

Building an art gallery: Celebrating achievement and culture within the arts.

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Statement of focus

After beginning our Artsmark journey this year, I began to focus on the importance of cultural education and its place within the teaching of the arts. The Case for Cultural Learning document identifies the life-long benefits to having access to culture, as those accessing cultural education tend to achieve higher. Due to this, and after discussion with senior leadership, I designed a curriculum, which focuses on culture through the arts and celebrates its importance in history. I have designed and overseen the creation of an art gallery space in school, where our cultural learning and art curriculum work can be reflected upon, celebrated and reviewed regularly by children and staff.



Development

In Autumn 2, I introduced the new cultural curriculum to staff and it was met with an extremely positive reaction. I ensured resources were available for staff to use when introducing new artists, so the workload was reduced and motivation to teach culture was high.

Once the cultural curriculum was established within school, I began to start the design process of the gallery. I located an appropriate space in school and began to search images for inspiration. I consulted with local Fylingdales artist, Colin Cook, about what a gallery should look like and focused my ideas on a clean, crisp look, which drew attention to the work within the frame rather than being overbearing or distracting. I was advised that the

gallery should be white and frames minimalistic in their design. I also began to look at plinths as a way to display textile work.

The end goal of this project is for each year group to have a high-quality display of their art curriculum work. This should then be used as a space to revisit and review previous learning before pupils begin their new art topic. The aim is for it to be an interactive and reflective area, which brings past learning and skills back to the forefront of their minds. As part of the gallery, there is a wall dedicated to the cultural curriculum learning in school. I have designed this space to be interactive, using QR codes, which link to websites and videos of various artists we have covered. This allows children to revisit their past learning regularly.



Building the gallery

Having finalised the design with senior leadership, I sourced the materials needed and began the pricing process. Once this was agreed, I ordered seven large wall mounted frames, 21 plinths, 3D wall lettering and new spot lighting to highlight the work within the frames.

It took several weeks for the items to be delivered; however, the installation process began as soon as the materials arrived. All measurements were accurate and the frames were fitted successfully. The plinths were of a good quality and art books were displayed on them whilst we waited for our art unit, in Summer 2. There were no issues with the installation of the spotlights and they were orientated correctly to showcase each frame.

One challenge I faced whilst building the gallery was the delivery of the lettering for the wall. 'Harrow Gate Art Gallery' is to be displayed above the frames, as well as 'Cultural Curriculum' on the opposite wall. Despite clear communication with the company, several

emails had to be sent to prompt them before they confirmed our order and began manufacture; therefore, the gallery is still awaiting installation of its lettering.



What was the impact?

The full impact of the art gallery will not be evident until Summer term is completed. However, the impact on the planning and delivery of initial art lessons shows a significant improvement to previous years. There is a much clearer understanding of our art curriculum and school ethos towards encouraging exploration and independence, rather than just reproducing famous works of art. As this has been actively encouraged through our cultural curriculum work this year, the children are showing a huge increase in confidence when it comes to making independent artistic choices and are much more willing to be creative, 'have a go' and make mistakes. The cultural curriculum wall is being actively used and several classes have already visited it, used the QR codes successfully and reflected on their favourite artists. A teacher commented, *"The children were thrilled to see some of their work is featured."* I have started to frame the Year 6 artwork as an example of expectations for the gallery, and members of staff and children have commented on the quality of the space.

Due to the success of this project, senior leadership have agreed to the building of an art studio in school. This will further facilitate all of the high-quality work we are doing in school, giving the children a designated creative space to complete their cultural curriculum and art topic work.