**St. John’s N.S., Kenmare**

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**Visual Arts Policy**

**Visual Arts Policy for**

**St. John’s N.S., Kenmare, Co. Kerry. Roll No. 20197K**

**Introductory Statement:**

This plan was developed by the staff of St. John’s N.S. The plan describes the teaching and learning of Visual Arts in our school and will serve as the foundation for all long and short term plans in Visual Arts. This plan was drafted in accordance with the guidelines set out by the Primary Curriculum in consultation with all the staff.

**Rationale:**

This plan was formulated to provide for creative and aesthetic experiences through exploring, investigating, inventing, designing and making in a range of media. It promotes observation and ways of seeing and helps the child to acquire sensitivity to the visual, spatial and tactile world and to aesthetic experience. We believe it channels the child’s natural curiosity for educational ends and can facilitate in all areas of the curriculum. This plan is a record of our good practice in this subject and also conforms to the principles of the curriculum statements on visual arts.

We endeavor to:

* Enable the children to explore and experiment with the use of different materials in a creative way.
* Encourage spontaneity and to stimulate and motivate the children towards working independently.
* Inculcate a process of planning, questioning, speculating, analyzing and drawing conclusions.
* Provide the children with an outlet for expressing feelings and emotions.
* Give the less academic child a sense of self-worth and achievement.
* Encourage an appreciation of the visual arts, modern, classical and abstract encompassing other cultures.
* Develop the ability to respond according to their own individuality.
* Display the work of the child.
* Foster an appreciation of other art forms e.g. architecture, cookery, sport, media, music, dance, fashion, photography and nature.

**Vision:**

St. John’s values and recognizes the uniqueness and potential of each child within a caring school environment. Our vision is to assist the children in our school in developing those qualities. We promote creativity, imagination and aesthetic understanding in line with the school’s vision statement and as outlined in the curriculum statements.

**Aims:**

**We fully endorse the aims of The Visual Arts Curriculum for Primary Schools:**

* To help the child develop sensitivity to the visual, spatial and tactile world, and to provide for aesthetic experience.
* To help the child express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual and tactile forms.
* To enable the child to have enjoyable and purposeful experiences of different art media and to have opportunities to explore, experiment, imagine, design, invent, and communicate with different art materials.
* To promote the child’s understanding of and personal response to the creative processes involved in making two and three-dimensional art.
* To enable the child to develop the skills and techniques necessary for expression, inventiveness and individuality.
* To enable the child to experience the excitement and fulfilment of creativity and the achievement of potential through art activities.
* To foster sensitivity towards and enjoyment and appreciation of the visual arts.
* To provide opportunities for the child to explore how the work of artists and craftspeople might relate to his/her own work.

**Objectives:**

When due account is taken of intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances, the visual arts curriculum should enable the child to:

* Look at, enjoy and make a personal response to a range of familiar and unfamiliar objects and images in the environment, focusing on their visual attributes.
* Explore and begin to develop sensitivity to qualities of line, shape, colour and tone, texture, pattern and rhythm, spatial organization and the three-dimensional quality of form.
* Express ideas, feelings and experiences in visual form and with imagination, enjoyment and a sense of fulfilment.
* Experiment in spontaneous, imaginative and increasingly structured ways with a range of art materials, including pencils, paints, crayons, chalks, markers, inks, clay, papier maché, fabric and fibre, and construction materials.
* Explore the expressive and design possibilities of the materials within a range of two and three-dimensional media, including drawing, paint and colour, print, clay, construction, fabric and fibre.
* Apply skills and techniques, demonsrating increasing sensitivity to the visual elements in his/her art work.
* Look with curiosity and openness at the work of a wide range of artists and craftspeople.
* Explore atmosphere, content and impact in the work of artists, especially when they relate to his/her own work.
* Identify a variety of visual arts media and describe some of the creative processes involved.
* Develop an ability to identify and discuss what he/she considers the most important design elements of individual pieces, especially when they relate to work in hand.
* Discuss the preferred design elements in his/her work and in the work of classmates.
* Begin to appreciate the context in which great art and artefacts are created and the culture from which they grow.
* Respond to visual arts experiences in a variety of imaginative ways.
* Use appropriate language in responding to visual arts experiences.

