

GOVERNOR VISIT – CREATIVE ARTS (MUSIC, ART, D&T)

Claire Price met with Stella Nnochiri, Year 6 teacher and Art lead on March 11th, 2026

Focus: to consider the approach to the Creative Arts in Fleet's curriculum, what is typical in our provision and any additional projects taking place.

I met with Stella in the Year 6 classroom. She and Sinead are Music co-leads. Stella is Art lead. She described a cycle rotation of D&T, music and art, with one session focussing on art every other week at least.

She showed me the curriculum requirements for art in each academic year, covering five areas; drawing, painting, sculpture, printing and textiles. It was clear how passionate Stella is about this subject. It was incorporated throughout the Year 6 topic work that was all around us. She believes art is very valued at Fleet and enjoys the flexibility she has to deliver curriculum requirements. She thinks Fleet is an exceptional school in this regard.

The school engages with borough initiatives like the Biennale, where Camden schools can submit work for display at Central St Martins. As part of this, the Biennale organises a local artist to support schools that don't have a specific art teacher. Stella thought this was a very good resource.

She attends regular Camden insets, at least once a term, for art leads and teachers to pool ideas and visit galleries together. She has also delivered insets at Fleet to share expertise with staff.

She put together a new initiative in the Autumn term, 'Art Week', where the entire school focussed on one artist, developing their own work in response. She got lots of positive feedback from this and will repeat.

She talked about the great relationship the school has developed with the October Gallery. The gallery can create almost bespoke experiences for the children, depending on what they are focussing on at school at the time.

One of Stella's priorities has been to continue to decolonise the curriculum, to show children that "artists can look like anyone". She is still working on creating more links with local artists post Covid and would like more artists to visit the school to talk about Art as a career.

With drama/spoken word; every class does 3 assemblies each year. These are topic related and can involve every aspect of the creative arts from performance (music, dancing, acting) through to making backdrops. At their last assembly, Year 6 even wrote their own script. The assemblies are very beneficial but do require a lot of teacher preparation and extra time.

The school has a good relationship with WAC arts in Belsize Park. They run drama workshops at the school and have even done work with the children on making stop motion films.

Both Year 2 and Year 6 make one theatre trip, but these are very expensive. To raise funds for the year 6 Christmas trip (to see the pantomime at Hackney Empire), the school became a cinema for the afternoon, charging a minimal entry fee to children and parents.

For Music; in Year 3, every child is given a recorder and their class teacher leads weekly sessions. This is across Camden schools. There is an opportunity to take part in Camden's music concert at the Royal Albert Hall.

Year 4 and 5 are given a trumpet or trombone, with a weekly visit on Thursdays from Rod, an outside music teacher. Class teachers join these sessions. This is a Fleet initiative. I asked if many children carry on with these instruments after Year 5. Stella thinks some in year 6 have continued with Rod, but most let it go. These are heavy instruments to bring into school. The children also get guitar taster sessions, with a visit from another outside teacher.

More instruments generally would be highly beneficial as there are not enough of any one kind of instrument (ie xylophones) for everyone in the class to play on at the same time. She connected with the music teacher at a nearby school to make a sharing arrangement but there were scheduling conflicts.

She suggested the music cupboard (where Camden Music lead their one to one sessions and instruments are kept), could be re-organised to improve access when collecting instruments for lessons.

She showed me 'Sing Up', an online resource available to all teachers, especially useful for those who don't know music themselves. The school pays in to access this scheme but it is very helpful and builds teachers' confidence.

Like the other creative arts, Design & Technology is embedded throughout the curriculum, in textiles, experimentation and modelling, even food preparation and planning. Stella contextualises concepts, like looking at how to build bomb shelters or sew VE Day bunting as part of Y6's WW2 topic. She is planning to make 'trench soup' with the children, taking them in groups to the cube to cook. The home learning projects that the children are encouraged to do every half term are often 3D - Stella showed me pictures of previous projects, including a WW2 battle scene and a model of the solar system. The children have their own sketchbooks that they return to throughout their time at Fleet. They can practise skills but also use these books as a space to develop their own ideas.

I am very grateful to Stella for giving me her time and was impressed by how imaginatively creativity (in all its forms) and design is embedded within the required curriculum.