicates meaning, reflects society and shapes culture. Practical making is combined with critical thinking so that students become increasingly confident in generating ideas, solving creative problems and developing personal responses.

Our curriculum follows a carefully sequenced spiral model in which practical, theoretical and disciplinary knowledge are revisited through increasingly sophisticated projects. Students continually build upon previous learning while encountering new materials, technologies, concepts and ways of working.

Projects are structured around meaningful themes and artistic concepts rather than isolated technical exercises. Students investigate topics such as identity, environment, place, narrative, nature, culture and visual communication while learning how artists from different traditions, movements and contemporary practices have explored similar ideas.

Drawing remains central throughout the curriculum—not simply as a technical skill, but as a way of observing, thinking, investigating, recording, designing and communicating ideas. Alongside drawing, students develop confidence across painting, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, textiles, photography, digital media and mixed-media practices.

Students study artists, designers and craftspeople from traditional, modern and contemporary contexts, developing an understanding of how artistic practice evolves in response to changing technologies, cultures and societies. This contextual understanding informs increasingly independent creative decision-making as students progress through Key Stage 3.

The formal elements of art (line, shape, form, tone, colour, texture, pattern and space) and the principles of design are taught throughout the curriculum as part of a wider visual language. Rather than being the organising framework for learning, they are introduced when most relevant to the concepts, materials and intentions being explored, enabling students to understand how artists use visual language purposefully to communicate ideas and meaning.

Students are explicitly taught how to present work professionally, document creative journeys, annotate thoughtfully and curate sketchbooks and portfolios that demonstrate both process and reflection.

By the End of Key Stage 3

By the end of Key Stage 3, students will:

- understand art as a means of exploring ideas, expressing identity and communicating meaning;
- confidently use a broad range of traditional, modern and contemporary materials, techniques and processes;
- apply drawing for observation, investigation, design, experimentation and personal expression;
- understand how artists use visual language, materials and processes intentionally to achieve different effects;
- analyse and discuss artworks using appropriate subject vocabulary while considering historical, cultural and contemporary contexts;
- make increasingly independent creative decisions, selecting materials, techniques and processes appropriate to their intentions;
- demonstrate resilience, curiosity and confidence through sustained experimentation and reflective practice;
- present work professionally while articulating and justifying their creative decisions through visual and written communication.

This foundation prepares students not only for GCSE Art & Design but also for further study, creative careers and lifelong engagement with visual culture.

Key Stage 4 Curriculum

During Key Stage 4, students embark on a two-year journey studying AQA GCSE Art & Design with a focus on the Fine Art pathway. Component 1, constituting 60% of the course, encompasses a 'sustained project' and a selection of 'additional portfolio work'. To begin, students are introduced to course expectations and the Assessment Objective categories (AO1, AO2, AO3, AO4), along with the specific evidence required to attain marks in each category. This essential understanding is imparted during the initial project, 'Inside Out', which primarily centres around AO3 (recording) - encompassing drawing, written annotation, and photography in the first half-term.

In their creative exploration, students delve into the works of a selection of artists (AO1 - research) as a contextual reference, reinforcing the notion that all references should relate to their artistic journey. Next, AO2 (experimentation) takes precedence as they revisit and master drawing, collage, monoprinting, ink painting, charcoal, pastel and fineliner mark-making techniques. Moreover, students gain artistic freedom by selecting artists of interest and crafting responses to their works, which informs the refinement of their own painting (AO4 - final outcome, presentation, and understanding of visual language).

Throughout Year 10, students are gradually entrusted with the autonomy to make independent creative decisions and steer their own projects, effectively preparing them for the Externally Set Assignment (Component 2).

In Year 11, the Externally Set Assignment Exam paper is released by AQA, marking the commencement of a preparatory period. Subsequently, students engage in a 10-hour exam under strict conditions to materialise their creative intentions for their projects. Component 1 is submitted in January of Year 11, while Component 2 is officially handed in on the first day of the 10-hour controlled assessment. This comprehensive journey culminates in a well-rounded exploration of the artistic realm, empowering students not only with valuable skills and experiences in the field of Fine Art but also with adept project management, portfolio presentation, and the ability to work independently.

In our commitment to ensuring equal opportunities for all students and providing support, we provide all students with any and all art materials, sketchbooks and resources they will need for the course. Additionally, students can attend Session 6 Open Studio for extra guidance on their coursework in a specialised environment.

