

**Plymouth
School of
Creative Arts**

make
discover
perform

Plymouth School of Creative Arts

Curriculum Statement and Policy

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Created by: D.Strudwick,

Review period: Governing Body
to Determine

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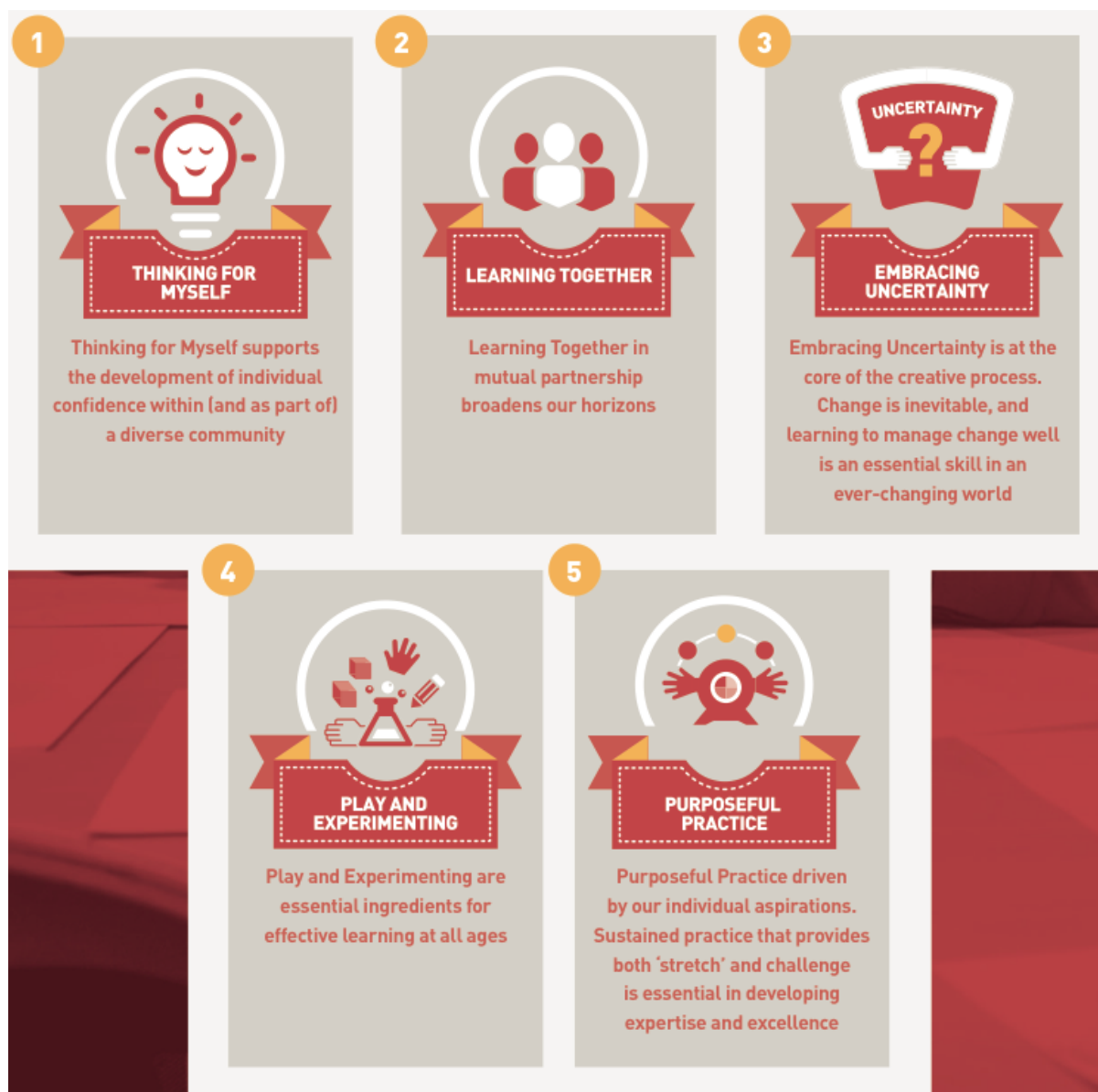
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1. Introduction

1.1 There is a continued intention for the National Curriculum to be ‘balanced and broadly based’. **As a 4-16 Free School, Plymouth School of Creative Arts (PSCA) is not bound (unlike maintained schools) by the National Curriculum.** However, it is with this balanced and broadly based principle aim in mind that the PSCA curriculum has been designed.

