ABBEY MEAD
PRIMARY ACADEMY

# Design Technology Policy

2026/2027

## National curriculum Purpose of study

Design Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject in which pupils use creativity and imagination to design and make products that solve real and relevant problems in a variety of contexts. In doing so, they consider their own needs, as well as the needs, wants and values of others. Pupils develop a broad range of subject knowledge and skills, drawing on disciplines such as mathematics, science, engineering, computing and art.

Through the design, making and evaluation process, pupils learn to take risks and become resourceful, innovative and enterprising, developing the skills and attitudes required to be capable citizens. By evaluating both past and present design and technology, pupils gain a critical understanding of its impact on daily life and the wider world. High-quality Design Technology education makes an essential contribution to creativity, culture, economic development and well-being.

## Aims

The National Curriculum for Design and Technology aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop the creative, technical and practical expertise needed to perform everyday tasks confidently and to participate successfully in an increasingly technological world
- build and apply a range of knowledge, understanding and skills in order to design and make high-quality prototypes and products for a range of users
- critique, evaluate and test their ideas and products, as well as the work of others
- understand and apply the principles of nutrition and learn how to cook

## Planning:

To ensure clear progression in Design Technology across the school:

- DT projects are carefully mapped across each area of Design Technology from EYFS to Year 6 to ensure clear progression in knowledge, skills and understanding.
- A progression of skills document clearly outlines the core skills and key elements each year group needs to cover when teaching DT projects, ensuring consistency and continuity across the curriculum.
- Design Technology is integrated within our curriculum units, with purposeful cross-curricular links made to subjects such as English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography. This ensures learning in Design Technology is meaningful and builds upon pupils' prior and current knowledge.
- Each DT project is underpinned by a clear, purposeful design brief, providing pupils with an authentic context, intended user and specific outcome to guide their researching, designing, planning, making and evaluating.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, DT skills are linked specifically to curriculum objectives and the Early Learning Goals. Provision is planned to reflect current topics and areas of focus, allowing children to develop early design, making and evaluation skills through purposeful play and practical experiences.
- A range of teaching styles is used to make learning engaging and collaborative, maximising enjoyment and learning potential. These approaches encourage children to take risks and develop confidence when working practically.

- All units follow the same structure of research (including product testing, market research and skills teaching), design, plan (including health and safety planning), make and evaluate.

## Cross-curricula links

Design Technology has strong cross-curricular links with English, Mathematics, Science, History and Geography. DT supports the development of oracy and communication through discussing, explaining and evaluating ideas and products. Pupils apply mathematical skills such as measuring, size and shape to support practical designs and models. Projects are designed to link with science, history and geography to ensure learning is purposeful and meaningful.

## What we want Design Technology to look like at Abbey?

At Abbey, we want Design Technology to be:

- **Creative:** Projects are designed by the children, using taught skills, resulting in unique and individual outcomes.
- **Aspirational:** Teachers and pupils have high expectations. Projects may not always go to plan; however, strong reflection and evaluation are valued over perfect outcomes.
- **Skill-focused:** Pupils learn and apply a range of skills and techniques to design, make and evaluate products based on a design brief.
- **Knowledge-rich:** DT lessons teach both disciplinary and substantive knowledge.
- **Progressive:** Lessons are vocabulary-rich and build progressively on prior learning.
- **Independent:** Pupils confidently and safely use a range of tools and equipment, understanding their purpose and function.

## Inclusion

At Abbey, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils can access, participate in and achieve within the Design and Technology curriculum. We recognise that pupils may require different levels of support, scaffolding and challenge to enable them to become confident, creative and independent designers and makers.

Inclusion is considered at the planning stage of each DT unit, with teachers identifying potential barriers to learning and making purposeful adaptations to suit the needs of their pupils. These adaptations should maintain the integrity of the design process and ensure that all pupils are working towards ambitious learning objectives.

### Adaptations may include:

- **Pupils with SEND:** Providing adapted tools and equipment, visual instructions, task breakdowns, pre-prepared materials, additional modelling and opportunities for supported practical exploration. Teachers should consider the physical, sensory, communication and cognitive demands of each unit when planning adaptations.
- **Pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL):** Using visual vocabulary mats, labelled diagrams, real-life examples, demonstrations and practical modelling to develop understanding of technical vocabulary and processes. Opportunities for paired discussion and collaborative designing should support pupils in articulating and communicating their ideas.
- **Pupils working at greater depth or exceeding age-related expectations:** Providing opportunities for increased independence, more complex design briefs, additional design constraints and greater experimentation with materials, structures and mechanisms. Pupils should be encouraged to justify design decisions, refine prototypes, evaluate against specific criteria and consider the functionality and sustainability of their products.

### Unit-specific inclusion planning

Teachers should consider the particular demands of each DT unit and identify adaptations that will enable all pupils to access the intended learning. For example:

- **Structures:** Consider alternative construction materials, joining techniques and adapted tools to support pupils' fine motor skills, while challenging others to investigate load-bearing capacity and structural stability.
- **Textiles:** Provide pre-threaded needles, larger templates, fabric grips or alternative joining techniques where appropriate, while encouraging greater independence and more complex stitching techniques for pupils requiring additional challenge.
- **Mechanisms:** Use pre-assembled examples, visual sequencing and simplified components to support understanding, while extending others through the exploration of more complex mechanisms and their applications.
- **Cooking and nutrition:** Adapt equipment, preparation techniques and visual recipes to support safe participation, while extending pupils' understanding of ingredients, nutritional value and the science behind cooking processes.

Adaptations should be responsive to individual needs and reviewed throughout each unit. Teachers should ensure that pupils are supported to develop practical skills, problem-solving abilities and independence, rather than having the challenge of the design process removed.

Our aim is for every pupil to experience success as a designer and maker, with appropriate support and challenge enabling them to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to create purposeful, functional and innovative products.

## Safety Guidelines

Overall responsibility for safety lies with the class teacher. All teachers are responsible for ensuring that appropriate safety measures are in place and for modelling the safe use of tools and equipment. When cooking or using specialist equipment in the DT room, such as saws or hot glue guns, teachers must refer to the relevant risk assessments and provide clear demonstrations, ensuring pupils understand how to work safely.