

## Design Technology in EYFS at St Dennis Primary Academy



**Scope and Approach** – Design Technology in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encourages young children to explore, create, and experiment with materials, developing both their fine motor skills and their understanding of how things work. Through hands-on experiences, children investigate properties of materials, use simple tools safely, and begin to design and build purposeful creations.

Aligned with the EYFS framework, DT supports several key areas of learning:

- Expressive Arts and Design – Children have opportunities to explore and use a variety of materials, tools, and techniques. They learn to combine different media and experiment with colour, texture, form, and function. Designing and making encourages creative thinking and imaginative problem solving.
- Physical Development – Using tools, joining materials, and constructing models enhances fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination. Children learn to handle equipment and materials safely and with increasing control.
- Understanding the World – Through exploring how things are made and how they work, children develop a deeper awareness of the built environment. DT experiences often involve simple mechanisms and real-life contexts, helping children make connections between what they create and the world around them.
- Communication and Language – DT activities prompt rich discussion and vocabulary development. Children are encouraged to describe what they are doing, explain their ideas, and talk about their creations.

Design Technology in the EYFS is not about the final product but about the process of thinking, planning, experimenting, and problem-solving. It lays the foundation for innovation and critical thinking and provides a space where every child can be a maker, an inventor, and a designer in their own right.

**Vocabulary** – Vocabulary linked to DT is shared with the children to ensure they are prepared for their DT learning in Key Stage 1 and they use words including **cut, join, design, evaluate, chop, tools, knife, sharp, test.**

**Assessment** – Assessment is formative and on-going and achievements on planning which is used by all adults. This is responded to through tailored group work, 1:1 support where needed through all provision. We use a Pupil Progress document to record children who are on track or of concern and what actions are in place to address this. Achievement of the Early Learning Goals (as end points of Reception) are assessed through the use of professional discussions and adults knowing the children. This informs transition to Year 1 and their priorities.

### Opportunities and activities in Reception

- How to use tools and materials is modelled by staff first, then supported exploration. For example, chopping fruit to make a fruit salad.
- Regular cutting practice
- Continuous provision resources allow key skills to be practised. These are introduced in September and developed throughout the year.
- Taught units such as 'flags' and 'boats'.
- Range of materials available in all areas of learning which change and progress through the year.
- Real life examples used and references to their own lives, such as 'animal homes'.
- Staff on hand to discuss what they are doing and how they could improve it, leading to evaluation skills
- Books available that link to themes