**Content of the Plan**

**Curriculum Planning**

1. **Strands and Strand Units:**

*Strands Strand Units*

Drawing Making drawings

Looking and Responding

Paint and Colour Painting

Looking and Responding

Print Making prints

Looking and Responding

Clay Developing form in clay

Looking and responding

Construction Making constructions

Looking and responding

Fabric and fibre Creating in fabric and fibre

Looking and responding

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the six strands and ensure that each strand and both strand units are given equal prominence during the visual arts programme for the year. Each strand’s activities are interrelated and involve perceiving and exploring the visual world and making art and looking and responding to the visual world and works of Art. These activities are informed on by the Art Elements: *line, shape, form, colour and tone, pattern and rhythm, texture* and *spatial organization.* Objectives for each strand unit can be found in the Curriculum book.

In choosing thematic content, it is advised to draw on children’s experience, imagination and observation and curiosity.

1. **Approaches and Methodologies**

Guided Discovery is considered the appropriate teaching method for The Visual Arts.

* It allows the pupils to explore the expressive potential of various media and experiment with them.
* It assesses their suitability for a given task.
* It cultivates their own artistic interpretation of their world.
* It allows observation of their visual environment.
* It allows for appraisal of artist’s work.

Other Methodologies will include:

* Whole class work.
* Small group work.
* Pair work.
* Individual work.
* Direct teaching of skills e.g. use of clay, fabric and paint mixing.
* Discussion and brainstorming themes.
* Providing a stimulus and motivation.
* Provision of materials.
* Looking and responding to work created in class and to other artists work.
* Integration with other subject areas.
* To stimulate active creativity through questioning, prompting and suggestion.
* Instructing children on care and use of instruments e.g. brushes.

It is important that the teacher understands children’s Stages of Development in Art can direct their ability and can challenge them accordingly.

An awareness of a broad range of imagery in children’s work and in Art in general is very necessary as well as exposure to work from different eras, traditions and cultures as well as the Western Classical Tradition.

Emphasis on process rather than product and on practice and progression will encourage creativity. It will result in sequentially structured activities increasing in complexity and developing from previous experience.

There will also be a need to use activities from different levels with a class in order to allow for its range of ability and experience.

1. **Linkage and Integration**

*Linkage*

Linkage occurs and will be planned for both within and between the strands of the Visual Arts Curriculum. It emphasizes the inter-related nature of art activities. Linkage occurs:

* In the way the strand units provide for complementary activities in making and looking and responding.
* Through concepts and skills development using different media, for example developing awareness of colour through drawing, painting and print making and through activities in fabric and fibre.
* In a mixed media approach to developing a piece of work that uses a variety of materials, for example combining print, painting and fabric and fibre in a collage.
* Through activities that develop a theme in a number of media, for example interpreting the theme ‘playing’ in drawing, painting, clay and mixed media.
* A thematic approach may be taken for linking strands e.g. at Christmas, construct a crib, make figures from clay, use fabric and fibre to dress figures.

*Integration*

Opportunities for integration will be indentified and planned for with care taken that the objectives for Visual Arts are kept in clear focus. The following curricular areas offer real opportunities for integration.

* Music
* Drama
* Physical Education
* Language
* S.E.S.E.
* S.P.H.E.
* Mathematics
* I.C.T.

1. **Children with Different Needs**

The Visual Arts Programme should provide opportunities for all children to experience success. Particular support will be given to children with special needs where discovery and experimentation in visual arts can be very rewarding and may lead to the development of other skills and talents. The resource teacher, when devising learning profiles, shall consult with the class teacher as to the visual arts activities that best suit the children with special needs in our school.

Children who display a particular ability in the area of the visual arts will be encouraged to develop their talents through a range of school activities. Parents will be made aware of their child’s talents through a range of school activities. Parents will be made aware of their child’s talents at the annual parent teacher meeting. These children will be encouraged to avail of opportunities to engage the visual arts e.g. enter competitions, attend extra-curricular classes and develop portfolios.

*Special Needs/Diversity*

The following need to be acknowledged:

* The variety of Stages of Development in a class due to a range of experience and ability found in any class.
* Children with Special Needs may function at a younger stage to their peers.
* Children with coordination problems may have particular difficulties with grip and control of certain media. Different implements may need to be offered here to maximize the pupil’s experience.

1. **Assessment and Record Keeping**

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning processes in visual arts education. Teachers observe and discuss both work in progress and completed work. Assessment will take place as the child engages in the creative process of making art, when a piece of artwork is completed and while making a personal response to artworks. Assessment will be based on a range of Visual Art activities over a period of time and will include:

* Teacher Observation
* Teacher-designed tasks.
* Work samples, portfolios and projects.

*Teacher Observation*

Through observation and discussion the teacher can note:

In response to a stimulus:

* Has the stimulus sparked a visual and personal response?
* Are the children eager to talk about choice of materials and tools?
* How will they use them?

As the children engage in the activity:

* Are the children absorbed in the activity?
* Does their work show a visual vocabulary appropriate to their individual stages of development in Art?
* Are materials and tools used with confidence and discrimination?
* Are the children willing and able to discuss their ideas and might adopt them to the challenges they meet?

As the children respond to their own work and the work of others:

* Do the children value their own work and the work of others?
* Do they respond enthusiastically to artworks?
* Can they use an appropriate vocabulary when responding to artworks?

*Teacher-designed tasks*

From time to time, art activities will be designed with very specific objectives in mind. These will help to assess the child’s ability to handle particular concepts and skills. The aspects of development to be assessed and the level of achievement to be expected will be appropriate to the child’s ability to:

* Communicate concerns and experiences in a personal way, through a variety of Visual Arts media.
* Work cooperatively, productively and enjoyably with others.

*Work samples, portfolios and projects*

Work samples, portfolios and projects will be used to look at the progression of skills development and as a record of achievement.

1. **Equality of Participation and Access**

All children shall have equal access to all visual arts activities. In line with our inclusive school policy, different cultures are affirmed through discussion, activities and displays. We acknowledge that different cultural heritages are expressed through art, so we will endeavor to use the arts to enhance pupil’s understanding of different values and attitudes in our multicultural society. When and where applicable the Visual Arts class is used as an opportunity to integrate the culture of all pupils within the school.

We will have a balanced programme of Visual Arts activities to reflect the interests of both boys and girls.

Equality of participation and access for children with special educational needs is also assured within the school at a differentiated level. Individual support will be given to children with special needs for example language is simplified and tools readjusted. Children who display a particular ability in the area of Visual Arts will be encouraged to develop this talent further.

**Organisational Planning**

[Home](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/)

* + [Our School](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=263)
  + [Mission Statement](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=266)
  + [Our School Code](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=518)
  + [List of Teachers / Staff](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=268)
  + [School Location](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=797)
  + [Contact Us](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=7)
* [For Parents](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=310)
  + [Introduction](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=499)
  + [Introduction for parents of new infants](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=462)
  + [School Information Booklet](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=270)
  + [Newsletters](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=274)
  + [Policies](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=272)
  + [Catholic Ethos](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=532)
  + [Sacrements](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=527)
  + [School Enrolment Form](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=276)
  + [Booklists](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=280)
  + [Recommended Reading for Children](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=343)
    - [Best Children’s Books](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=539)
    - [Books for primary school children](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=541)
    - [Books for all ages](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=543)
  + [Recommended Ipad Apps](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=282)
* [Gallery](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=251)
* [News and Recent Events](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=294)
* [Projects](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=286)
  + [Active Schools](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=394)
  + [Aistear](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=830)
  + [Discover Primary Science and Maths (STEM)](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=403)
  + [Green Schools](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=288)
  + [STEPS project (Engineering)](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=396)
  + [Tree of Life](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=834)
* [After School](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=392)
* [Calendar](http://stjohnskenmare.ie/?page_id=292)

1. **Time**

Visual Arts is an intrinsic part of the timetable in our school. Infant classes should allow for 2 hours and 30 minutes per week for Arts education, to include Visual Arts, Music and Drama and the other classes should show 3 hours per week. At certain times of the year, teachers may block time when they are working on particular subjects or preparing for special occasions. This scheduling should be reflected in individual teachers’ planning.

1. **Displays**

Children’s work is displayed in each classroom and is regularly updated to ensure that the children are inspired by a colourful and constantly changing classroom environment. The school corridors, entrance hall and notice boards are used to display artwork completed by the children. The church is used as a display area at certain times e.g. Christmas, Communion and Confirmation. Local businesses may display artwork e.g. for local competitions.

1. **Resources**

* Paint
* Scissors
* Glue
* Brushes
* Sponges
* Cotton buds
* Craftsticks
* Paper plates
* Cereal boxes
* Pipe cleaners
* Pastels
* Charcoal
* Straws
* Plastic table cloths
* Assortment of paper and card
* Markers, pencils crayons and other writing and colouring implements.
* Fabric and fibre – cloth, thread, cotton woll, needles, hessian.
* Clay, rolling pins, lino, rulers.
* Lollipop sticks, clothes pegs, sellotape.
* Books on famous artists and art and craft activities.
* Picture stimuli – posters, photographs, videos.
* ICT – youtube, google images, art websites e.g. firstpalette.com, twinkl.co.uk
* A folder of art ideas is available in the staff room which is divided into the six strand areas.

