



Very rarely – perhaps once in a working life – does an opportunity like this arise: the occasion of a new departure in creative education, in which to make and shape a new school, indeed a new kind of school, with new pedagogy and new learning horizons, all from scratch.

most formative years. We don't just

want this school for our children,

we want to be part of its making.

**Professor Andrew Brewerton** 

Director, Plymouth School of

Creative Arts Trust

Our vision for Plymouth School of Creative Arts comes directly from our art college ethos of thinking and making, and our ambition is personal and cultural transformation. We see this not as a one-year or five-year project to create a new kind of school, but from the outset a twenty-year project to create a new kind of art student.

It's a pleasure to welcome you and your child to our school. Our purpose is the transformation of student's lives, enabling them to become the best they can be in all areas, achieving academically through a creative, purposeful education. Our specialism is the creative arts and these will be used to develop excellence in a broad and balanced curriculum. Creativity and making run through all we do as this helps students learn how to take high levels of responsibility and lead their own lives.

The strength of partnership that we're continuing to build with parents means we are - quite literally - making a school with you. We understand you are the experts in your child's life, and we will make the time and space to listen to you about your child and their learning as they journey through our school.

We already have a great deal to be proud of in terms of student outcomes and we hold ambitious plans for the future.

Our amazing staff team and a purpose-built space are only a part of what makes the Red House an amazing place to be. Our purpose is 'Creating Individuals, Making Futures' and as such, everything we do is designed and intended to meet your child's needs and aspirations.



Dave Strudwick Headteacher - Plymouth School of Creative Arts





## **Ethos**

#### **WE ARE MAKING A SCHOOL...**

Plymouth School of Creative Arts is a 3-16 mainstream, city centre all-through school sponsored by Plymouth College of Art. We opened in September 2013 and entered our new building in February 2015.

Our vision for Plymouth School of Creative Arts grows out of an established art college ethos in response to the serious erosion of the arts and creativity in schools. Founded in 1856, Plymouth College of Art has a long history as an independent specialist in arts, craft, design and media education in Plymouth and the South West.

Our school is a place for making things – making ideas, making technology, making art - for discovering how knowledge, values and language, identity or experience is made. It is a place of performance, in both senses: performance as doing; performance as achievement. A place of creative learning in all subjects.

Our goal is to secure academic excellence and our learners' ambitions through structure with a purpose, and our purpose can be described in just four words – *Creating Individuals, Making Futures*.

## OUR SCHOOL IS A CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE ARTS, LEARNING AND LIVING WELL

We have very high aspirations around the effort that students put into their learning and development. We ensure that your child will develop in a rounded manner to succeed academically, contribute to their community and strive to be the best they can be.

#### To achieve this we help your child to:

- Develop positive learning habits and behaviours
- 2. Make sense of how they learn best and what is possible for them
- 3. Identify the underlying needs that when met will help an individual fly
- 4. Stretch themselves to achieve new things, even when they are not sure if they can.
- 5. Develop a sense of what is possible in their life
- Develop a sense of purpose that motivates them and ensures a curiosity to learn

#### We offer:

- An 'all-through' school which is childcentred and organised so that each child is really known for who they are, for their individual talent and needs, and for what they might become
- The highest quality staff committed to creative education, high standards and the success and well-being of every child as an individual:
- Deeper learning, not 'teaching to the test', with a rigorous approach to tracking progress and ensuring achievement.
- Every child's natural curiosity and intrinsic motivation to learn, children won't be doing things for a certificate or sticker!

- A friendly and respectful environment where we are known by our first names
- A curriculum that provides depth and diversity in both content and process – the why and how as well as the what of learning
- An innovative studio environment that provides new opportunities for students and parents a creative space that is integral to the wider community
- A considerable number of artists, student teachers, and volunteers who work with our staff, offering high ratios of adults to children in each studio space
- Local, regional, national and international partnerships that allow us to draw on expertise and resources that others might only dream of

Together with our sponsor Plymouth College of Art, our school allows for students to learn creatively and purposefully from foundation stage to masters level in a single continuum of learning that is unique in the UK today.

As a result of their experiences at our school, your child will make great progress, develop self-discipline, develop self-discipline, confidence and the ability to express themselves articulately.

