



Expressive Arts Continuum and Progression Guidance (Incorporating subject specific- Art, Music and Design and Technology for Pathfinder Curriculum/ as needed). Based on Equals Curriculum

To develop the understanding of the Intrinsic Value of the Arts

Expressive Arts foster:

- self-expression, social-emotional growth, and communication
- Sensory-first approach: Activities should prioritize tactile, auditory, and visual engagement.
- Communication through experience: Use objects of reference, switches, and communication boards.
- Therapeutic intent: Focus on emotional regulation, enjoyment, and interaction rather than product.
- Repetition and predictability: Build confidence through familiar routines and gradual variation.

| Pre-Formal | | | |
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| <u>Learner Profile:</u> | <u>Learner Focus/ Intent</u> | <u>Experiences/ Activities</u> | <u>Outdoor Community Links</u> |
| <i>Learners with profound and multiple learning difficulties</i> | Respond to sensory stimuli with support. Begin making choices and showing preferences. Show intentional responses and engagement. Express feelings and preferences about activities. Responding to tactile, auditory, and visual stimuli. Choice Making: | - Music: Listen to contrasting sounds (soft vs. loud), feel vibrations from drums or speakers. Art: Explore textures (soft fabric, rough sandpaper), finger painting with safe materials. Drama: Experience movement through hand-over-hand support, mirror play with facial expressions. | |

| <i>(PMLD) or at very early developmental levels.</i> | <p>Indicating preferences through gaze, gesture, or switch.</p> <p>Emotional Regulation: Using arts for calming or stimulating experiences.</p> <p>Interaction: Engaging with adults and peers during creative activities.</p> <p>Communication: Expressing likes/dislikes through any available mode.</p> | <p>Multi-sensory: Use light-up objects or sound-and-colour stations for cause-and-effect.</p> <p>Music: Activate a single switch to play a sound; choose between two instruments.</p> <p>Art: Select a colour or material with eye gaze or gesture; make marks with support.</p> <p>Drama: Respond to a familiar story with props (e.g., touch a scarf when prompted).</p> <p>Multi-sensory: Combine sound and movement—shake a sensory instrument while listening to music.</p> | |
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| Informal | | | |
| Learner Profile: | Learner Focus/ Intent | Experiences/ Activities | Outdoor Community Links |
| <i>Learners with severe learning difficulties (SLD), beginning to make sense of community and time.</i> | <p>Exploration & Sensory Engagement: Build curiosity and sensory awareness</p> <p>Intentional Creation with Support: Begin making choices and expressing ideas with guidance.</p> <p>Engagement and Awareness: To increase attention and engagement. To anticipate familiar routines. To demonstrate awareness of cause and effect</p> <p>Communication Through the Arts: To use expressive arts as a means of communication. To share experiences. To express preferences or emotions.</p> <p>Creative Expression: To participate in creating art, music. To explore mark-making. To contribute to a group piece,</p> <p>Motor Development Through the Arts: To develop fine or gross motor skills. To practise coordinated movement. To use adapted tools or assistive technology</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set up sensory art trays (e.g., foam, sand paint, glitter glue, sponge paint, clay). Pupils rotate between stations with adult support. Encourage them to explore using tools: sponges, rollers, textured stamps, finger painting (if tolerated). <p>Success looks like: choosing materials, reaching for preferred textures, using tools more purposefully.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intentions supported: making choices, expressing preferences, communicating ideas. <p>How it works:</p> | |

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| | <p>Emotional Wellbeing: To experience enjoyment and emotional regulation. To explore emotional states. To develop confidence</p> <p>Participation and Interaction: To take part in shared art or music experiences, To interact with peers To respond to social cues</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present a visual choice board: colours, tools, materials, instruments. • Pupils choose what they want using symbols, pointing, eye-gaze, or objects of reference. • Adults model language: "You chose RED," "You want the BRUSH." • Success looks like: communicating wants, initiating choices independently. • Play different music tracks (slow, fast, loud, soft). • Pupils make marks that "match" the sound (e.g., long lines, dots, scribbles). Success: expressing ideas through movement and sound. • Intentions supported: mark-making, simple designs, group creativity. Setup: • Large roll-out paper on the floor or wall. • Offer thick chinks, rollers, stamps, sponges, finger paints. • Pupils add marks, shapes, or patterns. • Adults help model shapes ("Can you make dots? Lines? Circles?"). Success: adding recognisable patterns or intentional marks. • Choose a simple story (e.g., animals). • Pupils act out movements (stomping, creeping, flapping). • Add scarves, hats, or sound effects. Success: role-playing with imagination. • | |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions supported: gross motor skills, coordinated movements. • Examples: • Painting using large brushes taped to broom handles. • Floor drawing with chunky crayons while kneeling or standing. • Action songs with ribbons or scarves. • Success: improved reach, grasp, and body awareness. | |
| Semi-Formal | | | |
| <u>Learner Profile:</u> | <u>Learner Focus/ Intent</u> | <u>Experiences/ Activities</u> | <u>Outdoor Community Links</u> |
| <i>Learners with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) or higher SLD, who can engage in structured learning with support.</i> | <p>Exploring and Experiencing Art Materials</p> <p>To explore a range of art materials</p> <p>To use tools and materials with increasing purpose: To develop awareness of the properties</p> <p>Developing Attention and Participation: To engage in expressive arts activities. To follow simple routines and sequences). To respond to changes</p> <p>Communication Through Creative Experiences. To make choices</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions supported: exploring materials, using tools with purpose, noticing properties. • How it works: • Provide a selection of materials (felt, foil, tissue, sponge, clay, corrugated card). • Pupils explore them using brushes, rollers, fingers, or stamps. • Adults model vocabulary: <i>smooth, rough, soft, shiny, thick, thin.</i> • Pupils choose one material to use in their artwork. • Success looks like: purposeful exploration, selecting a preferred texture, describing simple properties. <p>Intentions supported: following routines, sustaining attention.</p> | - |

