

Art and DT at The Cavendish School

“The arts are not mere diversions from the important business of education; they are essential resources”.

Elliot W Eisner

Art and DT embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. Art reflects and shapes our history and contributes to the culture, creativity and wealth of the world. It is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject which uses creativity and imagination to experiment, invent and create, as well as providing visual, tactile and sensory experiences. The arts, including dance, drama, music and visual arts, are all powerful modes of communication through which pupils explore and construct a sense of self, achieve their aspirations and provide a unique way of understanding and responding to the world.

By learning about the arts, students can develop a range of essential skills. Unlike more practical subjects like science or math, the arts require pupils to become emotionally involved. Drama, art, and music all require students to reach inside themselves and to use their own feelings, thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Teaching arts subjects involves critiquing pupils’ work, and students must learn to appreciate constructive criticism of their own creativity and expressiveness and learn not to take it personally — something that will benefit them in the future when they receive criticism both in the workplace and in social settings.

Developing key skills and knowledge through participation in Art and DT

The arts aren’t only valuable as stand-alone subjects; they are, in fact, an ideal link between every subject in our school’s curriculum. Not only that, but they are also a fantastic form of delivery for those concepts, recognising that students may enter an understanding of a particular subject from many contrasting starting points (Barnes, 2015).

The visual and performing arts are powerful tools for communication. They allow artists to communicate particular points of view or express attitudes or sentiments about an aspect of society that often stem from personal experience.

Learning through and about the arts enriches the experience of education as well as preparing students for life after school. Art and design encourage self-expression and creativity and can build confidence as well as a sense of individual identity.

Design technology requires a broad range of subject knowledge and draws on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Studying art and design through history helps us to understand different historical contexts and the ways that art has been deployed throughout history to inform and persuade audiences.

Through Art and DT pupils will explore the ideas and meanings in the work of artists, craftspeople and designers. They learn about the diverse roles and functions of art, craft and design in contemporary life, and in different times and cultures. Understanding, appreciation and enjoyment of the visual arts have the power to enrich our personal and public lives. This can be achieved through visits, guest speakers and the latest current affairs focussing upon areas of Art and DT.

School priorities and vision

Our school’s mission statement is ‘Enabling the Self’. As an International Baccalaureate School, our school has a variety of values that we feel are essential to our students’ development and journey with us. These are:



The Art and DT curriculum is designed to incorporate all aspects of our IB learning statements in order to create well rounded students. At the end of their school journey, our students will be:

- **Knowledgeable** about influential artists, craft makers and designers
- Be **reflective** about the similarities and differences in practises and disciplines
- **Moral** through consideration of Art as an expression of self
- Able to **celebrate the differences** in cultural art forms
- Able to **think** critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of forms of art
- **Caring** in feedback and subject matter, use art as expression of world need and improvement (UNESCO)
- Able to **communicate** their thoughts, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways
- Able to give a **balanced** view on different mediums, expressions and artists.
- Confident in **inquiring** about historic and current artists and their relevance
- Have the **courage** to explore and share their own ideas and experiences

Art and DT enables us to look within and to listen to ourselves, realize who we are, and what we care about. It connects us to our thoughts, feelings, perceptions, and our outer realities and experiences. At The Cavendish School our mission is to create learning that allows our students to become happy and confident individuals who can be fully immersed in their communities. Art and design will teach our students that aims can be held flexibly; that the goal one starts with can be changed midway in the process as unexpected opportunities arrive, that problems can have more than one solution, and to exercise judgement by looking inside themselves and calculating conclusions. These are just a selection of the vital attributes of Art and DT, which can support our children to enjoy learning, achieve their potential and develop key skills they need to thrive as independent, emotionally and socially confident young adults.

References

Barnes, J. (2015) *Cross-Curricular Learning 3-14*. 3rd edn. London: SAGE Publications Ltd, p.171.