



TO LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL THINGS
BY
LEARNING TOGETHER
LOVING OURSELVES
LOVING EACH OTHER
LOVING ALL PEOPLE
LOVING LIFE ITSELF
AND
CONSTANTLY STRIVING FOR
EXCELLENCE
WORTHY OF OUR GOD GIVEN GIFTS.



Reception Art Teaching and Progression

This document expands the Reception foundations in the whole-school Art curriculum grid. It follows the school's contexts through the year and supports learning through expressive arts, exploration of materials, observation, discussion and creative play. Activities are planned opportunities that teachers adapt to children's interests, experiences and starting points.

Key Knowledge	Key Skills
Artists use line, shape, colour, texture, pattern and space to create artwork.	Draw from observation, imagination and experience.
The primary colours are red, yellow and blue.	Use drawing and painting tools with increasing control.
Colours can be mixed to create new colours and shades.	Mix and select colours for a purpose.
Materials can be cut, folded, joined, arranged and manipulated to create artwork.	Cut, fold, join and construct using a variety of materials.
Natural materials can be arranged to create temporary artwork.	Print, create patterns and arrange materials thoughtfully.
Artists observe closely to represent people, animals and objects.	Talk about choices made and revisit work to improve it.

Unit	Birth to 5 Matters links	Key art teaching points and vocabulary	Activities and children's choices Continuous Provision and teacher-led	Progression and ELG links
Autumn 1 Self-portraits and primary colours	Range 5 — Creating with materials Develops an understanding of using lines to enclose a space, and begins to use drawing to represent actions and objects based on imagination, observation and experience Continues to explore colour and how colours can be changed Range 6 — Being imaginative and expressive Creates representations of imaginary and real-life ideas, events, people and objects	Observe and name facial features. Use lines and shapes to represent a face, adding details noticed through observation. Explore how drawing tools make different marks. Recognise and name red, yellow and blue. Learn how to load a brush, apply paint and rinse it when changing colours. Vocabulary: portrait, feature, line, shape, primary colours	Look in mirrors and talk about features before drawing self-portraits. Explore ways to represent eyes, mouths and hair. Choose from available drawing materials and explain what their marks represent. Explore primary-colour painting through lines, shapes and patches of colour, noticing what happens when colours meet.	From exploratory marks towards recognisable representations. Begin to connect what they observe with the marks they make. Make simple choices about tools and colour and establish routines for using materials.
Autumn 2 Cards—sculpt and build	Range 5 — Creating with materials Uses tools for a purpose Uses various construction materials, eg joining pieces, stacking vertically and horizontally, balancing, making enclosures and creating spaces Range 6 — Creating with materials Uses increasing dexterity, knowledge and understanding of tools and techniques and growing expertise with key materials to explore their interests and enquiries and develop thinking	Explore the properties of paper and card: bending, folding, tearing and cutting. Learn how a fold can help a card stand. Use glue or tape to join pieces. Explore arranging pieces before attaching them. Notice how folded or scrunched paper can project from a surface. Vocabulary: fold, cut, join, arrange, texture	Make a card for a chosen person or purpose. Explore folding a base, arranging decorations and adding raised paper features. Choose colours, textures and shapes that communicate an idea. Try different positions before sticking pieces down and test whether the card stands.	From choosing materials for appearance towards choosing them for a purpose. Build on control developed through drawing and painting. Begin to plan a simple outcome and change a fold, arrangement or join when it does not work.

Unit	Birth to 5 Matters links	Key art teaching points and vocabulary	Activities and children's choices Continuous Provision and teacher-led	Progression and ELG links
Spring 1 Junk modelling— People Who Help Us; mixing primary colours	Range 5 — Creating with materials Continues to explore colour and how colours can be changed Range 6 — Creating with materials Develops their own ideas through experimenting with and combining diverse materials, eg light, digital images, loose parts etc., to express and communicate discoveries and understanding	Select materials by considering shape, size and purpose. Revisit joining and learn when glue or tape is useful. Explore a broad base and balanced placement to help models stand. Combine primary colours and notice new colours. Begin to repeat a mixture deliberately. Vocabulary: model, build, balance, mix, attach	Create a model connected to People Who Help Us—for example, a person, vehicle or building. Choose boxes, tubes and other materials to represent different parts. Work individually or with others, explaining choices and testing joins. Explore colour mixtures on a separate surface and use selected colours on models where appropriate. Share the model and explain the materials, joins and colour mixtures used.	From simple assembly towards a planned construction. Apply earlier folding and joining experiences to a larger model. Choose materials for particular features, solve practical problems with support and move from accidental colour mixing towards purposeful mixtures. ELG - Creating with Materials Safely use and explore a variety of materials, tools and techniques, experimenting with colour, design, texture, form and function.
Spring 2 Puppets and printing	Range 5 — Creating with materials Uses tools for a purpose Range 5 — Being imaginative and expressive Uses available resources to create props to support play Range 6 — Creating with materials Uses the visual elements of line, colour, shape and space etc. with intention and purpose, in order to make visible their own ideas and share these with others	Use facial features and material choices to suggest a character. Apply earlier cutting and joining skills to a puppet. Learn that printing transfers an impression from a surface. Explore how the amount of paint and the action of pressing and lifting affect a print. Repeat impressions to create a pattern. Vocabulary: puppet, print, press, repeat, pattern	Make a simple card or paper puppet, choosing its character, expression and details. Test whether attached features stay in place during use. Explore printing with objects, textured surfaces or simple printing tools. Select a print or repeated pattern for the puppet's clothing or a setting. Use the puppet to act out a chosen character in a familiar or invented story.	From practising techniques separately towards combining them for an intended effect. Revisit facial drawing, colour choices and joining. Develop more deliberate control when printing and make adjustments after testing the puppet or examining impressions. ELGs Creating with Materials 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.

