

Robin Hood Primary School

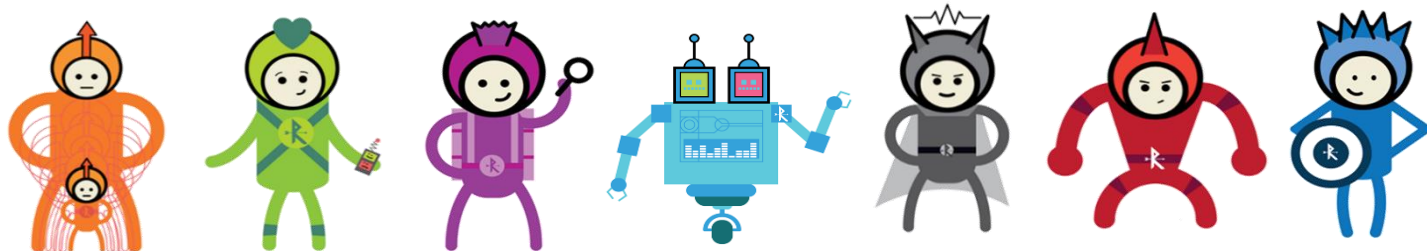


Design and Technology Policy

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Robin Hood Primary School D&T Policy

“Technology makes possibilities. Design makes solutions so let’s encourage young learners to think creatively and critically. Welcome innovation and problems solving, build in opportunities for children to plan and evaluate and welcome our leaders of tomorrow.” (John Meada, TED Talks, 2014)



Introduction

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject which enables pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to engage confidently with the designed and made world.

At Robin Hood Primary School, we deliver a high-quality Design and Technology curriculum in line with the National Curriculum (DfE, 2014). Pupils design and make purposeful products for real users and authentic contexts, applying creativity, innovation and critical thinking to develop effective solutions. In doing so, they consider function, aesthetics, sustainability and overall impact.

The subject draws upon a range of disciplines, including mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art. Pupils evaluate past and present technological developments to develop a critical understanding of their influence on daily life, society and the wider world.

Our curriculum reflects the importance of preparing pupils to respond to global challenges such as environmental sustainability, climate change and responsible resource use. Pupils engage in designing solutions to authentic, real-world problems, enabling them to understand how Design and Technology contributes to innovation, industry and improving quality of life. Through this, they begin to recognise their role in shaping a more sustainable future.

Design and Technology at Robin Hood Primary School is distinguished by its emphasis on purposeful design and environmental responsibility. Pupils are encouraged to consider the long-term impact of their choices throughout the design process, fostering thoughtful and informed decision-making. The curriculum also promotes independence, creativity and pupil voice, ensuring that learners take ownership of their work and develop confidence as capable and reflective designers.

The curriculum is designed with high ambition for all pupils. As a result, pupils leave Robin Hood Primary School well-prepared for the next stage of their education and equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to engage with an increasingly technological and rapidly changing world.

Intent

At Robin Hood Primary School, our intent is to provide a broad, balanced and progressive Design and Technology curriculum that develops pupils as creative, knowledgeable and responsible designers.

Pupils are equipped with the technical knowledge and disciplinary understanding required to design, make and evaluate purposeful products with increasing confidence and precision. Through carefully sequenced learning, pupils develop problem-solving skills and learn to think critically about the wider implications of design, including sustainability, ethics and environmental impact. They are encouraged to respond thoughtfully to real-life and global challenges, preparing them to contribute positively to society.

In line with the National Curriculum, pupils are taught to design purposeful and functional products for specific users, generate and communicate ideas effectively, select and use appropriate tools and materials safely, and

evaluate their work against clear design criteria. They also develop an understanding of nutrition and healthy eating. The curriculum is underpinned by the design–make–evaluate process, ensuring that pupils understand the iterative nature of design and the importance of refining and improving their work over time.

Design and Technology also supports the development of key learning behaviours within the school. Pupils engage in meaningful design challenges, demonstrate resilience when refining their work, collaborate effectively with others and reflect critically on their outcomes. They develop respect for different viewpoints and take pride in their work, while building knowledge that is retained and applied over time.

A strong emphasis is placed on oracy, vocabulary development and knowledge retention. Pupils are taught to articulate their thinking, justify their decisions and engage in meaningful discussion using a range of structured talk approaches. Through carefully planned retrieval opportunities and explicit vocabulary instruction, pupils develop a secure understanding of key concepts and terminology, enabling them to know more, remember more and apply learning confidently across contexts.

High ambition underpins all aspects of the curriculum. All pupils, regardless of their starting point, are supported through adaptive teaching, appropriate challenge and carefully structured learning, enabling them to succeed and develop as confident and capable designers.

Curriculum Rationale

The Design and Technology curriculum has been carefully structured to ensure that pupils build knowledge and skills progressively over time. Learning is sequenced so that foundational knowledge is secured before being applied in increasingly complex and demanding contexts.

Sufficient time is allocated for each project to allow pupils to engage fully in the design process. This ensures depth of learning rather than superficial coverage. Projects are purposefully selected to reflect meaningful, real-life contexts, including those linked to sustainability and environmental responsibility. Pupils are exposed to a diverse range of designers, engineers and innovators, ensuring representation and challenging stereotypes.