By the end of Key Stage 4

Students will have successfully completed their GCSE AQA Fine Art qualification. This course prepares students for their next steps in a variety of ways:

- **Skill Development:** The course hones students' artistic skills, enabling them to create and present their ideas effectively. These skills are transferable to higher education, apprenticeships, or future creative careers.
- **Portfolio Building:** Through the coursework and projects, students develop a substantial portfolio showcasing their artistic journey and creative abilities. This portfolio becomes invaluable when applying to further education or art-related professions.
- **Independent Thinking:** The course encourages students to think critically, make independent creative decisions, and solve problems. These qualities are highly sought after in any field of study or profession.
- **Time Management:** Completing projects and meeting deadlines during the GCSE prepares students for the time management skills required in higher education and the working world.
- **Artistic Voice:** Students explore and develop their unique artistic voice throughout the course, allowing them to express their ideas and perspectives confidently in future creative endeavours.
- **Contextual Awareness:** Through studying artists and exploring various art movements, students gain a broader understanding of art's historical and contemporary context, which enriches their creative perspective.
- **Communication Skills:** As students learn to articulate their ideas and creative processes, they enhance their communication skills, an essential asset in any career path.
- **Resilience and Perseverance:** The challenges and explorations faced in the course foster resilience and perseverance, preparing students for the demands of higher education and the professional world.

Overall, GCSE AQA Art & Design: Fine Art equips students with a strong foundation in art, providing them with the skills, confidence, and knowledge needed for their future academic pursuits (AS and A-level as well as vocational pathways) and careers in the Creative Industries.

SEND

Art & Design should be ambitious, broad, rich and diverse, yet also accessible to all learners. Our goal at Millbay Academy is to ensure every child can access a curriculum that encourages and nurtures exploration, an attitude of curiosity, open-mindedness, creative risk taking and self-reflection. Art & Design should be a subject where all learners can express themselves authentically and offer a space for all students to thrive creatively.

Students with SEND needs or other considerations identified receive the same quality teaching and learning as all other students. Lesson delivery and resourcing is adapted and scaffolded to facilitate students in accessing learning content and developing the skills necessary for KS4 and beyond.

Sequencing of learning content and skills are meticulously planned so students can make meaningful connections and recall existing prior knowledge and skills to support their progression in the subject. Key vocabulary is explicitly taught with additional word banks, sentence starters and prompts provided as part of their learning journeys in their student portfolios and pre-teaching available for future projects and learning. WAGOLL examples provide students with visual examples while workshops are broken down into manageable chunks with visual aids to support students to feel confident and build independence as they become more proficient with handling of tools and materials.

Subject Literacy

At Millbay, we recognise the significance of excellent oracy and literacy which are a fundamental aspect of empowering students to use their voices. The Art & Design programme thoughtfully sequences opportunities for all students to be able to articulate their ideas, share insights and engage in meaningful discussions about their work and the work of others. By developing strong oracy skills, students can communicate their opinions with justifications. They are taught subject specific vocabulary every lesson and shown how to use language appropriately in the right context, demonstrating professionalism and subject expertise.

Co-curriculum Enrichment

When students begin their educational journey with us at Millbay Academy, they bring with them diverse experiences in creating, observing, and engaging with art. Our paramount goal is to enhance their cultural capital, achieved not only through a robust curriculum but also by offering thrilling extracurricular experiences and opportunities. We seek to nurture a comprehensive appreciation for the arts that extends beyond the classroom, enriching their artistic journey throughout their time with us.

It is vital to recognise that Plymouth is a city brimming with cultural richness, boasting a deep-rooted historical heritage and flourishing as an up-and-coming hub for the arts. Our city offers young people a myriad of opportunities to explore and immerse themselves in the creative realm. At Millbay we have forged strong connections with various arts initiatives that exemplify the potential and possibilities that lie ahead for aspiring artists.

From vibrant galleries and art studios to bustling cultural events and festivals, Plymouth provides an ideal backdrop for nurturing artistic talents and passions. Through exposing our young people to the thriving arts community and engaging with successful practitioners, this encourages our students to envision the exciting prospects that await them in their creative futures. These valuable partnerships and resources serve as guiding beacons, helping our young people recognise the vast range of career pathways and creative opportunities that the arts can unfold.

Connections

- The Arts University
- Plymouth University - NMP - National Marine Park
- Plymouth County Council -Art & Energy
- The Box
- Nudge Community Builders
- KARST
- Real Ideas Organisation
- Ocean Studios
- Thames Festival Trust - Rivers of Hope