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# Curriculum

We provide a broad curriculum offer that provides opportunities to learn creatively across all subjects. Our process for learning is underpinned by the process of making, performing and discovering and is supported by core principles:



Thinking for Myself supports the development of individual confidence within (and as part of) a diverse community



Learning Together in mutual partnership broadens our horizons



## EMBRACING UNCERTAINTY

**Embracing Uncertainty is at the** core of the creative process. Change is inevitable, and learning to manage change well is an essential skill in an everchanging world



## PLAY AND EXPERIMENTING

Play and Experimenting are essential ingredients for effective learning at all ages



## PURPOSEFUI PRACTICE

Purposeful Practice; driven by our individual aspirations, sustained practice that provides both 'stretch' and challenge is essential to develop expertise and excellence

## Curriculum

WE START FROM A BELIEF THAT WE ARE ALL NATURALLY CREATIVE BUT THAT OVER TIME CREATIVITY IS 'UNTAUGHT'.



A focus purposeful learning with a real context, learning by doing and learning by making, supports the development of new neural pathways. Practice leads to the development of habits of mastery. Creativity is a rigorous and essential ingredient to learning and living well and supports our core purpose; Creating Individuals, Making Futures.

English and Maths are recognised as essential for every individual. Our approach to these core subjects will be the same as our approach to the whole curriculum. Teaching is evidence-based, monitors progression for success, meets needs, utilises creativity and is purposeful. For example, writing is based on children having had a personal experience, engaging with texts that relate to this experience, developing appropriate skills, and having an identified audience for their writing.

The importance of creativity in all subjects is demonstrated in real life whether you are a designer, a scientist or running your own

business. Studying creatively and using the vehicle of the creative arts is neither easy or a soft option. It's about rigour and perseverance, finding new ways, communication and discovery, confidence and performance, learning from failures and using those failures to become even better.

Our assessment processes are transparent and will be focused on the single purpose of improving outcomes for young people. This means we will have assessment systems embedded into our curriculum experience over a range of areas reflecting the core purpose of our school and our specialism in creativity and the arts.

Our staff have specialism and talents that are utilised across the entire school. Our curriculum offer is enhanced by our mutual, purposeful partnerships with our sponsor Plymouth College of Art and a broad range of organisations and countless individual practitioners.

We consider learning to extend beyond the walls of our school, and fully utilise the rich diversity of learning opportunities present in and around the city of Plymouth and from within our local community.

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# Individual & Different Learning

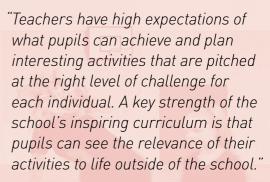
Recognising our uniqueness as individuals and developing learning that's tailored to individual needs, resources and aspirations is at the heart of our approach.

We recognise that every individual perceives the world around them differently, and also learns and develops differently. These differences in perception can be influenced by a range of different factors, including physical and inherited characteristics, our past experiences and our environment. These can contribute to both difficulties and strengths within our individual processes linked to learning.

Each learner has an Individual Learning Profile that is made by school staff, the learner, and parents. This records the conversations that are happening so that we all work together to ensure your child's needs are met.

Our approach develops thinking and evidence from the worlds of neuroscience, psychology and learning theory to create a framework that enables everyone to be the best they can be. We learn best when we're feeling calm and relaxed and we're clear about what we're learning and why. Our aim is for every 'learner' in the school, child or adult, to understand and create the very best conditions for themselves as individuals to learn effectively and purposefully with and alongside others.











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# **Studio Culture**

Learning through a Studio approach is quite distinct from learning in a traditional classroom. It looks, feels and functions quite differently. A team of adults working with different and complementary skills within a flexible space offers more scope for personalised learning; individual needs are recognised and responded to. Our Studio ecology (the physical space, the resources and the high quality of relationships within that space) promotes 'whole person' development and supports learning beyond the school walls - and school age.

#### **WHY-DIGITAL**

Technology is used alongside a number of other tools in our school. We want learners to develop digital expertise and an understanding of when a device, app, or programme can enhance, redefine or inhibit their learning.

