Design and Technology
Curriculum Statement

We recognise that many of our pupils at Melksham House face significant emotional and social barriers to learning. Our D&T curriculum is delivered in a safe, nurturing environment that prioritises emotional wellbeing alongside academic achievement. We use trauma-informed teaching practices, relational approaches, and personalised strategies to help pupils engage with learning and develop a positive self-identity as designers and creators.

At Melksham House, we are dedicated to ensuring that every pupil, regardless of their starting point, has the opportunity to achieve meaningful qualifications, develop essential practical and problem-solving skills, and leave us equipped with the confidence and ability to succeed in their next steps.

An ambitious and rigorous curriculum

Our Design and Technology curriculum at Melksham House equips pupils with the creative, technical, and practical skills essential for success in education and employment. Our curriculum encourages problem-solving, innovation, and resilience while developing a deep understanding of materials, processes, and the role of technology in the modern world. We recognise that our pupils may have experienced disrupted learning, leading to gaps in their knowledge and confidence. Through rigorous assessment and targeted support, we ensure that all pupils can make meaningful progress and achieve their full potential.

We follow the Curriculum Maestro scheme of work, which provides a structured and engaging approach to Design and Technology. This scheme ensures that all pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum covering key areas such as resistant materials, product design, food technology, and digital design. Lessons are designed to be hands-on, practical, and accessible, fostering creativity, problem-solving skills, and real-world application. Pupils engage in a range of design-and-make projects that develop their technical abilities, critical thinking, and understanding of sustainability and industry practices.

Assessment and Personalised Learning

Our D&T curriculum is carefully sequenced to build on prior learning while recognising that each pupil will have a unique starting point. We conduct comprehensive baseline assessments to identify strengths and areas requiring development, allowing us to set ambitious but realistic targets. Regular formative and summative assessments using the Earwig Assessment Framework ensures that progress is closely monitored, and interventions are applied where necessary to address skill gaps and reinforce key concepts. Our teaching approach includes hands-on practical work, iterative design processes, and structured scaffolding to develop independence and confidence in technical skills.

Pathways to Success:

Our pupils work towards nationally recognised qualifications that reflect their individual abilities and aspirations, these include, but are not limited to:

- **Entry Level Certificates (ELC)** – providing a structured approach for those requiring additional support in developing foundational practical and design skills.
- **Functional Skills in Design and Technology** – equipping pupils with practical skills applicable to real-world scenarios, further education, and employment.
- **GCSE Design and Technology** – enabling pupils to gain a nationally recognised qualification that supports progression to further education and vocational pathways.

Success in D&T is not solely measured by exam outcomes. For our pupils, success also means:

- Developing confidence and resilience in problem-solving and design thinking.
- Acquiring practical skills in working with a range of materials and technologies.
- Understanding the importance of sustainability, safety, and industry standards in design and production.
- Cultivating a positive attitude towards creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning.