Hamp Nursery and Infants School

Design and Technology Policy 2026 – 2027

Introduction

At Hamp Nursery and Infants School, our curriculum is designed to meet the specific needs and starting points of our pupils while fulfilling the statutory requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the Key Stage 1 National Curriculum. Design and Technology is an important part of this curriculum because it enables children to use creativity, practical knowledge and problem-solving skills to respond to real and meaningful needs.

Learning is organised through high-quality Literacy Tree texts and the school's story plans. These provide engaging contexts for design challenges while maintaining clear subject knowledge and skills. Children are taught to explore, design, make and evaluate products, and to build progressively on previous learning from Nursery to Year 2.

Rationale

Design and Technology is an inspiring, rigorous and practical subject. It encourages children to become resourceful, innovative and resilient thinkers who are willing to test ideas, learn from mistakes and improve their work. Through purposeful projects, pupils consider who a product is for, what it needs to do and how materials, components, mechanisms, structures, textiles and food can be used safely and effectively.

Our curriculum reflects the school ethos: “Where every child matters”. It supports children to become happy, healthy learners; to aspire and achieve together; to remain motivated and make progress; and to be prepared for life's next steps.

Curriculum Intent

Through Design and Technology, we aim for children to:

- develop curiosity, creativity, practical competence and confidence;
- use an iterative process of designing, making and evaluating;
- build technical knowledge of structures and mechanisms, including levers, sliders, wheels, axles, winding mechanisms, pulleys and cogs;
- select and use appropriate tools, materials and joining or finishing techniques;
- develop early textile skills, including weaving and sewing;
- understand the principles of nutrition and learn to prepare food safely;
- apply learning from mathematics, science, computing, art and literacy;
- communicate ideas through talk, drawings, labels, models and templates;
- take increasing responsibility for planning, organising resources and improving their work;
- recognise the importance of sustainability, including reusing and recycling materials.

Curriculum Implementation

Design and Technology is taught through the school's story plans and the Design and Technology Scheme of Work. Teachers identify the subject-specific knowledge and skills within each project and ensure that practical making is supported by explicit teaching. Projects are purposeful and linked to a user, purpose or design brief wherever appropriate.

The design process is taught in an age-appropriate way:

Stage	What children do
Explore and investigate	Look at existing products, materials and possible solutions.
Design	Discuss the user and purpose; generate, draw, model and explain ideas.
Make	Select and use suitable tools, materials, ingredients and techniques safely.
Evaluate	Test the finished product against the design criteria and suggest improvements.

Progression and Curriculum Organisation

The curriculum is deliberately broad and cumulative. Children revisit important concepts in increasingly demanding contexts. Projects are linked to the agreed texts in the scheme of work; teachers may adapt the precise outcome to meet pupils' needs while retaining the intended technical knowledge and progression.

Phase	Progression focus	Examples from the scheme of work
Nursery	Exploration and foundations	Through continuous provision and adult-led experiences, children explore materials, construction, joining, tools, food and how things work. They talk about what they are making and begin to change their ideas.
Reception	Purposeful making and simple evaluation	Farm machines; pirate ships; turnip soup; small-world gardens; clay models; puppets; bridges; articulated figures; 3D homes; tiles and sand sculptures.
Year 1	Developing technical choices	Food preparation and tasting; pulleys and cogs; shape puzzles; moving pictures with levers and sliders; bug houses; boats and dens; weaving; sewing bags; bread; split pins and string mechanisms.
Year 2	Greater independence and refinement	Vehicles; model houses; sewn puppets and carnival costumes; crowns; fruit salad; recycled-material models; globes; winding mechanisms; space vehicles; bridges; jackets and Bee-Bot mats.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Nursery and Reception, Design and Technology is taught principally through the areas of Expressive Arts and Design, Physical Development and Understanding the World. Children explore a wide range of materials and tools, construct with a purpose, prepare food and explain their choices. Adults model safe techniques and introduce vocabulary through high-quality interactions. Continuous provision allows children to return to ideas, practise skills and improve what they have made.

Key Stage 1

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are taught to:

- design purposeful, functional and appealing products for themselves and others, based on design criteria;
- generate, develop, model and communicate ideas through talking, drawing, templates, mock-ups and, where appropriate, digital technology;
- select from and use a range of tools and equipment to cut, shape, join and finish;
- select from and use a wide range of materials and components according to their characteristics;
- explore and evaluate existing products and their own ideas and products;
- build structures, exploring how they can be made stronger, stiffer and more stable;
- explore and use mechanisms in products;
- use the basic principles of a healthy and varied diet to prepare dishes and understand where food comes from.

Teaching and Learning

Teachers establish what pupils already know and model new knowledge and techniques clearly. Lessons balance explicit instruction with investigation, discussion and practical application. Children are given opportunities to handle and evaluate existing products, practise individual skills before applying them, make choices and explain their reasoning. They are encouraged to see testing and modification as a normal and valuable part of designing.

Cross-curricular links enrich learning but do not replace the teaching of Design and Technology. Teachers make the DT learning intention explicit and use subject vocabulary such as design, criteria, user, purpose, mechanism, structure, stable, join, template, evaluate and improve.

