

## Overview Year 7

### Project 1 Imaginary animals

The overwhelming aim of the art department for the KS3 art curriculum is to fire an enthusiasm for the subject. The year 7 art course begins with students learning the core skills which will be developed throughout their school art curriculum and beyond. We do this through a fascinating project on **imaginary animals**. Beginning with drawing, a vital element of art that underpins their learning, the students are encouraged to develop their observational drawing techniques. This work forms the foundation of them learning the key elements of shape, scale and proportion.

To facilitate the learning of these skills, as a starting point the students use a set of animals on loan from the **Booth Museum**. The animals offer an excellent opportunity to **explore shape, scale and proportion** whilst enhancing the students' understanding of the natural world in a fun and stimulating way. They form a discussion around the origins of animals in art and how artists have responded to animals around them and in their own environment.

The Booth Museum retains a unique charm of the Victorian era and it also promotes discussion around modern day concerns of conservation and protection of the planet. The majority of students feel passionately about climate change and they have the opportunity to channel their passion about the subject into their artwork. When we study the extinction of the dinosaurs and the Dodo it provokes discussion around the impact of climate change. Contextual references from the Booth Museum and artists from different times and cultures are referenced throughout.

Creating **tonal range and an understanding of tools and pencil grades** forms the second stage of this project. Vital shading and mark making techniques are now studied and the students shade their drawings. Their drawings are then worked from to create a hybrid imaginative species. Students are encouraged to develop their work in an individual and imaginative way whilst now exploring the key art term of 'composition'. Students discuss and describe the animal's visual characteristics and they develop an imaginary personality and world in which their animal lives.

These creatures are painted and so now the students learn about the **colour wheel, colour theory and complementary colours**. Having studied the colour wheel the students begin to explore painting techniques. Through observing **pattern and texture** in the animal markings they learn how to create textures, pattern and overlays. There is an emphasis on brush strokes, brush sizes and their uses. These painting techniques are revisited throughout their KS3 art curriculum and it is hoped that their year 7 project work gives them a solid foundation of the core painting techniques on which to build upon.

### Project 2 - The natural world

The second project builds on the key skills of project 1 whilst the students learn about the **natural world**. Artists have long been fascinated by the power of nature to benefit or harm mankind. To increase understanding and provoke questions about the importance of art and artists in the natural world students study the work of **two major artists Henry Moore and Andy Goldsworthy**. The work of Henry Moore who said 'the shape of things matter even more than the colour of them' helps students to understand form. Just as a child has to learn how far away a toy is by touching and feeling them, we learn distances by walking them and finally we understand space through understanding form. Moore was fascinated by the shape of things and so students look closely at his **mixed media studies** of shells and his object studies from the north Yorkshire moors.

The students study the schools own **natural form** collection, they are encouraged to look at the form of the objects and respond to their surface qualities. This builds on the painting techniques

that they explored in the first project, here they are introduced to working with mixed media. They combine paint with pastel in the same way that Henry Moore did using **layering, impasto and pastel masking techniques**. They learn about the size, texture, and precision of the strokes. They learn that brushstrokes can be described as “tight” or “loose” depending on how visible they are to the naked eye.

Henry Moore believed that anything and everything in the world, pebbles, bones, shells all give principles about **form**. As a child Henry Moore collected wood, sticks and bones. We encourage our students to collect and look at things which maybe they had no interest in before and this in turn helps them find the world a more interesting place. The year 7 independent learning task asks students to create a sculpture from natural forms that they have scavenged which they then photograph in its natural setting.

Andy Goldsworthy describes looking, touching material, place and form all being inseparable from his resulting work. He appreciates that when he touches a rock he is touching and working the space around it. Nothing is independent of its surroundings and the artist must work with the object in the area in which it is found. Knowing and understanding the work of Andy Goldsworthy helps students to be aware that nature is in a state of change. This constant state of change always causes discussion and debate about our responsibilities to respect and support nature and the planet. He eloquently says 'at the heart of whatever I do is a growing understanding and a sharpening perception of the land'. This resonates powerfully with our students who are determined to protect the earth. In this project all students are learning about a range of different art media and they explore the potential of them. Within this context they learn about the power of art to change the way we view the world around us.

Through completing the year 7 art projects we hope all students will gain a basic knowledge of mark making, application of colour and tone and they will be able to apply at least 2 of the formal elements in a final outcome using their own ideas. The majority of students will gain a confident knowledge of how to use visual language skills including tone, colour and line and use them with technical skill in their outcome. They will develop their own ideas in an imaginative way using their observational work to inform their piece. Some pupils will gain a fluent knowledge of how to use the formal elements with a range of techniques and may start to combine line, tone and colour together with high levels of technical skill. Students will start to make independent decisions and develop personal ideas in an imaginative way that demonstrates a further understanding of the concepts covered. All students will hopefully be able to look at visual imagery with a critical eye and challenge their own perception of the world around them.