This approach ensures that pupils develop both technical competence and a clear understanding of the relevance and importance of Design and Technology within the wider world. Progression is supported through clearly defined end points and mapped knowledge and skills across year groups, ensuring continuity and increasing complexity.

Implementation

Design and Technology is taught through a clearly sequenced curriculum across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Units are delivered regularly throughout the academic year, allowing sufficient time for pupils to engage fully in the design process.

Each lesson begins with memory retention activities designed to retrieve prior knowledge and skills. These activities activate recent learning, revisit content taught earlier in the academic year and provide flashback opportunities to recall knowledge from previous years. This systematic approach supports long-term memory and ensures pupils know more and remember more over time.

Each unit follows the structured process of designing, making and evaluating. Pupils investigate existing products, develop design criteria, generate and communicate ideas, and select appropriate materials and tools to create purposeful outcomes. Evaluation is integral to the process, enabling pupils to reflect on and refine their work.

Teaching focuses on the progressive development of technical knowledge, including mechanisms, structures, textiles, food technology and, where appropriate, simple electrical systems. Pupils are explicitly taught to use tools, materials and equipment safely, accurately and with increasing independence.

Projects are carefully structured yet remain open-ended, allowing pupils to develop creativity and innovation. Opportunities for both independent and collaborative work support the development of communication, negotiation and problem-solving skills.

Oracy is embedded throughout Design and Technology lessons to support thinking, discussion and reasoning. Pupils regularly engage in structured talk through the use of continuum lines, talk tactics, sentence stems and the *I See, I Think, I Wonder* routine. These approaches encourage pupils to explain their ideas, justify design decisions, evaluate products critically and build upon the contributions of others.

Teachers use effective pedagogical approaches, including explicit modelling, questioning and retrieval practice, to support knowledge retention. Key vocabulary is introduced at the start of each lesson alongside an illustrated image and clear definition. Teachers explicitly make connections to previous learning and links across different curriculum subjects to help pupils build increasingly connected knowledge. Vocabulary is carefully sequenced and revisited over time so that pupils can increasingly articulate their thinking with precision and confidence.

Widgit symbols and visual supports are used where appropriate to support accessibility, particularly for pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) and those who benefit from additional language scaffolds. Learning is adapted to ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, can access the curriculum and achieve success.

Teachers identify and address misconceptions through concept cartoons, talking points and carefully planned discussion opportunities. These approaches encourage pupils to consider alternative perspectives, challenge ideas respectfully and deepen their understanding. Vocabulary Bullseye activities are used regularly within lessons to assess pupils' understanding of key terminology and inform future teaching.

Learning is consistently linked to real-world contexts, enabling pupils to understand the relevance of their work. Where appropriate, pupils engage with authentic design briefs that reflect real challenges, including sustainability, resource management and improving everyday life.

Over time, pupils develop increasing independence and precision. Knowledge and skills are systematically revisited, enabling pupils to embed learning in long-term memory. Opportunities for deliberate practice, refinement and evaluation ensure that outcomes are of a consistently high standard. Teachers are supported through ongoing professional development to ensure strong subject knowledge and consistent delivery of the curriculum.

Assessment

Assessment in Design and Technology is ongoing and integral to teaching and learning. Teachers make informed judgements based on pupils' ability to apply knowledge, demonstrate technical skills and engage effectively in the design process. Evidence is gathered through design work, evaluation, discussion and observation of outcomes.

Formal assessment points are used to monitor progress and inform future planning. The focus is on what pupils know, remember and can do over time, ensuring that learning is secure and embedded.

Assessment is used diagnostically to identify gaps in knowledge and misconceptions. Teachers use this information to adapt teaching, provide targeted support and ensure that all pupils make sustained progress from their starting points.

Vocabulary development forms an important aspect of assessment. Teachers use pupil discussion, questioning, Vocabulary Bullseye activities and retrieval tasks to assess pupils' understanding and application of subject-specific terminology. Oracy-based approaches provide valuable evidence of pupils' conceptual understanding, their ability to make links between learning and their confidence in communicating ideas using appropriate technical language.

Impact

The impact of the Design and Technology curriculum is reflected in the secure and progressive development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and technical skills.

Pupils can articulate their learning clearly using subject-specific vocabulary and explain their design decisions with reference to purpose, user and function. They demonstrate increasing independence, applying the design–make–evaluate process with confidence and precision.

Evidence from pupil work, discussion and assessment shows clear progression over time. Pupils retain and apply key knowledge across projects, approaching new challenges creatively and with resilience. Outcomes demonstrate deliberate practice, thoughtful refinement and high-quality end products.

Pupils show a developing awareness of sustainability and environmental responsibility, making informed choices in their designs. They understand the broader impact of Design and Technology on society and the environment.

Leaders evaluate the impact of the curriculum through monitoring, assessment and pupil voice. As a result, pupils leave Robin Hood Primary School well-prepared for the next stage of their education and equipped to contribute positively to an increasingly technological and rapidly changing world.

Leadership, Monitoring and Accountability

The Design and Technology subject leader provides strategic leadership and ensures the quality and consistency of provision across the school.

Monitoring activities, including lesson visits, work scrutiny, planning reviews and pupil voice, are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum. This information informs professional development, curriculum refinement and school improvement priorities.

Senior leaders and governors receive regular updates, ensuring robust accountability and a clear understanding of the subject's strengths and areas for development.