**Art Sketchbooks**

The sketchbooks are a way for children to document their Art learning journey, to have a space for creativity and an opportunity to take risks with Art. The sketchbooks are intended to have six purposes for recording the children’s engagement and learning.

**Recording Responses**

The sketchbook is used as an initial way of recording responses to various stimuli. The most common form of this is through drawings. The children should be encouraged to think of it as the place to practise, develop and focus their work; a place where it is ‘okay to make mistakes’. The sketchbook will act as a reference source for drawings and a resource for future work. Where appropriate work by the children should be dated and titled to provide a suitable record for both the teacher and the pupils.

Drawing in the sketchbook can take many forms:

❖ A visual record of observations made from a range of first-hand sources, such as interesting objects, plant forms, buildings, people.

❖ Record a personal response to experiences and environment - a way of communicating ideas, feelings and interests.

❖ A focus on shape, to practise drawing certain features, and to gather information for use on a larger piece of work.

❖ Practise techniques such as shading, perspective and drawing from different viewpoints.

❖ Working drawings for ideas of things the children want to make (collage, 3D work).

❖ Investigative sketches to gather information of how things are made or work.

❖ An 'ideas book' to explore possibilities and alternatives.

**Gather resources and materials**

Children should be given opportunities to collect visual information and use it as a source material for their art work. By the end of Year 6 children should be selecting their own visual information to collect in order to experiment with ideas suggested to them.

The sketchbook can be used as a place to collect:

• Photographs, postcards, pictures from magazines, comics, cards, stamps, calendars.

• Photocopies of art works, other children’s work, patterns, landscapes etc.

• Samples of textures, fabrics, paper, and other materials.

• Poems, short stories, vocabulary, music titles, used to stimulate a response.

• Lists of resources that the children might need to produce a piece of art.

**Explore and use media**

The children can use the sketchbook as a place to keep records of their own, or other children’s, exploration of media. Pupils should be encouraged to comment on the media and techniques used, even at a basic level (eg ‘smudge it with your fingers’).

The sketchbook can include:

• Colour strips from colour mixing.

• Tone bars from tone work.

• Studies of the effects of media on different types of paper, card etc.

• Notes on the use of media e.g. how to mix a certain colour or get a certain effect.

• Rubbings with different media.

• Mark making (Examples of brush strokes, pencil lines, pastel strokes, rubbings etc).

• ICT print-outs and distorted images.

Pupils should be encouraged to practise their drawing skills regularly. They should develop the willingness to make working drawings (in a range of media) and to accept that it is good practice to re-work drawings (without the need for an eraser) as they observe with increasing accuracy and developing understanding.

Pupils should be challenged to draw:

• From observation, imagination and experience using their sketchbooks where appropriate;

• At different scales and on different surfaces;

• Using different media

• For different purposes, eg to explore ideas, to explain ideas to themselves and others, to record information about what has been observed.

While it is important to establish and develop the skills of drawing and painting, all pupils will benefit from working in three dimensions and sculpture, using textile and ceramic processes, and working with ICT and video. These media and processes not only teach pupils about tactile qualities, but also help them to understand the concept of space, the use of rhythm, spacing, sound and sequencing. It teaches them how to create and interpret mood and expression, how to use textural layers in materials and sound, and how to set the context. It also gives them the confidence to suggest and echo ideas. These are skills needed for traditional art forms and also for advertising, film making and other art forms such as dance, music and writing.

**Review and modify**

Pupils can use sketchbooks to record their thoughts on the artwork that they have produced. They can take part in a critical dialogue identifying positive features in their work and ways in which their work could be developed or improved. In its simplest form this could take the form of a list of comments (alongside a photograph or photocopy of the work) saying what they like about the picture and what they would do differently if they did it again. Whenever children decide they have not drawn something right and to start again, they are reviewing their work. Avoiding erasing or throwing away earlier attempts provides the pupil and teacher with a method of review.

**Knowledge and Understanding**

It is important for children to gain knowledge and understanding of how artists and craftspeople go about their work and some of this information is recorded in the sketchbook. Develop understanding Postcards of other artists’ work can be stuck in and annotated with information or comments. Laying tracing paper over the picture and writing in detail about particular parts or aspects can be a useful exercise as well as brainstorming particular vocabulary.

**Respond to and Evaluate**

The children can record their responses to the ideas, methods and approaches of artists and other children in their sketchbooks. The sketchbook could be a place to compare different approaches. The sketchbook might include:

❖ Description of things that the children have made and notes on the actual technical processes involved.

❖ Annotations, labels and descriptions of materials and methods to be used.

❖ Evaluations of ideas, methods and plans.

❖ Reflecting, reviewing and identifying progress.

❖ Particular works that interest them in school and on visits to museums, galleries and exhibitions.

❖ Analysis of methods and techniques used by different artists, craftspeople and designers.