



11 September 2025

Dear Parent/Carer,

I am writing to you as your child has recently begun an Art GCSE course. We are thrilled that so many hard working and talented artists have selected to study an art subject for GCSE this year and are really looking forward to working with them over the course.

We feel that it is important to inform parents of the requirements of the course as they are very different from almost all other subjects. While your child will be informed of the requirements of the course as it progresses, we are aware that this information does not always get shared at home.

Unlike all other subjects, Art and Design is still very heavily weighted towards coursework. All of the work that students produce in year 10, and all of the work produced in year 11 until January, is their coursework. This means that the work that your child is producing now will directly contribute to their final grade for their GCSE, this is not the case for any other subject. The coursework is worth 60% of the student's final GCSE grade. This means that the grade that they achieve for this current project, is likely to be the grade that they achieve overall for their GCSE.

Because all of the work the students are producing is for their coursework, and worth 60% of their final grade, we cannot write on the students' work. If you look inside the front cover of your child's sketchbook you will find their yellow learning ladder, this informs students of what they need to do for each task, how to complete it well and is where all of the work is marked. If you are interested, you can have a look at this sheet periodically to see how they are getting on and read any advice offered to help them to improve. On this sheet, you will also find your child's current predicted grade and their target grade.

If your child therefore fails to complete a piece of work that is set in lesson or for homework, this is a few marks that they will not achieve, almost like just not answering a question in one of their exams. For this reason, we have the department policy of setting afterschool mandatory catch up, if any work is left incomplete by the deadline. This is not set as a punishment, but as an opportunity for students to catch up on the coursework that is missing at school with support from their teacher.

## TARGETS

In most subjects, students have been given their target grade for the end of year 10. We cannot do this as because the work that they are producing currently is worth 60% of the final mark, they need to be aiming for their end of year 11 target now (as the work they are producing now is the work that will be graded by the examiner at the end of year 11). Therefore, the target that can be seen on the student's learning ladder is their end of year 11 target which they must aim to achieve or exceed with this project.

## HOMEWORK

There is a bit of a myth around the amount of homework given out in Art and Design. Almost every piece of work is started over a series of lessons (usually 3) in school, but as students work at different speeds



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**Other schools in our Trust:**  
Kennett Primary School  
The Shade Primary School  
The Weatheralls Primary School

(particularly in art subjects) they are asked to complete the work at home if not yet finished. It is important that students make the very most of lesson time and therefore would have a minimal amount of work to complete at home. Where homework is set, we always endeavour to allow students a full week to complete it. With art work it can be difficult to know when to stop and therefore some students spend hours agonising over their work at the detriment of other subjects. We advise that students should need to spend no more than a maximum of three hours on their art homework within the week that they have been given to do it.

If completing work is challenging for students or if they would benefit from using some of our materials or expertise, we offer an afterschool Art session in the art classrooms on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 3pm – 5pm.

## DEADLINES

Throughout the course, students undertake 3 projects. The first two form their coursework (60%) and the last one is for their exam (40%). The exam in Art is also very different from all other exams. It lasts for 10 weeks and the students have to fill up a sketchbook during this time (just like with their coursework, but with less time). At the end, just like with the coursework there is a 10-hour exam.

Dates	Project	Weighting
September 2025 – December 2025	Unit 1 Coursework: Freedom	60%
January 2026 – November 2026	Unit 2 Coursework: (Title released by examination board in January)	
November 2026 – January 2027	Making improvements based on feedback	
January 2027 – April 2027	Unit 3: Exam (Title released by examination board in January)	40%

## 'FINAL PIECE DAYS (10-hour exam)'

At the end of each project (including the exam project) students will have a 10 hour 'final piece exam' to complete their final piece. This exam takes place over 2 days, so students instead of attending normal lessons on these days, the students will come to their usual art classroom, with their usual art teacher. There will be three of these during the course, one at the end of each project.

These final piece exam days represent the end of each project and they are therefore are the final deadlines for each project. Therefore, these times (December 2025, November 2026 and April 2027) are likely to be pressure points for students in the course where they work hard to improve their submission before it is handed in. Any students that have slipped behind on any work set during the project are likely to find this time particularly stressful, but we are here to support them if required. Ideally, if all of the deadlines are met throughout the project, this situation will not occur.

Finally, if there is anything that we can do to support your child or if you have any questions about the course, please do not hesitate to contact us via email. We find that regular communication with Parents often helps students to overcome any difficulties and supports them to make excellent progress.

Yours Sincerely

Mrs Anna Harvey

Director Of Art and Design Technology