DT Curriculum

Intent: At St Swithun's Catholic Primary School, our Design and Technology curriculum aims to inspire pupils to become innovative, creative and reflective thinkers, who understand and appreciate the design process and its impact on the world around them.

Rooted in our Catholic ethos, we encourage pupils to use their God-given talents to solve problems, serve others and contribute positively to society. We want children to develop confidence in taking risks, learning from mistakes and refining their ideas through the process of design, make and evaluate.

Our curriculum ensures that all pupils:

- Develop creativity and innovation through purposeful design
- Gain confidence in taking risks, testing ideas and refining outcomes
- Understand the full design process: ideation, creation and evaluation
- Build practical skills and technical knowledge across a range of disciplines
- Develop an awareness of the impact of design and technology on everyday life and the wider world
- Become resourceful, enterprising learners, prepared for future opportunities

Through carefully sequenced learning, pupils build both disciplinary knowledge and practical skills, enabling them to design and create with increasing independence and sophistication.

Implementation: At St Swithun's, our DT curriculum is structured through a progressive long-term plan based on the Kapow scheme, ensuring clear development of skills and knowledge across all year groups. The DT curriculum is organised into six key areas:

- Cooking and nutrition
- Structures
- Textiles
- Mechanisms / mechanical systems
- Electrical systems (KS2)
- Digital world (KS2)

These areas are revisited throughout the school with increasing complexity, allowing pupils to build on prior learning and deepen their understanding. Progression is evident from:

- EYFS – early exploration through junk modelling, simple structures and basic textiles
- KS1 – developing basic skills in cooking, structures and textiles (e.g. fruit preparation, puppets, mechanisms)
- LKS2 – applying skills to more complex projects (e.g. seasonal cooking, slingshot cars, pavilions)
- UKS2 – designing purposeful, user-focused outcomes (e.g. electrical systems, playground structures, textiles projects)

Teaching Approach

Our teaching approach follows a clear and consistent process, ensuring that all pupils can access and succeed:

- Design → Make → Evaluate – testing, refining and improving outcomes
- Explicit modelling (I do – We do – You do) of techniques and processes
- Use of practical, hands-on learning to develop real skills
- Opportunities for problem-solving and innovation
- A balance of independent, paired and collaborative work
- Use of design briefs and real-life scenarios, encouraging purposeful outcomes

Lessons are engaging and varied, including:

- Practical making tasks
- Investigations and testing
- Discussion and evaluation
- Digital and computer-based design where appropriate

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Vocabulary and Oracy
- Explicit teaching of DT-specific vocabulary (e.g. prototype, mechanism, structure, evaluate)
- Use of sentence stems to support design explanations and evaluations
- Opportunities for pupils to justify design choices and reflect on outcomes
- Development of technical language and communication skills

Adaptation and Inclusion is embedded to ensure all pupils can succeed:
- Scaffolded design prompts to support idea generation
- Step-by-step modelling of practical skills using visualisers
- Word banks and sentence stems to support evaluation
- Flexible outcomes, allowing creativity at all levels
- Peer support and expert learners to model techniques

Real-Life Application and Purposeful Design
Pupils respond to design briefs and scenarios that require them to consider:
- The needs of users and clients
- Functionality and purpose
- Aesthetic qualities
- Real-world problems

This ensures that DT is:
- Meaningful and relevant
- Rooted in real-life application
- Focused on developing enterprising and reflective learners

Catholic Social Teaching in Design & Technology
Design and Technology is enriched through the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Pupils are encouraged to recognise their responsibility to use their skills and creativity for the common good, designing solutions that serve others and improve lives. Through design briefs and real-world problems, children consider the needs of different users, promoting dignity, inclusion and respect. They explore how design choices impact the environment, developing an understanding of stewardship and sustainability. Collaborative projects encourage participation and teamwork, reflecting the importance of community. Through this, pupils learn that their ideas and creations can have a positive impact on the world around them.

Impact: By the time pupils leave St Swithun's Catholic Primary School, they will
- Understand the functional and aesthetic properties of materials
- Be able to select and use tools effectively for a range of processes
- Design and create high-quality, purposeful products and prototypes
- Apply knowledge of healthy eating, nutrition and cooking techniques
- Demonstrate awareness of key designers, inventions and technological developments
- Understand how design decisions impact society and the environment
- Evaluate and refine their work with confidence and accuracy

Pupils leave St Swithun's as creative, resourceful and reflective designers, equipped with the skills and knowledge to succeed in the next stage of their education and beyond.

"Design is not just what it looks like and feels like. Design is how it works."
Steve Jobs