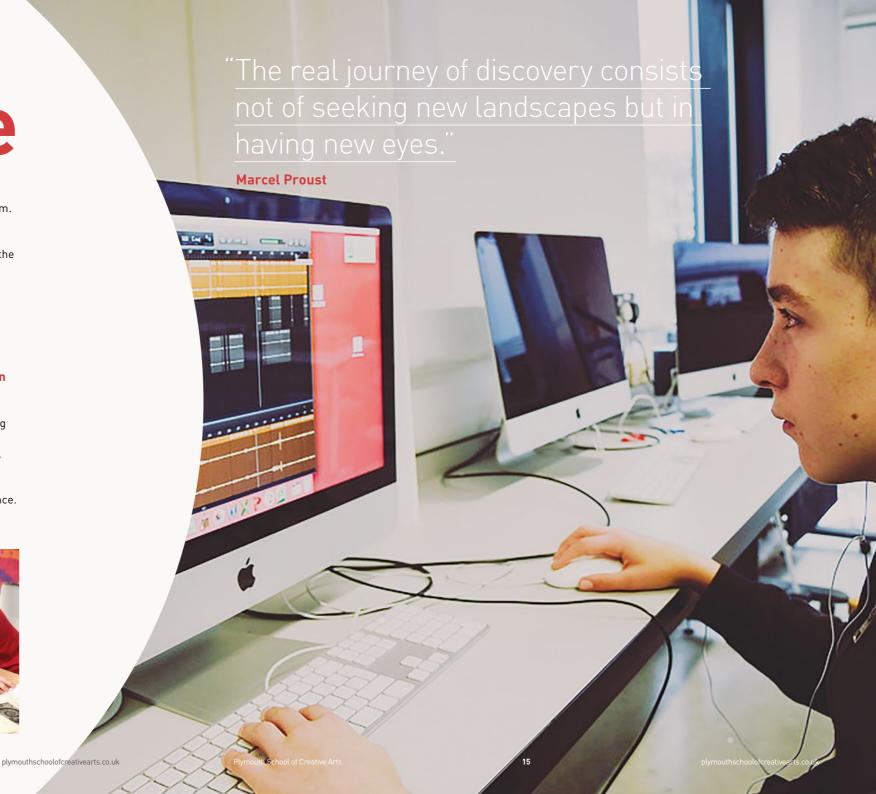
We provide a mixture of devices and applications so that learners understand the merits of each. The use of personal devices will be encouraged with students having the ability to bring their own technology to school from year 3 onwards. Our approach also supports the digital curation of your child's learning. This will help learners objectively assess and consider what they have done, future possibilities and their progression over time. We have systems that will enable parents to access individual pupil records and work so that parents, children and staff all work together to enable the best outcomes.

#### **LEARNING BEYOND THE STUDIO**

We endorse the approach that the environment is the teacher, with a keen eye to the horizon.

Our school will take advantage of its geographical location, with learning taking place across the city, utilising the sea and nearby moors, and opening wider cultural horizons nationally and internationally. Residential trips are scheduled as an important part of the curriculum experience.







# School Structure

#### THE SCHOOL IS ORGANISED INTO FOUR **INTERCONNECTED PHASES:**

#### Phase 1 comprises Pre School to **Year 2** (age 3 to 7)

During this time we build on children's natural curiosity. The aim is to develop a love of learning, supported by core skills. Children learn in a large studio space with high ratios of adult support.

#### Phase 2 comprises Years 4 to 6 (age 8 to 11)

During Phase 2 each learner has access to a wider number of teachers and specialist teaching is introduced in some curriculum areas. This is in readiness for increasing amounts of specialist teaching as each person journeys towards phase 4. The focus at this stage of the school is on becoming increasingly confident to lead my own learning.

#### Phase 3 comprises of Year 7 and 8 (age 11 to 13)

Learning in Phase 3 is extended through becoming a researcher and increasingly high levels of responsibility for myself. Students' learning is connected through a theme, such as innovation or adaptability, and utilises a subject lens that allows students to be the Author, Artist, Historian or Musician.

In Year 8. students will select subject options for their study in Years 9 to 11. These will include a full range of subjects that will support their aspirations for the future.

#### Phase 4 comprises Years 9 to 11 (ages 13 to 16)

Our students will take GCSEs and other qualifications that enable them to be recognised as outstanding. Engagement and success in the final phase

of the school is not driven by the qualifications themselves but by the students' personal career path, future education and life ambitions. See our Next Steps document for further details.

#### Pre School

Plymouth School of Creative Arts Pre School is open to children the Year before they start school. Our children play, make, discover and learn in a stimulating, nurturing and caring environment. Our learning environment is tuned into, and meets the needs of all. Staff develop meaningful and positive relationships, enabling children to feel nurtured, safe and valued. Our Pre School is a studio, fully integrated and part of our school.



Plymouth School of Creative Arts

# Parental Partnership

## AT PLYMOUTH SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS OUR PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS IS BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING APPROACH:

- 1. We want parents to feel welcome in the school.
- Parents have expertise in their own child that staff will not possess.
- Parents have skills and connections that can add significant value into the school community and students' learning.
- We understand that parents may be very busy, and so may not always be able to engage in all aspects of school life.

