DT POLICY 2026/27

Aims

We aim for all children at Front Street to become confident, skilled and fully prepared for the world in which they will be adults.

At the heart of our aims is the belief that our children will be the designers and developers, the makers and innovators of tomorrow. Therefore, they must be encouraged to develop as skilled workers, creative thinkers and resilient problem solvers.

DT Curriculum

Our curriculum promotes the National Curriculum aims for Design and Technology. Children learn to:

- Develop their creative, technical and practical expertise.
- Apply and extend their knowledge, understanding and skills of designing and making.
- Critique, evaluate and test ideas and products.

Curriculum Content and Coverage

The DT curriculum at Front Street Primary School has been organised into five key strands which are revisited at intervals across both key stages:

- Food Preparation, Health and Hygiene
- Mechanical Systems
- Electrical Systems
- Structures and Construction Ideas
- Joining and Finishing Skills

Within Key Stages 1 and 2, each year group delivers three units of work over the course of the academic year.

A balanced coverage of each strand is achieved through the Whole School DT Curriculum Map. The focus of each unit ensures progression in both skills and concepts.

DT in Early Years

The Early Years curriculum provides the foundations for future learning in Design and Technology through the Characteristics of Effective Teaching and Learning and across the areas of learning, particularly Physical Development, Expressive Arts and Design and Understanding the World. Children

are encouraged to explore, create, construct, investigate and solve practical problems through continuous provision and adult-directed activities.

Children develop early designing and making skills through opportunities to build, join, adapt, evaluate and improve their creations using a range of materials, tools and construction resources. Real-life contexts are used to promote curiosity, creativity and independence.

Substantive and Disciplinary Knowledge in Design and Technology

At Front Street Primary School, our DT curriculum is built around both substantive and disciplinary knowledge.

Substantive knowledge is the established knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. This includes:

- Materials
- Mechanisms
- Structures
- Electrical systems
- Cooking and nutrition
- Technical vocabulary
- Health and safety
- Significant designers, engineers, inventors and manufacturers

This knowledge is carefully sequenced and revisited throughout the curriculum so that children build increasingly complex understanding over time.

Disciplinary knowledge is the knowledge of how designers, engineers, chefs and makers work. It includes the processes and approaches used when designing, creating and evaluating products.

Children learn to:

- Investigate existing products
- Identify user needs
- Generate and communicate ideas
- Select appropriate tools and materials
- Test and refine prototypes
- Evaluate effectiveness
- Improve designs

Through this process, children learn to think and work as designers by engaging in the iterative cycle of design, make, test and evaluate.

The interaction between substantive and disciplinary knowledge enables children to apply what they know in purposeful and meaningful contexts. As pupils progress through school, they become increasingly confident in making informed design decisions, solving problems creatively and evaluating products critically.

DT Vocabulary

Our approach to vocabulary is rooted in the principles of disciplinary literacy. We recognise that success in Design and Technology requires pupils to develop and use the specialised language of the subject. Key vocabulary is explicitly taught, revisited and embedded throughout units of work so that pupils can access increasingly complex concepts and communicate their understanding with precision. Through repeated exposure, practical application and structured discussion, pupils learn to use technical terminology accurately when designing, making, evaluating and solving problems. This supports both subject knowledge development and wider literacy skills..

Food Technology

Front Street is a Healthy School and we recognise that growing up knowing how to live a healthy life is essential for our children. Within the food units taught, we further promote positive attitudes towards food preparation as well as deepening understanding of health and healthy lifestyles choices.

Sustainability

Respect for the environment and sustainable use of resources are core principles in our DT curriculum. Children are taught to reduce their environmental impact: by learning to use and manage DT resources responsibly; by considering the re-use and recycling of materials as part of their designing and practical work; and, by engaging with and using renewable energy technologies.

Teaching approaches

Teaching and learning styles will vary in DT lessons depending on factors such as the age of the children and the nature of the activity being undertaken. Safety considerations will also influence group size and the level of independence given.

