VISUAL JOURNALING: A SPRINGBOARD FOR PRIORITISING THE CREATIVE PROCESS?

An Exploration of Teachers' Perspectives on Visual Journaling in the Primary

School Classroom and its Potential to Contribute to the Prioritisation of Process in the

Visual Arts Curriculum.

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is a presentation of my original research work. Wherever contributions of others are involved, every effort is made to indicate this clearly. This work has not been submitted previously at this or any other educational institution. The work was done under the guidance of Eileen Keane at the Marino Institute of Education, Dublin. I agree that the Library may lend or copy this dissertation upon request and may deposit it in Trinity College's open access institutional repository, subject to Irish Copyright Legislation and Trinity College Library conditions of use and acknowledgement.

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Abstract

The critical emphasis of the Visual Arts Curriculum for Irish primary schools is on the process of children's artmaking. Exploration of, and experimentation with materials, is a central objective along with teachers taking a 'guided discovery' approach. However, literature and research on the implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum highlight the need for an innovative approach that prioritises the creative process. In light of this, this study explores the question as to whether the use of visual journaling - "an artistic process for recording personal insights with constructed images and written reflections" (Evans-Palmer, 2018, p.19) - can help to prioritise process in the Visual Arts Curriculum, in the senior end of an Irish primary school.

Located within the interpretivist paradigm and employing a mixed-methods design, data was collected from eight primary school teachers in one-case study school through questionnaires, this was followed by an implementation phase where teaches were introduced to visual journaling in their Visual Arts Curriculum, and following this semi-structured focus group interviews were conducted. The first research aim, was to explore the visual art practices of teachers and ascertain factors that may have contributed to the priority of product over process, as identified in School Self-Evaluation prior to this research. The second aim was to introduce teachers, to visual journaling and to investigate and examine its implementation, outcomes and potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the Visual Arts Curriculum.

Findings from the study confirm that visual journaling served as an effective antidote to the priority on product in the art classroom in the case-study school. Moreover, the research study finds benefits to student learning including enhanced skill, confidence and pride in art-work; improved collaboration and inclusion; creation of a safe space; and increased engagement. The data further evidences benefits to teacher practice including improved implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum; authentic assessment of student learning; enhanced collaborative practice; and growing confidence in teaching art. A renewed appreciation for a focus on the creative process was also noted. Guided by these findings, it is recommended that visual journaling be highlighted and harnessed as an approach to the prioritisation of the creative process in art education in primary schools.

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This introductory chapter highlights the core focus of the Irish Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum on the creative process and explores the implications of this for the role of the classroom teacher. It also defines visual journaling as an approach in art education and highlights its potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the primary school classroom. Based on this, the chapter then outlines the research question, objectives and rationale for this study.

1.1 1999 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum

1.1.1 Curriculum Emphases

The critical emphasis of the Visual Arts Curriculum for Irish primary schools is on "understanding the creative process children go through in making art" (GoI, 1999a, p. 11). Indeed, the process of making is deemed as valuable as the final product. Exploration of, and experimentation with, different tools and media is a central objective, along with children being 'designers' of their artwork (Ní Bhroin, 2012). Significantly, the curriculum declares that "this role should not be taken away from them" (GoI, 1999a, p. 12). Therefore, the essential emphasis of the Visual Arts Curriculum is that children's artwork should be their own individual and creative work.

1.1.2 The Teacher's Role

To foster and facilitate the individual creative process of the child's artwork the Visual Arts Curriculum encourages the teacher to take a 'guided discovery' approach. This approach places the teacher in the role of facilitator rather than instructor and regards the teacher's role as "more of a catalyst than a teacher of technique" (GoI, 1999a, p.54). Indeed, the curriculum asserts that "the task of the teacher is not to teach clever techniques or to demonstrate ways of producing images and forms he/she finds acceptable but to build on interests and strengths… and making suggestions where appropriate" (GoI, 1999a, p.12).

1.1.3 Curriculum Evaluations

Both the report on the 'Evaluation of Curriculum Implementation in Primary Schools' (DES, 2005) and the 'Primary Curriculum Review, Final Report' (NCCA, 2005) indicate that teachers continue to face difficulties as they implement the Visual Arts Curriculum – specifically with the implementation of individual and creative approaches. In some classrooms it was found that children's creativity was hindered through the use of over-prescriptive starting points and insufficient opportunities for individual expression (DES, 2005).

Such challenges are echoed and affirmed throughout more recent Irish studies (Coolahan 2008; Long, 2015; Murphy, 2018), with researchers arguing that - while the quality of art education in Irish primary schools has seen some significant advances, the reality has fallen far short of aspirations (Granville, 2011). In line with international research, arts education at primary level is often found to be standardised and of poor quality (McArdle, 2012). Furthermore, the lack of creativity, use of worksheets and arbitrary pedagogical approaches taken by some teachers, are of key concern (Alter et al., 2009; Boyd & Cutcher, 2015; Eckhoff, 2013).