- Parents appreciate a flexible approach, including the use of online information, to ensure that they understand how well their child is doing.
- 6. If occasionally things go wrong, or if we are unaware of an issue, please don't hesitate to speak to us. We prefer problems to be dealt with at an early stage, rather than allowing more significant issues to develop.
- We expect the whole school community, including staff, pupils and parents, to be polite and respectful of each other's perspectives.

#### PTFA

Friends of PSCA is our Parents, Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA). Our primary focus is fundraising to pay for equipment and experiences to enhance our children's time at school. We are also working in partnership with the school to build a strong community in and around PSCA and we would love it if you would join us.

Your PTFA needs ideas, volunteers, fundraisers, administrators, designers, thinkers, tea/coffee drinkers, walkers, talkers, bakers, makers, movers and shakers. Whatever your skills and however much time you can spare we want you on board.

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"...They are developing a passion for learning, along with the tools they need to find out what they want to know for themselves. They are able to influence their own learning, environment and the wider school, knowing their individual opinions, ideas and suggestions are genuinely valued - our experience is that similar feedback is actively encouraged from parents too. For them, school is an exciting place to go every day and we know we are sending them to very the best place."

**Plymouth School of Creative Arts - Parent** 



Plymouth School of Creative Arts 20



Our school dinners are of exceptional quality and are prepared on-site from fresh food each day. We recognise that growing, making, eating and sharing food together is an essential part of life. We keep bees on our roof and students are involved in caring for our hives and harvesting honey.

Students study Culinary Art, which is taught in French; they produce food for events and make the highest quality meals.

"Food is creativity and practical understanding: it is nutrition, health and culinary art; it is craft and economics, design and experience and entrepreneurship. Food is history and geography, it is culture and language in performance. Food culture is fundamental to human identity. Cuisine is teamwork and business and mathematics in practice, applying laws of chemistry and biology and physics."

**Professor Andrew Brewerton** 

In our 'learning village' we recognise that everybody can learn from everybody else, irrespective of age or ability.

What might be fun and effective learning for a four-year old might also be helpful for someone aged 12 or 51 – and vice versa! Making and learning 'alongside' others supports effective teaching, mentoring and coaching. And it supports the creation of a continuous 'all-through' learning and development

process that's rich, diverse and builds from our Preschool through our amazing new school into Plymouth College of Art.

commitment to

Community

Our school serves its community. The school building is open during the evening and on weekends, supporting a wide range of activities including Dance, Sport and Performance.

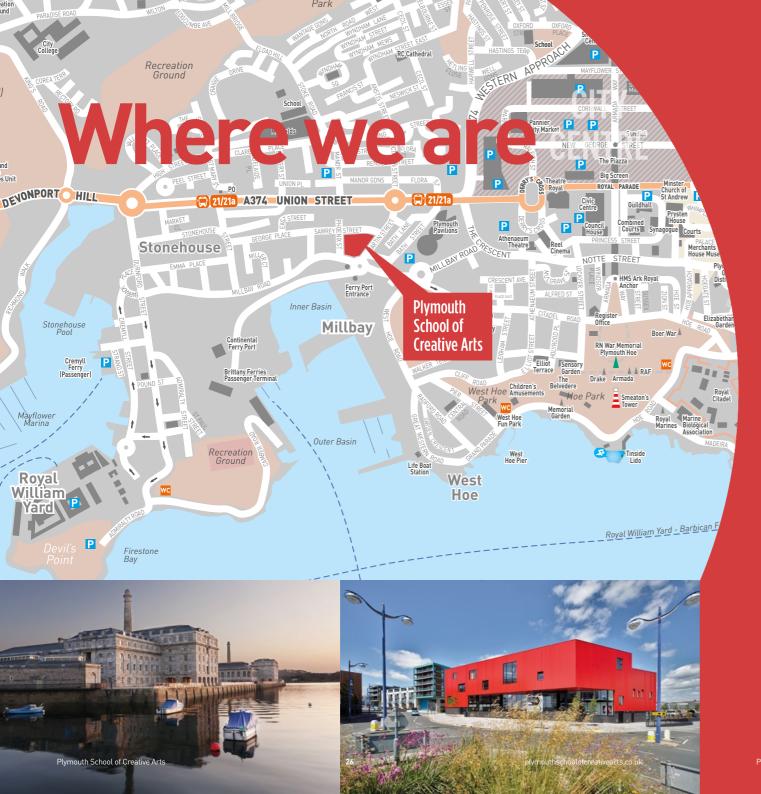
We work as a part of our community and with a range of

mutually purposeful partnerships to enrich our curriculum experience in many areas including the arts, food, sport, history and the sea.