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| | <p>To express preferences or ideas through movement, sound, gesture, or early verbal communication. To communicate with others</p> <p>Creative Skills and Expression: To experiment with mark-making, To create simple artworks, To use imagination within music or drama activities</p> <p>Motor Development Through Creative Activities. To develop fine motor control To strengthen gross motor skills through dance, movement, To coordinate movements</p> <p>Emotional Understanding and Regulation: To experience enjoyment and pride. To express emotions. To use expressive arts as a tool for self-regulation,</p> <p>Social Interaction and Collaboration: To work alongside peers, sharing space and materials appropriately. To take turns in music-making, group painting, or movement activities. To contribute to group creative projects, recognising themselves as part of a team.</p> <p>Building Independence in Creative Tasks</p> <p>To follow simple instructions related to expressive arts with decreasing levels of support. To begin setting up or tidying away materials with support</p> | <p>How it works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a 3–4 step visual sequence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Choose tool ○ Add shapes/lines ○ Add colour ○ Finish and tidy • Pupils complete each step with fading prompts. • Use timers or “finish boxes” to support engagement. <p>Success: completing the sequence with fewer reminders.</p> <p>Intentions supported: making choices, communicating ideas, expressing preferences.</p> <p>How it works:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a choice board with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – three colours – three tools – three materials • Pupils pick one from each category to create their picture. • Adult encourages simple communication: <i>“I choose...”, “I like...”, “I want...”</i> • Play two contrasting music tracks. • Pupils choose how the music makes them “move” their tool (big/small marks, fast/slow strokes). <p>Success: responding to sound with intentional mark-making.</p> | |
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| | <p>(e.g., putting brushes in pots, handing out instruments). To develop problem-solving skills, such as adjusting materials or choosing another tool when needed.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intentions: mark-making, early design, creativity. • How it works: • Adults model creating shapes or simple patterns (zig-zag, dots, circles). • Pupils repeat and then adapt them in their own artwork. • Offer templates or stencils for support. • Success: pupils intentionally creating and adapting patterns. • Pupils act out shapes, animals, or feelings using body movement. • Add simple props (scarves, hats, ribbons). Success: imaginative movement connected to a theme. • Intentions: fine motor development, accuracy. • Examples: • Using stamps to place marks in specific areas. • Tracing simple shapes with chunky pens. • Painting within a defined outline. • Success: increasing control and accuracy in tool use. • Pupils move large brushes, rollers, or sponges on upright paper or a floor canvas. • Encourage reaching, stretching, and crossing midline. Success: controlled movement linked to a creative action • Intentions: emotional expression, self-awareness. | |
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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How it works: • Provide emotion–colour mats (e.g., blue = calm, red = excited). • Pupils select a colour that matches how they feel and use it in a small piece of art. Success: selecting a colour to show a feeling. • Intentions: task completion, responsibility, independence. • Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handing out aprons. • Sorting paintbrushes by size. • Putting paper in the drying rack. • Success: completing familiar tasks independently or with minimal prompts. • Problem-Solving • How it works: • Provide small challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Your paint is empty — what do you need?” “Your brush is too big — which tool works better?” • Pupils use problem-solving to adapt their approach. Success: independently selecting new tools or solutions. • | |
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Higher Challenge/ Subject Specific for Pupils able to access discrete subject curriculum

