

# Art and Design in Early Years

A Guide for Subject Leaders



# Art and Design in Early Years

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“Making art builds children’s **self esteem** by giving them opportunities to express what they are thinking and feeling... **Drawing**, in particular, becomes an activity that allows them to symbolise what they know and feel. It is a needed outlet for children whose **vocabulary**, written or verbal, may be limited.”

Jill Englebright Ph.D, and Stacey Berry M.Ed, (2008).



# 1. Introduction

An overview of what art and design is like in early years and where to find it in the curriculum

# Introduction

From only a few months old, children seek sensory stimulation. They have a desire to explore and experiment with their surroundings. Art and design offers children a range of media and materials to explore, change and create. Children are empowered to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through media.

# Introduction

- ✓ Individual creativity should be praised and encouraged.
- ✓ Adults should model and scaffold children's learning by teaching creative skills across a range of media.
- ✓ Art opportunities occur both indoors and outdoors. Children should be given a vast range of media to explore.

- ✓ Artists, across a range of media, should be woven into the art curriculum, enabling children to observe, explore and recreate.

# EYFS Art & Design – Early Learning Goals



## Creating with Materials

- Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function
- Share their creations, explaining the process they have used
- Make use of props and materials when role playing characters in narratives and stories



## Fine Motor Skills

- Use a range of small tools, including scissors, paint brushes and cutlery
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing

# EYFS Art & Design – Educational Programmes



## **Expressive Arts and Design**

The development of children's artistic and cultural awareness supports their imagination and creativity. It is important that children have regular opportunities to engage with the arts, enabling them to explore and play with a wide range of media and materials. The quality and variety of what children see, hear and participate in is crucial for developing their understanding, self-expression, vocabulary and ability to communicate through the arts. The frequency, repetition and depth of their experiences are fundamental to their progress in interpreting and appreciating what they hear, respond to and observe.

## 2. Child-Initiated Learning

Key indicators and examples of effective practice when monitoring art and design in the early years, in relation to child-initiated learning through an enabling environment

# AN ENABLING ART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT – Paint

What might I see children doing?

- ★ Using a range of tools, e.g. brushes, hands, feet, straws, sponges, stencils etc.
- ★ Talking about, exploring or recreating an artists work.
- ★ Following own ideas to create art work.
- ★ Planning which resources and tools are needed to create a desired outcome.
- ★ Exploring colour mixing to achieve a desired effect.
- ★ Painting people, places or things.
- ★ Painting in response to music.
- ★ Exploring books containing paintings or class portfolios.



# AN ENABLING ART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT - Clay and Dough

What might I see children doing?

- ★ Creating 3D models
- ★ Using tools to shape, carve and manipulate.
- ★ Adding additional resources to their creations.
- ★ Creating 3D patterns and shapes.
- ★ Mark making



# AN ENABLING ART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT - Drawing

What might I see children doing?

- ★ Mark making using drawing tools, including pencils, pens, chalk, crayons, charcoal.
- ★ Creating drawings from their own thoughts and ideas.
- ★ Creating drawings inspired by an event, person or place.
- ★ Copying the drawings of others, making their own interpretations.
- ★ Taking rubbings of different textures.
- ★ Drawing in response to music.



# AN ENABLING ART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT - Craft

What might I see children doing?

- ★ Creating collage pictures using resources including; glue, paper, material, scissors, glitter etc.
- ★ Covering 3D models using paper, materials or natural resources.
- ★ Creating pictures inspired by an event, person, place, thing or artist.
- ★ Weaving using paper, materials or natural resources.
- ★ Making symmetrical patterns or pictures.



# AN ENABLING ART LEARNING ENVIRONMENT – Outdoors

What might I see children doing?

- ★ Transitional art using natural materials.
- ★ Creating patterns.
- ★ Building 3D models or structures, both large and small scale.
- ★ Create large 2D pictures using resources, paint, chalk or water.
- ★ Talking about patterns, shapes, textures and the beauty of the natural environment.



# Adults Scaffolding Learning During Child-Initiated Play

## What should I see adults doing?

- ★ Observing and responding sensitively to children engaged in creating art.
- ★ Responding to children's ideas and suggestions.
- ★ Suggesting possibilities to extend their ideas.
- ★ Offering other tools and resources when appropriate.
- ★ Creating art alongside children to take learning forwards, suggesting ideas and showing what's possible.
- ★ Introducing and encouraging use of a rich art vocabulary.
- ★ Sharing their own experiences and making suggestions.
- ★ Role modelling thinking aloud and commenting.
- ★ Modelling artistic skills effectively.

- ★ Posing questions and/or 'ponderings' to stimulate ideas and add challenge e.g. What could you use instead to represent the sky?
- ★ Mirror children's art creations through play experiences.

# 3. Adult-Led Learning

Key indicators of effective practice when monitoring art in the early years, in relation to adult-led learning

# What should I expect to see when adults are leading an art and design activity?

- ★ Offering information about art; e.g. children may be interested to learn created the painting.
- ★ Encouraging children to explore and use a range of media.
- ★ Discussing art with children, modelling how to describe the art and seeking out their opinions and thoughts.
- ★ Providing a range of media and materials for children to explore during play.
- ★ Choosing artists to focus upon, teaching children about the artist and providing opportunities for children to practise the relevant skills.
- ★ Encouraging children to represent their thoughts and ideas using art and design.
- ★ Modelling how to use media and tools effectively in a range of ways.
- ★ Modelling respect and care of tools as well as techniques for using effectively.
- ★ Scaffolding children's musical ideas, eg by copying a child's pattern and then adding an idea of their own. ★ Supporting children to create art based on a theme or linked to a story.

- ★ Displaying children's art work.
- ★ Using experts to support adult-led learning, e.g. a local potter.