Unit	Birth to 5 Matters links	Key art teaching points and vocabulary	Activities and children's choices Continuous Provision and teacher-led	Progression and ELG links
Summer 1 Andy Goldsworthy —landscapes	Range 6 — Creating with materials Uses the visual elements of line, colour, shape and space etc. with intention and purpose, in order to make visible their own ideas and share these with others Range 6 — Being imaginative and expressive Chooses particular movements, instruments, sounds, colours and materials for their own imaginative purposes	Notice colour, shape, size and texture in natural materials. Look closely at selected Goldsworthy artworks and describe how materials are arranged. Explore lines, circles, repeated arrangements and spaces between objects. Recognise that an artwork can be rearranged and can be temporary. Vocabulary: natural, texture, arrange, pattern, space	Explore natural materials and select pieces for an outdoor arrangement. Create lines, circles, pathways or another chosen design, individually or collaboratively. Try grouping materials by colour, size or texture. Move pieces, compare arrangements and explain which version they prefer and why.	From arranging pieces mainly to fit towards deliberate composition. Apply earlier choices about placement and pattern to unfamiliar materials. Negotiate shared decisions and refine an arrangement before considering it complete. ELG - 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.
Summer 2 Tinting, shading and animal pictures	Range 5 — Creating with materials Continues to explore colour and how colours can be changed Range 6 — Creating with materials Uses increasing dexterity, knowledge and understanding of tools and techniques and growing expertise with key materials to explore their interests and enquiries and develop thinking Uses the visual elements of line, colour, shape and space etc. with intention and purpose, in order to make visible their own ideas and share these with others	Observe an animal's recognisable shapes, features and markings. Combine shapes and add details through drawing. Explore adding white to make a colour lighter and small amounts of black to make it darker. Use brush movements and repeated marks to suggest fur, feathers, spots or stripes. Vocabulary: observe, detail, mix, lighter, darker	Choose an animal from photographs, books or observation. Explore its shapes and markings before making a picture. Trial lighter and darker colours, then select colours and tools for the animal and its surroundings. Revisit the picture to add features, change marks or improve an area. Talk about choices and changes.	Towards more detailed representation and purposeful technique selection. Draw on the year's experiences of observation, mark making, colour mixing and composition. Work with increasing control, choose approaches for a reason and explain how the work has developed. ELGs Creating with Materials Share their creations, explaining the process they have used. Fine Motor Skills Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing.

Progression across Reception

Children move from exploring tools and materials and making simple choices towards selecting techniques for a purpose, combining processes, solving practical problems and revisiting work. Increasing independence develops through repeated opportunities and responsive adult teaching.

Birth to 5 Matters (2nd edition, 2026): the statements are from Expressive Arts and Design. Ranges 5 and 6 overlap and are revisited according to children's development; they are not fixed termly expectations.

Progression and the links to Year 1

In EYFS, children develop the foundations for Year 1 Art through exploring materials, observing closely, making choices and revisiting their ideas. Self-portraits and animal pictures develop the use of lines, shapes and recognisable details, preparing children for Catherine Rayner-inspired drawing and Modigliani portraits. Exploring primary colours, colour mixing and lighter and darker shades builds towards the painting techniques used in Lines, Miró and Tree of Life.

Card making, junk modelling and puppets develop control when cutting, folding, arranging and joining materials, preparing children for the paper constructions in Year 1 Playground. Printing and Goldsworthy-inspired arrangements introduce repetition, pattern and the positioning of shapes and objects. Across these experiences, children learn to describe their choices, discuss artwork and make simple improvements. Year 1 builds on these foundations through more deliberate control of materials, increasingly detailed representations and purposeful use of artists' ideas.