Speaking and Listening

Speaking and listening are central to Design and Technology. Adults model precise vocabulary and provide structured opportunities for pupils to discuss products, explain design decisions, follow instructions, work collaboratively and evaluate outcomes. Drawings, models, demonstrations, symbols and sentence stems are used where appropriate so that all pupils can contribute.

Assessment and Curriculum Impact

Assessment is ongoing and informs future teaching. Teachers assess pupils' knowledge, vocabulary and practical skills through questioning, observation, discussion, design work, photographs and finished products. Assessment considers the whole process, not only the appearance of the final outcome.

The impact of the curriculum is evident when children can:

- explain who a product is for and what it is intended to do;
- generate and communicate an idea appropriate to a design brief;
- select suitable materials, ingredients, tools and techniques;
- make safely and with increasing accuracy and independence;
- describe how structures or mechanisms work;
- test, evaluate and improve their products;
- remember and apply knowledge and skills from earlier projects.

The subject leader monitors standards and progression through discussions with pupils and staff, scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, photographs of practical outcomes, learning walks and review of the scheme of work. Findings inform subject action planning, resourcing and staff development.

Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

All pupils are entitled to a rich and ambitious Design and Technology curriculum, regardless of race, gender identity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. Resources, designers and contexts should represent a diverse society and avoid stereotypes. Reasonable adjustments and additional support enable every child to take an active role in designing and making.

SEND and EAL

High-quality teaching is adapted to remove barriers without reducing ambition. Support may include pre-teaching vocabulary, visual instructions, worked examples, adapted tools or materials, additional practice, chunked steps, supportive grouping and adult modelling. Practical demonstrations, images and repeated oral rehearsal support pupils with English as an additional language. Adults promote independence and avoid completing the designing or making on a pupil's behalf.

Greater Depth

Pupils who demonstrate secure understanding are challenged through increased independence, more demanding design criteria, reasoned material choices, accurate construction, purposeful testing and thoughtful refinement. Challenge should deepen the design process rather than simply increase the amount of work.

Health and Safety

Health and safety is an integral part of Design and Technology. Teachers assess risk, organise the working area and explicitly teach the safe use and storage of tools, materials, electrical components and equipment. Pupils are supervised at a level appropriate to the activity and their needs. Tools are counted where necessary and damaged equipment is removed from use.

Food activities follow the school's hygiene and allergy procedures. Staff check current medical and dietary information, prevent cross-contamination, ensure effective handwashing and use age-appropriate equipment. Food must be stored, prepared and cooked safely. Relevant school risk assessments and local procedures take precedence for individual activities.

Resources and Sustainability

Resources are selected to provide progression and safe access to a broad range of tools, materials, textiles, construction components and food-preparation equipment. Staff teach pupils to use resources responsibly, minimise waste and consider whether materials can be reused or recycled. Reclaimed materials are clean, safe and suitable for the intended purpose.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Design and Technology subject leader will:

- maintain and review this policy, the scheme of work and curriculum progression;
- support colleagues with planning, subject knowledge, resources and safe practice;
- monitor provision, progression and standards across the school;
- identify priorities for development and contribute to the school improvement process.

Class teachers will:

- plan and teach the agreed curriculum, making the DT knowledge and skills explicit;
- provide appropriate challenge, support and reasonable adjustments;
- assess learning across the design, make and evaluate process;
- follow health, safety, hygiene and allergy procedures;
- care for resources and inform the subject leader of resourcing or training needs.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Design and Technology subject leader, or sooner if there are changes to statutory requirements, the school curriculum or health and safety guidance.

Written by	Mrs Rhiannon Gardner - September 2026
Approved by Headteacher	_____
Approved by Chair of Governors	_____

Written by: Mrs Rhiannon Gardner, Design and Technology Subject Leader

Review date: Autumn 2027, or earlier in response to statutory changes

Design and Technology Scheme of Work

Reception	Cave Baby	I am Henry Finch	The Extraordinary Gardener
	Manipulate clay to create an animal	Build a bridge using different construction materials	Construct a portrait using different materials
	The Naughty Bus	Billy and the Beast	Night Pirates
	Use natural materials to make a farm	Make a clay tile of a home Make a 3D home using joining techniques	Make a sand sculpture
Year 1	Where the Wild Things Are	Astro Girl	Stanley's Stick / Dinosaurs and All That Rubbish
	Explore and compare mechanisms	Design and make a 3D boat	Create a paper collage using spirals Create and use pulleys and cogs
	Beegu	The Odd Egg	Izzy Gizmo / A Walk in London
	Food tasting	Make a moving picture using levers and sliders	Create weaving using positional techniques
Year 2	Lubna and Pebble	The Minpins / The Bear Under the Stairs	Ocean Meets Sky / Dear Earth
	Use paper mâché to create a 3D model of the world	Design and sew a carnival-themed puppet	Use recyclable materials to make props by junk modelling
	Jim and the Beanstalk	Rosie Revere Engineer / Iggy Peck Architect	The Last Stop on Market Street / The Journey Home
	Prepare fruit and make a fruit salad	Design, build and test a bridge	Design and make a vehicle with working axles