**10. Health and Safety**

School personnel are mindful of the health and safety issues associated with the visual arts. Every care will be taken in using glue, scissors, craft knives, clay and other materials. All art materials used should be non-toxic and safe for children to work with. The children will be encouraged to wear old clothing during practical classes to protect uniforms. It might also be necessary for children to wear latex gloves when using glues or fabric paints.

Teachers must pay particular attention to the floor area near the sink when children are changing water. Plastic containers must be used for water. Glass jars are not permitted. Lighting should be adequate and the room well ventilated while work is drying.

**11. Individual Teachers’ Planning and Reporting**

A thematic approach for some aspects of the Visual Arts programme may be employed. This may include topics such as, the seasons, school events, cross-curricular activities, celebrations and festivities. This thematic approach may be reflected in each teacher’s long and short-term planning.

Following consultation, it was decided that the ‘Looking and Responding’ strand unit be incorporated into each lesson, either as the ‘stimulus’ for the lesson (based on the children’s experiences, environment, local and national events), at the end of the lesson, or if time is limited, at a time later in the week, as mentioned previously.

**12. Staff Development**

Teachers are supported, where possible, by the Board of Management to develop their range of skills and expertise in the visual arts. Attendance at courses in the Education Centre is promoted and the sharing of knowledge and skill facilitated at staff meetings or at school planning days.

Staff talented in the visual arts are invited to lead workshops in particular strands at staff meetings or at other times suitable to staff members. Teachers working on particular strands are also encouraged to invite other teachers and their classes to view their work in the classrooms. Outside experts/skilled parents may be invited to facilitate staff in Visual Arts activities.

**13. Parental/Community Involvement**

Parents with particular skills and interest are invited to support the visual arts programme. They may also be invited to assist in other school events.

Children’s interest in the visual arts can be stimulated by visits to galleries, museums and exhibitions and, where possible, to see artists and craftspeople at work. Parents are encouraged to avail of such learning opportunities for their children. Parents can encourage their children to enter local exhibitions and community events. Information on these events is circulated through the school newsletter.

*Communication to parents*

* Requests for collection of recyclable materials.
* Information regarding children’s usage of the internet and computer for visual arts.
* Information about projects in which the children may be involved.

The visual arts programme is linked with the study of local history, geography, traditions and folklore. The children’s attention is also drawn to interesting aspects of the local landscape and streetscape features.

**14. Success Criteria**

It is hoped that this plan will impact positively on the teaching and learning of Visual Arts in our school. Primarily, the success of this plan will be evident from the degree to which pupils learn to express themselves through each of the strands, by skillfully producing their own artistic creations and by being able to appreciate the artwork of both their peers and accomplished artists.

The implementation of this plan will be evident through the adoption of a more co-ordinated and effective approach to the teaching of Visual Arts across the school. Teachers will be expected to base their planning and teaching of Visual Arts on this plan and also to follow the procedures as described within it.

The efficacy of the plan will be evident from:

- Feedback from pupils, parents and teachers and the school inspector.

- Cuntais míosúila.

- Pupils working at their own level.

- Teacher evaluation and assessment.

**15. Implementation**

The plan will be supported, developed and implemented by school staff, pupils, parents and the school’s Board of Management. The teacher responsible for co-ordinating Visual Arts will co-ordinate the progress of the plan, encourage and accept feedback on its implementation and report to staff on findings. Class teachers are responsible for the implementation of the Visual Arts programme for their own classes.

**16. Review**

The plan will be monitored and evaluated at regular staff meetings. It will be reviewed at these staff meetings to ensure optimum implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum in our school. The teacher responsible for co-ordinating Visual Arts has responsibility for co-ordinating this review. Teachers, parents, the Visual Arts Plan Co-ordinator and the Board of Management will be involved in the review.

**17. Ratification and Communication**

This policy is made available as part of the whole school plan. Following ratification by the Board of Management, it will be communicated to all teachers via the online teachers’ data system and implemented in all classes. A copy of the plan will be available to parents and guardians on the school website.

**Date Created:** October 2021