



# Sprowston Community High School and Sixth Form

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Headteacher: Andrew John BSc (Hons) MA (Ed)

*“the purpose of life is a life of purpose”*

14<sup>th</sup> November 2017

Dear Parent, Guardian, Carer and Student,

## **GCSE Art and Photography**

I would like to take this opportunity to make sure that you are all up to date with the organisation and deadlines for the next 6 months in the Art and Photography GCSE course.

**All students have spent four terms on coursework;** the work produced during this time provides the bulk of the evidence for the coursework element: up to 60% of the overall GCSE marks and should all have ALREADY been handed in for an interim assessment

### **THIS TERM**

At the start the students were allowed to work on their coursework completed in Y10 and the summer project. This was due in half term.

We then began the mock exam period; 8-10 weeks of lessons and homework time plus an extended practical done under exam conditions in an Art or Photography room. We are helping them understand the demands of the real exam and so this term is a preparation for that exam. To help them we are using the following teaching and learning methods:

1. The title for the mock is a previous exam theme so that students can recognise how this is different from a coursework brief and become familiar with the exam style
2. Initial teacher set starter tasks to focus them on how to evidence the 4 assessment objectives (sections) and set a good work ethic
3. Taught instruction and guidance but also an expectation that they work independently: we will make suggestions and respond to questions; however, we also encourage them to try to problem solve and push themselves as much as possible, the more they do this the higher the grade potential
4. As in the exam we cannot give a specific grade mark however we can tell each student where their work is weakest and how to improve it: we provide frequent feedback verbally and in books (with post-it notes) that suggests ways to PUSH their grade and attainment higher
5. As in the exam we expect them to be focussed and work alone, as we get closer to the exam we will also ask them to work in silence in practice for the exam; they can at this point speak to their teacher

### **THE MOCK EXAM PROCEDURE**

1. The mock exam is between Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> December and Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December and all students will have 2 full days to complete their final piece. As far as possible students will take their exam on the Wednesday and Friday OR the Thursday and Monday but clashes with other subjects may mean adjustments for a few students.
2. Art will be in WG13 and photography in WG11 and 12 – they will be supervised by a specialist teacher and an exam invigilator
3. The exam **STARTS AT 9.15** but students must be in the exam for **9am** to get materials and resources ready. It will last all day but with normal breaks, **FINISHING AT 3.30**.
4. Exam conditions apply
  - a. **No talking to anyone other than the examiner teacher OR invigilator**
  - b. **No playing of/listening to music**
  - c. **No using the internet**
  - d. **No disrupting of other students**
  - e. **Sketchbooks to remain in the exam room at all times: students may not take it home**
5. If a student breaks these rules they will be sent out of the exam and 'fail' the mock as they would fail the real exam in March



After the mock exam is complete the mock work now becomes the final element of their coursework. They may take this work home over Christmas to make any improvements but all work must be returned by Friday 12<sup>th</sup> January. They should be handing in:

- Sketchbooks which are clearly labelled with names.
- Relevant artist analysis and annotations
- Any preparation work: sketches, contact sheets, experiments and plans, development of ideas – most of this will be in sketchbooks although some can be on separate sheets
- Final finished outcomes

None of this is new work but is what they have been doing since the start of Y10. The extra time is to allow students to respond to our detailed marking feedback completed in the Autumn term

### **THE COURSEWORK WILL NOT BE RETURNED BEFORE THE END OF MARCH**

#### **NEXT TERM**

##### **Teachers**

- The art teachers will be mark and standardise ALL coursework over the first half term using the official GCSE assessment sheets. We will look for anything that is still missing or could do with improving. We will make clear notes linked to the assessment criteria of exactly how students can improve their work.
- We will contact home by the end of February half term if we have any significant concerns or if the evidence earns marks which are far lower than the student's potential. We will continue to provide intervention and enrichment activities after school on a Wednesday.

##### **Students will sit the EXTERNALLY SET EXAM ASSIGNMENT**

- In the first week of term we will give out the final actual exam paper (ESA) and start the ten week countdown.
- We do not see the exam before the student and so will not be able to provide specific starter resources
- All students will have their own copy of the ESA starter paper and must have a new sketchbook specifically for the exam. For students who have paid the photography contribution we will provide this
- They will work on the exam in all lessons until the last 4 days of term. ALL homework must be linked to the exam and they should be spending one hour a week on it.
- As all students will be answering the exam in an individual personal way, we cannot set whole class homework, but we will expect every student to write down a specific, individual task or activity each week, which they will commit to do outside school.
- We will give continuous verbal and written feedback linked to the assessment criteria.
- In the time between Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> March and Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> March each student will complete 10 hours on a final piece in exam conditions; individual dates to be confirmed later. The same exam rules apply that are set out on page 1.
- At this point the externally set exam period finishes and there will be **NO FURTHER TIME AVAILABLE.**

#### **COURSEWORK**

When the exam period is over, before Easter, we will give students their coursework back to revisit and improve or refine. We will provide time and materials as well as taught guidance to help them to finish or replace any incomplete outcomes and to improve their overall mark. This time will end on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May when the main written exams begin.

I have been very impressed by the massive improvement the Year 11 Art and Photography students made during the past term. There is some wonderful work being produced and a real buzz in lessons. The mock results will show to what extent they have really understood how they need to work to gain the best marks. The Externally Set Assignment is an opportunity for students to take more leadership and direct, under teacher guidance, their creativity in directions which reflects their own interests. The theme this will not be known until the paper is given out in January.



I hope this letter clarifies the structure of the final few months of the Art and Photography lessons. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,

Ms. E Humpleby  
Head of Art, Media & Photography, Head of Creative Arts Faculty  
Mrs Harris and Ms Fern, Teachers of Art