Design Technology

Subject Leader Report
2024-2025

Subject Leader: Zoe Illingworth

Autumn Term

This term, Masefield Primary School appointed a new Design Technology Leader, who has worked collaboratively with the previous subject leader to continue to improve and develop the subject across all year groups. A comprehensive approach has been taken to assess and enhance the curriculum and teaching procedures for Design Technology, ensuring all aspects of the subject are both engaging and educational.

The new leader has been proactive in observing lessons, completing learning walks, monitoring children's books, and engaging in discussions with both pupils and staff. This has led to the identification of key strengths and areas for further development. Furthermore, professional development has been a priority, with staff participating in continuous professional development (CPD) sessions and collaborative planning opportunities. These sessions have empowered teachers to integrate more effective teaching strategies into their lessons and have helped to refine and develop Design Technology practices across the school.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Design Technology is taught as part of Expressive Arts & Design, with a focus on practical, hands-on activities. Most learning occurs through continuous provision, guided by teacher modelling. Key activities include construction tasks such as building chairs for Baby Bear from the Goldilocks story, designing houses for the three little pigs, and creating shelters for hibernating animals. Children also work with food, linking their learning to calendar events, creating items like chocolate sparklers, witches' hats, and fruit salad. Food hygiene practices are emphasized, teaching children to wash their hands before and after food preparation, clean the food, and tidy the area. Additionally, children engage in building structures using materials such as clay, playdough, and tape, alongside continuous access to junk modelling resources like boxes, tubes, and pipe cleaners. The current focus is on deepening the children's understanding of the design process, particularly the importance of the design brief when creating and evaluating their products.

In Key Stage 1, Year 2 students have focused on mechanisms, specifically sliders and levers. They have applied this knowledge in designing, making, and evaluating moving Christmas cards for family members or friends. This unit has been enhanced with new resources that support both design and evaluation lessons.

In Lower Key Stage 2, Year 3 have explored pneumatics, designing and constructing a moving toy that incorporates this technology. Year 4, who also studied mechanisms, created more complex moving Christmas cards using sliders and levers, providing a deeper level of challenge compared to Year 2.

In Upper Key Stage 2, Year 5 students studied structures, with a particularly purposeful unit. They designed, made, and evaluated full-scale shelters in the forest school area. The project was enriched by input from Mrs. Walton, the Forest School teacher, who taught the children how to join wood using various knots, enhancing both the practical and collaborative aspects of the project.

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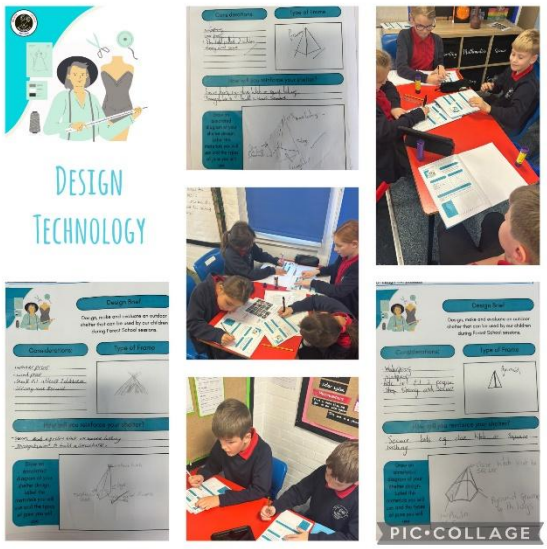
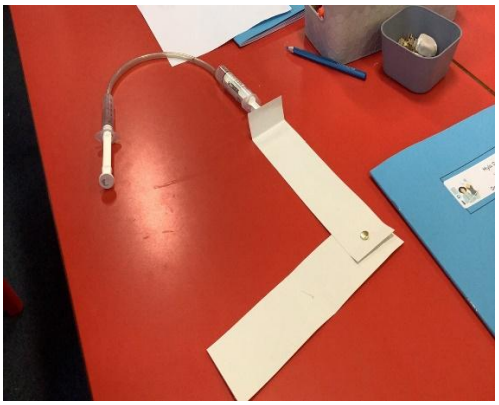
The next steps for Design Technology at Masefield Primary School are to continue refining the understanding and application of design briefs. This will ensure that students fully grasp the purpose of the brief and consistently refer to it throughout the design, make, and evaluate process. This will foster a more structured and purposeful approach to Design Technology, allowing students to create thoughtful and well-evaluated products.





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Spring Term

This spring term, we have further developed our Design Technology curriculum by making some purposeful changes to the units, ensuring that the learning is more relevant and engaging for our students. For example, in Year 2, the focus of the structures unit has shifted to building hedgehog homes, providing children with a hands-on project that links closely to both nature and sustainability. This change has not only made the unit more meaningful but has also allowed students to apply their learning to real-world contexts.

We have also strengthened the link between the Design Technology curriculum and outdoor learning by incorporating more outdoor projects that tie in perfectly with our Forest School activities. These outdoor learning experiences have provided children with the opportunity to engage in practical tasks such as building, crafting, and exploring the natural world, reinforcing the importance of environmental awareness and problem-solving in Design Technology.

A highlight of this term was our Knowledge Day, which proved to be a huge success. Many parents joined us for a day of hands-on learning, where they engaged in a variety of Design Technology activities alongside their children. Parents and children worked together to explore sewing, sample products made in Food Technology, and build structures, making it a fun and collaborative event that reinforced the importance of creativity and practical skills.

Looking ahead to the summer term, we are excited to focus on strengthening our work around evaluating the products children create. We aim to make the evaluation process more effective, helping students assess the quality of their work and consider improvements in a structured and reflective manner. This will further enhance their understanding of the entire design process, from conception to completion.

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Summer Term

This summer term, the Design Technology curriculum at Masefield Primary School has offered students a rich and varied programme of learning, underpinned by an emphasis on the design and evaluation processes. The Design Technology Leader has continued to observe lessons, monitor children's work, and engage in professional discussions with staff and pupils to develop a cohesive and engaging curriculum.

In Summer 2, each year group engaged with a different focus:

- Year 1 explored mechanisms by designing and creating moving toys, allowing them to understand how simple levers and sliders can bring their ideas to life.
- Year 2 applied their skills in food technology, making fruit salads and kebabs while practising safe food preparation techniques and healthy eating habits.
- Year 3 investigated structures and computer-aided design by making a gift box, developing their understanding of nets and how 2D designs translate into 3D products.
- Year 4 built on this learning with a more advanced structures unit, also creating gift boxes. They deepened their knowledge of nets by exploring how more complex shapes and joining techniques impact the strength and function of their designs, showing clear progression from Year 3.
- Year 5 focused on mechanisms, designing and building moving fairground models using pulleys, levers, and gears, which challenged them to apply problem-solving skills and engineering principles in a practical context.
- Year 6 engaged in food technology by making a savoury product—pizzas—developing their understanding of recipes, nutrition, and safe food handling.

Across all year groups, a key focus this term has been on strengthening the design and evaluation processes. Teachers have worked with pupils to complete market research and user surveys, ensuring that products are designed with the needs of the intended user in mind. The evaluation process has been refined so that pupils refer directly to the design brief and the specific needs of their users when assessing the success of their products. This structured approach has enhanced pupils' understanding of the entire design journey, helping them to create purposeful, well-evaluated products.

Looking ahead, we aim to continue refining these processes and supporting staff in delivering high-quality Design Technology lessons that inspire creativity, problem-solving, and real-world application.

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