



# VISUAL ART DEPARTMENT

## Student Handbook

### Mission and Curriculum Overview

We believe in the value of personal growth through training in visual art. By practicing and acquiring skill, knowledge, and experience in a range of mediums in the studio, students derive benefits that represent the core of the art-making process itself: personal expression, self-discipline, resourcefulness, and the role of visual art in the world and culture at large.

A collaborative studio environment, which includes intensive training and high expectations, helps each young artist develop their own individual vision and artistic voice. As students develop and grow through the language of art, they gain a sense of themselves, a pride in their own motivations, and satisfaction in a sense of purpose.

Our curriculum requires that each student explore and gain technical skills in a diverse range of studio practices. Developing as well-rounded young visual artists, they build a balanced portfolio and gain a broad understanding of the art-making process through their experiences in the studio. Most students will take four studio classes per semester. It is important that all students work in 2-D and 3-D mediums throughout the school year, as well as other components of the curriculum, such as darkroom photography and computer-based art processes. The goal is to experiment, try different mediums, gain new skills, and take full advantage of the curriculum available at Walnut Hill.

In each studio class, students will be evaluated and graded on the quality of the artwork they produce, the growth they have shown throughout the semester, and the effort and attitude that they have consistently demonstrated in the class.

### Departmental Citizenship and Personal Responsibility

The Visual Art department studios are busy shared spaces; they can get messy and crowded quickly. This is a very lively and dynamic environment, and it requires that all students do their part to help it run successfully for everyone. Cleaning, putting supplies away, carefully respecting the artwork and supplies of others are all critical components of the “trust” that goes into making a shared studio a successful and welcoming environment. In other words, we are all in this together. We have to work together to make it thrive.

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### Health & Safety

Contemporary safety practices are adhered to in all studios and only the most up-to-code materials are used in class. Students are instructed as to the proper do's & don'ts when learning to use various artistic supplies and tools. Moreover, in our studios we only use materials that can be properly handled, ventilated, and disposed of. All faculty keep current with these processes and regulations. The safety of our students and young artists is always our top priority.

Working in an art studio and learning to safely handle the materials used (oil paint, photo darkroom chemistry, ceramics, sculpture tools, etc.) is an important part of the training and learning process for any aspiring young artist. All students in the Visual Art Department participate in this effort, both individually and as part of a group working in a shared space. At Walnut Hill School for the Arts we (faculty and students) take this responsibility very seriously.

### Respect, Kindness, and Personal Conduct

Artists learn from other artists. A crucial part of growing as a young artist (and a young person) is developing a sense of humility about yourself and your artwork, while also developing a curiosity and interest in the work of your peers. You have a lot to learn from on another. For this dynamic and healthy exchange of knowledge to take place, all students need to feel welcome and supported while they learn and grow as young artists. Working closely in the studio with friends and peers is an exciting, fun, and very important part of the artistic process, but it can also be stressful and tough at times. It is absolutely critical and REQUIRED that all students treat others with kindness, and with respect: for their artwork, for their supplies and materials, and of course for their persons. The Visual Art Department strives to be a safe and supportive work environment, and it takes the effort and participation of all its members, faculty, and students, to make this a reality.

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I have read and fully understand the guidelines and statements written above. My signature indicates that I support these ideas and I will do my very best to follow them.

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Signature

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Date