| | Art | Music | Design & Technology | Drama |
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| Enquiry | <p><u>Foundations</u> Drawing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold and use a range of drawing tools with growing control. • Begin to use line to represent objects. • Experiment with light/dark using pencil pressure. <p>Painting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name primary colours. • Mix primary colours to make simple secondary colours. • Apply paint using a brush with increasing control. <p>Colour & Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore colour, shape, and texture using a range of media. • Use simple tools safely (glue sticks, scissors, sponges). | <p><u>Foundations</u> Listening & Appraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to a range of music and respond with simple actions or words. • Identify changes in music (loud/quiet, fast/slow). • Talk about how music makes them feel. <p>Singing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing simple songs from memory. • Sing in tune within a limited pitch range. • Copy short melodic patterns. <p>Playing Instruments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play classroom percussion instruments safely (tambourine, claves, triangles). • Keep a steady beat with support. • Explore different sounds and timbres. | <p><u>Foundations</u></p> <p>Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use pictures, words or simple templates to communicate ideas. • Talk about what they want to make and which materials they might use. • Begin to select tools and materials with guidance. <p>Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use basic tools safely (scissors, glue spreaders, hole punches). • Join materials using simple methods (tape, glue). • Cut paper, card, and simple fabrics with support. • Follow simple steps to create a product. <p>Technical Knowledge</p> | <p><u>Foundations</u></p> <p>Performance Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple facial expressions and gestures. • Speak aloud to a group using single words or short phrases. • Begin to perform in front of others with support. <p>Role-Play & Imagination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take on simple roles in imaginative play. • Pretend to be characters using basic movements and voices. • Respond to a stimulus (picture, object, story). <p>Voice & Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experiment with loud/quiet voices safely. • Move around a space safely and with awareness. • Copy simple actions and movements modelled by an adult. |