We also recognise parents' expertise in their own children, and the importance of involving families so that learning is not defined narrowly as something that only happens between the school's opening hours.

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Plymouth School of Creative Arts is located in Millbay, Plymouth, and is a short walk from the city centre. The school is well connected to public transport and there are a number of travel options for parents and students to choose from. We aim to increase travel awareness of school staff, students and parents to ensure everyone's journey to school is as safe as possible. Walking and cycling to school are healthier options and we promote these means of travel in order to encourage exercise and to reduce traffic and pollution in the city.



#### BUS

Numerous bus routes that extend across the city are readily accessible from the site, from stops located at the southern end of Western Approach and the eastern end of Union Street. These stops are within a 600 metre walk. To find the most suitable bus route for you please visit plymouthbus.co.uk/timetables



#### **TRAIN**

A wide range of local, regional and national train services operate from Plymouth Railway Station, which is approximately 1km from the school site. There are buses which travel from the train station to bus stops close to the school site. Alternatively you can travel between the train station and the school site, by bicycle or by foot.



#### CAR

We prefer parents and staff not to travel to school by car. If this is unavoidable we encourage the use of car sharing and ask that students are dropped off at designated areas a short walk away from the school site. We provide free parking in partnership with Plymouth Pavilions for the beginning and end of the school day. There is no parking on our school site.



#### BIKE

Cycling will clearly be a viable mode of transport for some students and we provide cycle storage on the school site. There are a number of cycle routes through Plymouth which you can download from Plymouth City Council's website: plymouth.gov.uk/cycling



#### **ON FOOT**

We encourage students to walk to and from school as safely as possible. Walking improves the health of students and reduces pollution in the city.

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# School Year

## AT PLYMOUTH SCHOOL OF CREATIVE ARTS ALL PHASES OF THE SCHOOL WILL SHARE THE SAME TERM DATES.

The school year runs broadly in line with other schools in the Plymouth area and involves 38 weeks of teaching. Term dates are available on our website.

#### **SCHOOL HOURS**

Learners in Phase 1 and 2 can arrive in the Studios with their parents from 8.30am, when there's an 'informal' opportunity for children to take part in a play - based/learning activity, and for adults to spend time alongside their child, speak to staff or catch up with other parents for a half-hour until 9.00am. Children in Phase 1 finish at 3.40pm. Children in Phase 2 finish at 3.50pm.

The school runs a daily Breakfast Club for Phase 1 & Phase 2 children, which begins at 7.45am. There is an After School Club which runs from the end of the day until 6.00pm.

Our Secondary students can arrive at the school from 8.30 before they start tutorials at 9.00. The school day will finish at 16.00.

All learners will have a morning break and lunchtime.

There is a range of after school and lunchtime clubs run by staff that your child is welcome to attend at no cost. There are also clubs and music lessons run by outside groups and specialist teachers, where there may be a charge to attend. Students will also be encouraged to take part in activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award, volunteering and social enterprise.



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# Admissions

Plymouth School of Creative Arts is an open access, city-centre school designed to meet the needs of our local community.

Our policy is available on our web-site. Our School uses the Local Authority

admissions process, with details available on plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/education/schools/schooladmissions.htm a concentration

## The Red House

Our award winning building, the Red House, with its dramatic overhang and strong colour scheme, is a physical representation of our creative and aspirational approach.

Our school is designed with spacious studios, equipped with high quality furniture and learning materials. The school environment includes specialist spaces for making and performance, such as a food hall, a theatre, a dance studio, a recording studio, and making workshops. Science and design labs will enable learners to be the scientist or designer inquiring into an area, rather than just 'follow instructions'. This environment will facilitate learners to achieve academically, whilst preparing them for their next steps in the world of work.

The building provides a cohesive all-through learning environment. It has a four-court sports hall and outdoor spaces that both support learning and the connection of children of different ages. Wider sports and outdoor provision is accessed via minibus to enhance the provision we can offer.



"In line with the school's vision, the pupils quickly learn to lead their own learning by working things out for themselves, under the guidance of the teacher. They are totally engaged in, and enjoy, the activities. This contributes to their good behaviour and growing confidence."

#### **OFTSED**

### **YOUR VIEWS**

We would love to hear your views and opinions on our vision for this innovative new school in Plymouth, and we will be arranging events over the coming year to keep you involved. Visit our website for information, follow us on Facebook and Twitter and join our mailing list.

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