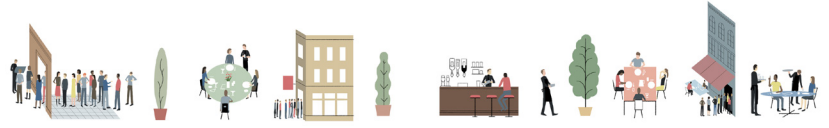


# Archischools



## MANIFESTO

In Scotland today, every member of the population is under the influence of architecture and architects in some way. We live in a time of increasing urbanisation and architecture affects every aspect of our lives. Knowing this, one would expect people to be very opinionated about architecture and to demand to join in when it is being created. Yet apart from negative reaction to the unfamiliar, this is seldom so. Why should this be? Architecture appears complex and the process of its creation is a mystery to those not involved. This is quite simply because we are not taught it.

Our intention to introduce architecture into schools will be achieved with a focus on the following aims:

*We aim to highlight the importance of both built and unbuilt spaces in shaping our environment and lives.*

As part of teaching architecture, it is important to understand the relationship between the built form and the surrounding unbuilt spaces. Young people should know how to analyse and understand the impact of scale, situation, orientation, soft and hard landscaping, and ownership of open spaces in shaping our built environment. Just as our lives are affected by the places we inhabit; a building is influenced by its surroundings. An understanding of this bigger picture is needed to create a link between the environment, the population, wildlife and the built environment.

*We aim to encourage the practice of hands-on 3D making to promote experimentation, problem-solving and the discovery of new skills.*

Making could take many forms, from learning traditional building crafts to digital approaches, introducing ideas of scale, qualities of materials, and representing space. An understanding of how things are made is essential to understanding what can be made, demystifying the making process and empowering young citizens to consider and develop new techniques which in turn could open the door to future innovation.

*We aim to make architecture, design and construction accessible to all and encourage greater diversity in these industries.*

The image of the architectural profession as being overwhelmingly male, middle-class, white and heteronormative is one perpetuated even by children's story books. If we are to see any meaningful change in the variety of participants in these sectors then we must present them as exciting, viable and accessible careers to our young people. A greater diversity of voices can only serve to improve our built environment. By educating even our youngest citizens about the built environment we can encourage a life-long contribution to their surroundings, be it as architects, engineers, builders or simply as individuals prepared to speak up.

*We aim to encourage the iterative nature of the design process as a method of learning across all subjects.*

Design is a wonderful skill which balances science, mathematics, technology logic, logistics, creativity, politics and craft. The value of the design process includes the holistic awareness of these interdisciplinary relationships. Far from being a purely creative activity, the core aspects of the design process are: concept, communication, consultation, development, refinement and making. All of these qualities are essential tools to encourage informed citizens with the confidence to demand more of their built environment. The pathway of design to fabrication is an exercise in the important discipline of following a clear creative process with problem solving, environmental awareness, listening, and critical appraisal; essential skills for any mode of work or study.

*We aim to encourage play as an intergenerational means of exploration, education and fun.*

Play allows a space in time for open ended and self-guided learning; an experience which can be constructive without being restrictive. Within architectural education the temporary nature of play, as a tool of learning, empowers a culture exploring ideas without fear of failure or judgement.

Places of play, within our towns and cities, have become mono-functional and fixed islands. Playgrounds are often designated as a world for children only, segregating age groups. The curriculum on architecture should explore how more natural, creative, inclusive and intergenerational play spaces and opportunities can be created within our built environment. These spaces should be risk-enabling, challenging, flexible and encourage fun.

*We aim to foster an interactive and collaborative approach with our current planning system.*

How can our current planning system encourage an interactive and collaborative relationship with adults and children? Encouraging young people to participate, observe and evaluate their surroundings will make them feel empowered to influence the future of our built environment.

Archischools believe that intergenerational consultations with an interplay of theory, experimentation, intelligence, self-discoveries and imagination are key elements to raising a responsible and visually aware society.

*We aim to encourage thinking and talking about built and made spaces and using the senses to explore them.*

How does a particular space make young people feel, act, interact? What happens when they run, climb or hide there? Where do they like being and not like being? What do they notice about the light, textures, visual calmness or clutter, acoustics, height and enclosure? There are no right answers, everyone experiences space differently and the varying needs, backgrounds, genders and ages of participants will only add to the discussion and everyone's awareness.

*We aim to integrate creative approaches associated with architecture across all school subjects.*

Architecture has connotations of being somewhat unapproachable to the layperson. We must break down this image and show it does not exist in a bubble but relates to all subjects already taught in schools. Young people should not learn about architecture or the built environment as a distinct subject but be encouraged to explore how it impacts their lives from creative, historical, political, technological, scientific, cultural and physical perspectives. Advocating creative and strategic thinking across all subjects will allow young people opportunities to better understand the world they inhabit and to experiment with the variety of ways they are able to influence it.

*We aim to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable development.*

As well as being functional and pleasurable, we need our natural and built environment to sustain itself in the most practical sense. Valuing, maintaining and improving buildings and spaces which currently exist is as important to this endeavour as the creation of new buildings. To have any chance of making a new norm we need our young citizens, as future influencers, to discuss and debate sustainable development for the sake of the planet and their future health and wellbeing.

*We must empower and engage our young citizens in the design and politics of the built environment.*



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