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| | <p>Sculpture & 3D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use simple 3D materials (clay, playdough, junk modelling). • Roll, pinch, and shape basic forms. <p>Artists & Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at artwork and describe what they see. • Talk about likes/dislikes using simple vocabulary. | <p>Composing & Improvising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create simple patterns using body percussion or instruments. • Choose sounds to represent ideas (animals, weather). • Improvise simple rhythms. <p>Musical Notation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that symbols can represent sound. • Begin to recognise simple graphic scores. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how materials can be shaped (fold, bend, twist). • Begin to explore mechanisms such as sliders or simple levers. • Explore how structures can be made stronger (folded card, wide bases). <p>Cooking & Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begin to understand where food comes from (farm, plant, animal). • Use simple food preparation skills (washing, tearing, cutting soft foods). • Recognise basic healthy/unhealthy food choices. <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about what they have made. • Say what they like or could change next time. | <p>Storytelling & Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act out well-known stories using simple actions. • Begin to sequence events in drama (beginning/middle/end). <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take turns in role-play. • Work with a partner to create short scenes. • Listen to others' ideas during group activities. |
| Discovery | <p><u>Developing Skills</u></p> <p>Drawing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use different lines (thick, thin, zig-zag, curved) purposefully. | <p><u>Developing Skills</u></p> <p>Listening & Appraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify simple musical features (beat, rhythm, dynamics, tempo). | <p><u>Developing Skills</u></p> <p>Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan ideas using drawings and simple labels. | <p><u>Developing Skills</u></p> <p>Performance Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use expression, gesture, and body language more purposefully. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add more detail to drawings (proportion, shape). • Use techniques like shading, hatching, and smudging. <p>Painting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix secondary colours confidently. • Begin colour mixing to make tints and tones (lighter/darker colours). • Select appropriate brushes for different effects. <p>Colour & Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combine materials thoughtfully (collage, mixed media). • Explore texture more deliberately. <p>Sculpture & 3D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shape, join, and form using clay or malleable materials. • Use simple tools to create patterns/texture. <p>Artists & Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about the work of a small range of artists, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise and describe different instrument sounds. • Begin comparing pieces of music using simple vocabulary. <p>Singing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sing with clearer diction and increasing confidence. • Follow pitch changes (higher/lower). • Perform simple songs in a group. <p>Playing Instruments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play and maintain a steady beat independently. • Copy and create simple rhythmic patterns. • Begin to play tuned instruments (e.g., glockenspiel) using single notes. <p>Composing & Improvising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create short sequences using a combination of sounds. • Arrange and organise sounds with a clear | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make choices about materials, tools, and components. • Design products for a specific purpose or user. <p>Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut materials with improved accuracy. • Measure, mark out, and assemble simple components. • Use a wider range of joining methods (tabs, split pins, glue, tape). • Begin to follow a simple design plan. <p>Technical Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand how simple mechanisms work (levers, wheels, axles). • Explore simple structures and ways to make them stronger or more stable. • Begin to use simple sewing techniques (running stitch) with support. <p>Cooking & Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the basic principles of a healthy diet. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak in full sentences when performing. • Perform more confidently to a small audience. <p>Role-Play & Imagination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt and stay in character for short periods. • Explore contrasting characters (e.g., happy/sad, brave/nervous). • Respond to prompts to develop a character's feelings and actions. <p>Voice & Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use changes in pitch, pace, and volume to show character. • Move with more control to show character or mood. • Use simple actions to represent different settings. <p>Storytelling & Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act out stories with clear roles. • Begin devising simple scenes with a clear structure. |
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| | <p>craft makers, and designers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe techniques artists use. Begin to talk about how to improve their own work. | <p>beginning, middle, and end.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improvise rhythms and simple melodic ideas. <p>Musical Notation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read and use simple symbols to represent sounds and silence. Begin to understand basic rhythm notation (ta/ti-ti or crotchets/quavers). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare ingredients safely (cutting soft foods, grating, mixing). Follow a simple recipe with adult support. <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Compare their product to their design. Identify what worked well and what could be improved. Talk about products made by others. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use drama to retell events from different viewpoints. <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work in small groups to plan short performances. Share and build on ideas from others. Begin offering feedback using simple language (e.g., "I liked..."). |
| Making Connections | <p>. – <u>Increasing Independence</u></p> <p>Drawing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use sketchbooks to record ideas and practise skills. Show control over line, tone, and shading. Experiment with different drawing materials (charcoal, pastels). <p>Painting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mix a wider range of colours, including tertiary colours. | <p><u>Increasing Independence</u></p> <p>Listening & Appraising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify musical elements (tempo, dynamics, rhythm, pitch, structure). Describe music using more specific vocabulary (crescendo, staccato). Recognise some instrument families (strings, woodwind, percussion). <p>Singing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sing with clear pitch accuracy and breath control. | <p><u>Increasing Independence</u></p> <p>Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use annotated sketches, diagrams, or prototypes to develop ideas. Choose tools, materials, and equipment based on suitability for the task. Start designing with a clear purpose and specific user in mind. <p>Making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measure, mark, cut, and shape materials with increasing accuracy. Use tools safely and more independently (e.g., saws, hole punches, needles). | <p><u>Increasing Independence</u></p> <p>Performance Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use body language, facial expression, and gesture to show character and emotion. Speak clearly and with greater confidence in front of an audience. Use simple stagecraft (levels, positions, focus). <p>Role-Play & Imagination</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustain a character for longer periods. Explore motivations, thoughts, and feelings of characters. |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use tints, shades, and tones with purpose to create mood or depth. • Use a variety of brush techniques for detail and texture. <p>Colour & Materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make deliberate choices about materials based on desired effect. • Combine collage, paint, and drawing in mixed-media outcomes. <p>Sculpture & 3D</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build more complex forms using clay, wire, or card. • Use tools to refine, join, and smooth sculpture. <p>Artists & Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study a broader range of artists and recognise styles or techniques. • Use artistic vocabulary to analyse artwork. • Evaluate their own and others' work, suggesting specific improvements. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a melodic line when singing with others. • Perform rounds or simple two-part songs. <p>Playing Instruments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play tuned instruments using simple melodies. • Read and play rhythmic patterns using basic notation. • Maintain a part within a group performance. <p>Composing & Improvising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compose short melodies using a limited set of notes (e.g., C–D–E–G). • Use dynamics and tempo purposefully in compositions. • Improvise using both rhythm and pitch. <p>Musical Notation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and write simple rhythmic notation (crotchet, quaver, rest). • Begin to read pitches on a simple stave. • Use notation to record own compositions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Join materials securely using chosen techniques (glue gun support, stronger joins). • Follow a detailed sequence of instructions or a design plan. <p>Technical Knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand more complex mechanisms (linkages, pneumatics, simple cams). • Develop structures with stability and strength (triangulation, bracing). • Improve basic textiles skills (neat stitching, attaching fastenings). • Begin to incorporate simple electrical components (bulbs, switches) where appropriate. <p>Cooking & Nutrition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know that a healthy diet includes a variety of food groups. • Use a wider range of food preparation skills (chopping, peeling, combining). • Follow simple recipes more independently, understanding basic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create short scenes starting from a stimulus (poem, object, music). <p>Voice & Movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use vocal techniques (pace, pitch, tone, emphasis) deliberately. • Move with control to show character, setting, or atmosphere. • Experiment with freeze frames, mime, and slow-motion. <p>Storytelling & Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Devise longer scenes with a clear storyline. • Use drama techniques such as narration, thought-tracking, or tableau. • Adapt familiar stories into short performance pieces. <p>Collaboration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work effectively in a small group, taking on different roles (performer/director). • Offer constructive feedback using drama vocabulary. • Rehearse and refine performances with |
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| | | | <p>processes (mixing, heating, cooling).</p> <p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate their product against design criteria.• Suggest specific improvements with reasoning.• Use correct vocabulary to discuss strengths and areas to improve. | <p>increasing independence.</p> |
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