



**Subject: Art            Leader: Emily Tonkin**

### **Quotes that guides us**

#### **Why is it important to teach Art?**

Art provides children with an opportunity to express their feelings and emotions in a unique medium. It plays a vital part in every child's development, both physically and mentally. Within the subject, children are encouraged to see themselves "as artists", where they produce their own pieces of work. Art also exposes children to different cultures, places and people across the world and throughout history.

At Portreath School we have devised a curriculum that matches the ambition of the National Curriculum and embodies the elements of our school motto: Be curious, creative and courageous to grow and make a difference.

Children are provided with opportunities to be **curious** throughout the Art curriculum. Through carefully and mindfully observing pieces of Art, children are able to ask questions – not just about the piece of art itself, but about who the artist is. Children ask one another questions about their pieces of work, providing their peers with feedback and encouragement. Art encourages experimentation within lessons, where children can show **courage** by exploring a new drawing skill or investigating what happens when two colours are mixed together. Art, of course, is a totally **creative** subject, where children are able to express themselves in a supportive and non-judgemental environment. Within our Art curriculum, children work collaboratively on final units, providing every child with a sense of purpose and belonging. Often, children who may find core subjects are able to thrive in Art. It is a totally unique subject that requires children to let go of inhibitions and to communicate their ideas in a different way.

#### **Golden Threads**

As a school we have identified 7 golden threads that are the key concepts that weave throughout our art curriculum. They are:

- Self-expression and Emotions
- Everyone An Artist
- Significant Artists
- Different Media
- Times and Places
- Community Connections
- Opinions

These threads start in the EYFS and link the learning in art together across the school. They help the children to make connections. By considering these threads when planning the EYFS team start to 'plant the seed' of these concepts and prepare the children for their journey in KS1 and 2. As the Art lead, I have worked with the EYFS lead to identify key learning for EYFS to prepare them for the study of art. The children can develop so many of the key skills needed at a very early age. For example, in EYFS the children are provided with opportunities to draw and paint as a form of self-expression, emphasising that everyone is an artist. This is then built on throughout KS1 and KS2 as children are invited to form opinions on art as they are introduced to different artists. This takes place through the study of artists in



Art lessons, but in addition to this all children are exposed to the works of significant artists each half term in whole-school assemblies. Our half-termly artist is showcased on a display and is referred to within every assembly. Children are often found looking at the pieces of art on the display in the dinner hall, carefully looking at intricate details and considering how and why the artist has produced that piece. At the start and end of every unit, children focus on a specific artist and think about how that artist has influenced their own work. The idea of “everyone an artist” is then extended at the end of the unit when children write a piece of feedback about their own, and in KS2, their peers’ final piece.

### **What we do well as a school:**

As well as discrete lessons, art lends itself to being a cross curricular subject in every way. We link art to topics and units all across the curriculum which deepens the children’s understanding, as well as providing art with a purpose and context. Children are very proud of their work and love to see it displayed around school. We also have a wonderful local area to inspire a wealth of art projects, such as the beach and woods. Children visit these places as part of their Art learning, and teachers often take children’s sketch books along to school trips not related to Art, to provide children with a chance to do some observational drawing of landscapes and buildings. When in Year 3/4, children are provided with the opportunity to visit Leech Pottery in St Ives to provide children with the opportunity to see ceramic artists in the “real world” but also allowing them to develop their own skills within a workshop.

As a school we have regularly worked on whole school art projects drawing on local artists and the local community. Over the summer of 2024, Year 1 and 2 children had their pieces of Art displayed in Truro Cathedral, which they had created in collaboration with a grandparent in one of the children in their class who was invited in to work with the children on textile art. Pieces of art by local artists are displayed around the school. We worked with the Portreath Neighbourhood Development programme, where every class was involved in a printmaking project and the work being exhibited in the village. Since 2021, we have worked with artists from ‘The Hall for Cornwall’ to produce pieces of Art to contribute to a whole school performance. Each half term the children are introduced to a different artist through paintings/photographs of artwork being shared at the start of Friday assemblies.

Art is used in a variety of ways outside of the classroom, such as at lunchtimes when the children are encouraged to take part in “small parts” play, where children are often found creating pieces of Art from shells, pieces of wood and other natural objects from the environment. Our wonderful Outdoor Learning area also gives children the opportunity to make Art from nature. We also use Art as a therapeutic approach within TISUK sessions.

### **Curriculum Design**

Art is taught in half term blocks with three Art units being covered each year in every class. Each unit is built around the six key art skills: drawing, colour, texture, form, printing and pattern. Some units are focussed on just one skill and some intertwine various aspects of different skills. Every 6-lesson unit builds up to a final piece. Each unit has an Artist linked to it.

Due to mixed year groups in year 3, 4 and 5 we have a two-year rolling programme for Birch and Oak class. To ensure a clear sequence of learning, each unit has a clear planning document. These detail the skills progression and small steps that build towards the final end point.

Vocabulary is a focus and key vocabulary is identified for each topic. The vocabulary also acts as an assessment tool as we can assess if children are able to understand and talk about the skills they are learning in Art.

The units have been carefully devised and link to learning elsewhere in the curriculum. The artists chosen promote diversity and expose children to both male and female artists from all over the world.



As previously stated, we make good use of visits and visitors within the Art curriculum. We share work with parents using Dojo and within open classrooms. This helps to promote a sense of pride within the children but also sparks creative conversation between parents and children about their learning.

### **Resources**

When planning, teachers are encouraged to consider the resources needed for each session. The central art cupboard is well resourced with suitable materials and is regularly replenished in accordance with the needs of the curriculum.

### **Use of Sketchbooks**

From Year 1, each child is provided with a high-quality, hardback sketchbook. This allows children to take pride in their work and emphasises the idea of “everyone an artist”. The sketchbooks are used to document something from every Art lesson – whether this is a photo of a child doing some art or a piece of experimentation straight into the book. Each unit has a cover sheet which the children stick in, where the artist, art skills, final outcome and key vocabulary is introduced. This sheet is referred to regularly throughout the unit. At the end of the unit, children stick in an evaluation sheet where they are able to write a comment about their final piece. In KS2, the children also evaluate their peers’ work. The sketchbooks are carried with the children throughout their school journey so they are able to visually see how they have developed as artists.

### **Training**

The subject lead is always happy to give advice to other staff to support them when planning their art lessons. She uses her knowledge and experience to support subject knowledge as well as offer ideas of suitable artists. Going forward she will lead some staff meeting sessions to help develop everyone’s subject knowledge.

### **What does monitoring tell us?**

Discussion with children with their books and knowledge organisers show that children are able to articulate what they have learnt not just activities undertaken. The children demonstrated their enthusiasm and engagement with Art. SILC visits demonstrated that the children are able to talk about what they have learnt in detail, not just what they had done. Displays around the school and final pieces demonstrate excellent understanding and effort from children.