Inclusion and equal opportunities

We aim to provide high-quality learning opportunities which enable all children to access, enjoy and achieve in Design and Technology. Teachers use adaptive teaching strategies to ensure that all pupils can participate successfully in lessons.

These strategies may include:

- Explicit modelling and demonstration.
- Visual prompts and examples.
- Structured design templates and planning scaffolds.
- Pre-teaching and revisiting technical vocabulary.
- Adapted tools, materials or equipment where appropriate.
- Flexible grouping and adult support.
- Additional challenge and opportunities for greater depth for pupils who are ready to extend their learning.

We value and celebrate diversity within our curriculum and seek to provide design contexts that reflect a range of cultures, communities, interests and lived experiences.

How do we assess DT?

Assessment is ongoing throughout each unit and forms an integral part of the teaching process allowing teachers to make purposeful adaptations. Teachers assess children's understanding of both

substantive and disciplinary knowledge through:

- Observation of practical work.
- Questioning and discussion.
- Design work and planning.
- Evaluation activities.
- Application of technical vocabulary.
- The quality and functionality of finished products.

Assessment information is used to identify strengths, address misconceptions and inform future planning.

Cross Curricular Links

The application of skills and knowledge in order to solve problems is central to learning and progression in DT. Therefore, prior learning from other subjects (e.g. knowledge of circuits or measuring accurately) are recognised within the DT progression of skills assessment document. Contextual links between DT and other subject areas are made, but only where appropriate. Quality CC links enrich the setting in which the DT brief is placed, and can often be the vehicle for introducing a problem which needs to be solved.

Growth Mindset

Growth mindset skills are an intrinsic part of the design, make and evaluate cycle. DT promotes resilience, lateral thinking and the ability to apply refining skills thus encouraging the children to become competent problem-solvers.

Planning in DT

Units of work are planned using the DT planning document which supports the Design, Make, Evaluate cycle. Central to each unit is a design brief or question which provides the focus for the project and the evaluation. Unit plans are an overview and will not outline all DT teaching and learning, as much of this occurs in response to the needs of the children on a lesson-by lesson basis.

Careers and Aspirations

Design and Technology provides opportunities for children to develop skills that are valued in a wide range of future careers including engineering, manufacturing, construction, architecture, product design, food production, electronics and sustainable technologies.

Where appropriate, learning is enriched through STEM activities, visits, visitors and engagement with employers and professionals. These experiences help children understand the relevance of DT in the wider world and raise aspirations for future study and employment.

Evaluation and monitoring

Monitoring of DT takes place throughout the academic year and may include:

- Learning walks.
- Pupil voice activities.
- Book and floor book scrutiny.

- Review of planning documentation.
- Analysis of assessment information.
- Photographic evidence of practical work.
- Discussion with staff.

Monitoring activities are used to evaluate curriculum implementation and impact, identify strengths and inform future subject development priorities.

Resources in DT: DT is a well-resourced subject where children are provided with a variety of materials, tools, and resources to enable quality work in all areas of the subject.

CPD in DT: CPD is delivered by DT Lead (supported by the Gateshead CCIG initiative), key teachers, and through the local authority.

Leadership and Management of DT

The Design and Technology Subject Leader is responsible for:

- Monitoring curriculum implementation and progression.
- Supporting staff with planning and assessment.
- Auditing and managing resources.
- Identifying CPD needs.
- Leading subject development in line with the School Improvement Plan.

The link governor for Design and Technology meets regularly with the subject leader to review provision, monitor progress and support strategic development of the subject. The link governor allocated for the oversight of DT is Mr David Hodgson. Governors meet with subject leads to discuss and monitor subject developments and strategic plans. Key documents/action plans are shared with governors when updated.

Policy Information	
Subject	Design and Technology
Policy Lead	David Lakey
Governor Link	David Hodgson
Date Approved	Autumn 2026
Review Date	Autumn 2027

For further explanation or clarification of any item discussed in this policy, please see DT Lead - David Lakey.

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Policy links to articles: 2, 6, 13, 13, 28, 29 & 30.