2. Curriculum Policy Statement

2.1 In keeping with its vision, ethos and rationale PSCA will offer a broad and balanced curriculum that provides opportunities to learn creatively across all subjects. The curriculum is a vehicle to realise the school’s core purpose of *Creating Individuals, Making Futures*. Learning is underpinned by the process of making, performing and discovering and is supported by these core principles:



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Our approach will enable us to:

- Raise aspirations
- Develop life skills, confidence and improve active participation
- Enable seamless progression from primary through to higher education
- Improve achievement and close the attainment gap
- Achieve high standards in National Qualifications

2.2 The curriculum model is one in which:

It is essential that the work that students take part in is purposeful, has context and looks at how I am learning as well as what I am learning. This fits with our focus on developing intrinsic motivation, which supports students to recognise the choices they make in life and the associated consequences.

2.3 This is realised through the following dimensions:

- The student is at the centre of the learning process. Whilst both learning and teaching are important, learning rather than teaching should drive our processes.
- Arts and Making are at the core of our ethos. Our pedagogy is often linked to an inquiry through making. The process of making can lead to the rest of the room disappearing and being purposefully absorbed. The arts and cultural learning are used in developing understanding, skills and attributes in all subject areas.
- The school has developed a Studio Ecology that utilises a team approach to co-construct the curriculum. This means that students, staff, other experts and parents all have the potential to shape what we do.
- Creativity is a thread that runs through all subjects.
- We do not believe that it is a choice between Academic success and Creativity. These areas are complementary. For example consider the creativity required as a scientist to design an original science experiment.
- The curriculum should reflect and be tailored towards needs. This includes individual, local and national needs. Individual needs and aspirations are met, and obstacles to progression removed.
- Assessment forms an integral part for understanding where students are and what will help them improve.
- As an 'All-Through' school we are able to utilise specialist staff and spaces from an early stage. This links to the developmental needs of each learner.
- Our approach is linked to research and can be evidenced internally through the outcomes of students. Students also act as researchers.
- The curriculum actively plans to develop the attributes described in our Language of Learning.
- The curriculum looks to connect to personal aspiration and has an on-going element around *Being the best you can be*.
- We utilise TED questions – Tell me ..., Explain about ..., Describe ... - to promote self-enquiry and development.
- Students are seen as leaders of learning and as such facilitating student voice is essential.
- We recognise that all the choices we make as a learner have consequences.
- The curriculum will give students the opportunity to select programmes for study from a range of pathways that are equally valued and held in equal esteem. Not all students will be

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expected to do the same things.

- We are developing a curriculum that is appropriately broad and balanced to help prepare young people for life in modern Britain.
- Curriculum experience is resourced in a way that enhances and transforms learning. This includes the use of ICT.
- Learning outdoors and utilising the city as a resource enhance the context for learning.
- We support learners to curate their own learning and life.
- Technology will be embedded in all aspects of school life to enable children to develop digital wisdom.
- Interdependence as well as independence in learning are fostered.
- Learning has a context, preferably real. This means we consider the value of audience and purpose on an on-going basis to develop Knowledge, Skills and Understanding.

2.4 The Governors and the Senior Leadership Team will ensure that planning for curriculum facilitates effective outcomes for learners. They will ensure that the curriculum provision supports the principles of life-long learning and educational opportunities beyond school for students while they are at school and when they leave school. It will ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve nationally accredited qualifications in all courses of study and that all students have the opportunity to follow programmes of study that can contribute towards subsequent accredited study.



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2.5 Every student will have a personalised curriculum based on prior attainment data, student aspirations and challenging targets. Within their individual learning programme, the students will be offered a level of learning appropriate to their recognised needs.

2.6 Our model has been developed in response to a range of best practice evidence, research and real world experience.

2.7 Our staff will ensure progression and coherence by regular monitoring and evaluation and provide equality of access to all individuals, taking due account of special needs or disabilities.

2.8 Each phase of the school will adopt these intentions and principles, interpreting them as appropriate to the age range of the section.

3. Curriculum Planning and Provision

3.1 Curriculum planning and provision is a collaborative exercise involving various teams, students and other groups including those with expertise.

3.2 This planning is shared across staff teams to look for opportunities to enhance our quality as an all through school. This is to support the utilisation of staff specialism and expertise in a creative manner.

3.3. Staff reflect in teams about the impact on learning of experience. This means we use feedback to continually challenge and improve what we offer.

3.4 Staff studio practise and willingness to share what we do with leaders, external experts and parents demonstrates the process of co-construction that we use to develop the curriculum.

3.5 Planning is developed in sequences, of varying lengths depending on the situation. For example some planning runs across years, others may focus on a three-week period or others over a term. Weekly planning is posted on the school server each week to enable greater collaboration and transparency.

3.6 Staff may share various parts of this with parents as this helps secure greater opportunities for learning outside of school.

3.7 Some of the curriculum will be partly developed and delivered by people from outside the school who have specialist skills and knowledge applicable to specific courses of study, which may be creatively, vocationally, or business focused. The school retains accountability for this.

4. Developing the Curriculum

4.1 Phase Teams will develop and deliver the curriculum alongside the supervision of leaders including the Strategic Leadership Team who are accountable to the governors.

4.2 The school has developed a Quality Framework. This supports staff in their Performance Management to challenge themselves positively to improve their practise as an on-going process.

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A habit (such as good teaching or good learning) is formed when a person (teacher, student) knows *what* to do, knows *how* to do it and knows *why* they are doing it.

4.2 Schemes of work are developed across the school. This ensures consistently high standards in learning and teaching across all phases documenting the curricular activities planned for groups of students and coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and GCSE / BTEC syllabi. Schemes of work will also provide a basis for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. These are kept on the school server in the planning folder.

5. Curriculum Overview

Reception

The learning principles are developed into play-based provision that responds to children's needs. The needs and interests of the learners inform planning. Staff utilise a mixture of large and small group work, continual provision, workshop and work alongside. This means that the curriculum responds to individual need and development. There are opportunities to learn inside and out.

In reception we use the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and provision reflects the different areas of learning. In the spring term there is a focus on fiction-based learning that fits with years 1 to 3. Health related learning is planned in a structured manner to build an understanding of healthy lifestyles and safety during the year.

Year 1 to Year 3

From Years 1 to 3 we look to capitalise on learners' confidence helping them build essential skills, knowledge and understanding as a platform for leading their own learning. Students will be immersed in a broad, engaging and highly creative experience. Fundamental to this is the development of language and literacy, numeracy, personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and (of course) creative development. There is flexibility in how weeks, terms and the year is planned indeed we will look to develop a thread through the entire year. The areas chosen have some areas of overlap and connection across year groups.

The school currently assesses using National Curriculum Levels. Student progress is carefully tracked.

Phonics

The school uses a blend of phonics approaches linked to letters and sounds. This includes our scheme 'Bug Club' which has both books and online resources and the use of games including Trugs. As with other areas of the curriculum learners' progress is carefully tracked.

Parents

Parents are able to connect in a number of different ways with the school and this includes an open session each day between 8.30 and 9.00, for reception to Year 3, where parents engage with their child's learning and with staff. Parents also work with staff to construct the Individual Learning Profile for their child.

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Phase 3

In this stage our emphasis is on broadening the horizons and increasing the responsibility of learners. We utilize an abstract thematic linked to an inquiry through making. This approach teaches through subjects for the first 9 weeks which are connected to a theme such as adaptability and linked by an overarching question linked to this theme. Each subject has a scheme of learning. Within each subject a student makes something such as an experiment, a blog, a sculpture, a song, a computer etc. This allows the student to understand adaptability through the subject lens and also to connect this learning to themselves. In the final three weeks of the term students have a chance to design their own project to make something in response to the theme. Whatever is made will have an audience and is shared to engage others. During this stage we assess the students ability to embrace uncertainty; to play and experiment, to practice purposefully, to think for myself, and to learn together. At the end of the term the student has a challenging interview where a student's Individual Learning Profile establishes the next steps for the following term.

6. Extended School Day and Extended Learning

6.1 The school operates an extended day to enable pupils to take part in a range of activities. There is a quiet study space set aside to support students with their homework and access to studios so that pupils can complete work.

6.2 There will be a wide range of after-school clubs provided by both staff and other educators.

6.3 We believe that students learn all the time. For younger students it is essential that we build a love of learning. More formalised homework is a part of the overall learning experience of our students as they get older. The aim is to establish habits that promote learning and to provide preparation for learning in school, as well as extension, reinforcement and practice of learning. From Year 7 onwards we recognise that some pupils may choose to benefit from the school being open beyond the formal school day and therefore may choose to complete their extended learning at school. In response to this a variety of areas are open beyond the formal school day to help provide facilities for further research and study.

8. Monitoring and Review

8.1 The SLT will review this policy alongside governors on a yearly basis.

8.2 Part of our process to monitor and review will include the use of research, learning walks and evaluation of a variety of forms of data.

8.3 The policy's implementation and effectiveness will be monitored by the Headteacher and the Director for Potential and Performance and be promoted and implemented throughout the school.

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