1.2 A Twenty-First Century Approach to Visual Art Education

Owen (2015) argues that providing a twenty-first century quality education for all students requires a rethinking of education: of how we teach and of how students learn. In order to be an effective educator innovative thinking is essential. In 1976, Arthur Efland published "The School Art Style: A Functional Analysis," in which he notes that there are distinct styles of art in schools. He reported an absence of meaningful variation in children's artwork and concluded "The self-same creative activities may not be as free as they [initially] looked" (1976, p. 41). Efland (1976) estimated that the school art style had remained largely static for the previous forty-five to fifty years and that this was its major downfall.

Forty-five years later there is still a lingering concern among teachers and scholars regarding the quality of art education in primary schools (Gude, 2013). Furthermore, and of note, Gude (2013)

observes that the art taught in most schools has remained strikingly similar over the ensuing

decades. Hence, in order to bypass the "conventional, ritualistic, and rule-governed" school-based

art lessons described by Efland (1976, p.38), teaching approaches must be adjusted to make art

processes more contemporary. Such arguments are echoed and affirmed throughout the literature,

with advocates contending that by continually rejuvenating established teaching strategies and

considering innovative approaches - the interests and learning needs of a particular generation of

students in art are accommodated (Sanders-Bustle, 2008; Song, 2012). In Ireland, the Teaching

Council urges schools to engage in a process of continuous professional development (CPD) in order

to improve the quality of their teaching and learning (Banks & Smyth, 2011). In fact, studies show

that formal and informal professional development is fundamental for enhanced pedagogy and

student outcomes (Banks & Smyth, 2011).

Considering the literature on the Visual Arts Curriculum and its implementation and

evaluation, it could be construed that the current generation of primary school children are in

urgent need of a more innovative approach in visual art education, one that fosters and values

creative processes.

1.3 Visual Journaling in Art Education

1.3.1 Definition

Evans-Palmer (2018) defines visual journaling as "an artistic process for recording personal

insights with constructed images and written reflections" (p.19). Traditionally, the sketchbook has

been used as a tool for pupils to practice skills in the art classroom; however, the structured

assignments often leave students feeling detached from the art classroom (James, 2019; Scott,

2010). Recent shifts in educational pedagogy urge art educators to examine and reconsider art

education as it is currently taught in order to manifest new styles of art education (Gude, 2013). In

response to this shift, visual journaling has emerged in the art classroom transforming the functional

role of the sketchbook to one that "encourages conceptual development and fosters creative

processes and critical inquiry" (Sanders-Bustle, 2008, p.9).

1.3.2 Location - Senior End of the Primary School

The use of visual journaling in art education is most commonly documented in second level

schools (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Kelly, 2019; Song, 2012; Willcox, 2017) and with student teachers

at third level (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017; Evans-Palmer, 2018;). However, there is some literature

advocating for, and detailing its use with children in the primary school (Bieg, 2011; Department of

Education [UK], 2013). In 2013, the Department for Education in the United Kingdom outlined the

key stages of the National Curriculum for Art and Design Programmes of Study. Here, visual journals

were deemed a necessary tool for developing skills with materials as well as for exploring individual

creativity and experimentation (Department for Education [UK], 2013). Indeed, the document

requires visual journals to be created by students from the Second Key Stage of learning i.e., by

children from the ages of seven - eight and upwards. Additionally, a small-scale study carried out by

Bieg (2011) involved using visual journaling in art education with second grade students. Bieg (2011)

argues that visual journaling should be used with younger children as they often show their

understanding through images and exploration of materials.

As noted previously, in Ireland the critical emphasis of the Visual Arts Curriculum is on

understanding the creative process that children experience in artmaking. This emphasis is justified

as Torrance (1963, 1968), found that creativity declines when children enter formal schooling,

particularly among fourth graders i.e., nine- to ten-year-olds; and many other researchers have also

found a slump in creativity among this cohort (Barbot, Lubart, & Bescançon, 2016; He & Wong, 2015;

Krampen, 2012).

Murphy (2018) observes that at the young age of five or six years, primary school children

are highly engaged in the art-making process and do not strive to have "a product". Nevertheless,

according to Boyd and Cutcher (2015), as children grow older, they seem to lose their uninhibited

enthusiasm for creating art and also lose their confidence. Clearly, a key question to ask is why is this happening? Could it be that primary school teachers prioritise the end-product over the creative process and value lessons which promote the use of stencils? This view is supported by an educator in Boyd and Cutcher's (2015) study who stated:

> Children lose confidence at primary school because they don't keep that free drawing going. They have templates and stencils, so many of the walls are covered with the same things. You could imagine what they could do if they kept drawing (p.95).

Many contend that it is not uncommon to encounter children, as young as seven, who are convinced that they cannot proceed with a creative task (Barnes, 2015; Desailly, 2015). Furthermore, research indicates that once formed, self-efficacy beliefs are difficult to change (Barrett et al., 2017). Nevertheless, in light of the onus on primary school teachers to foster the creative process of the child -as outlined in the Visual Arts Curriculum- it is incumbent on primary school teachers, particularly in the senior end of the school, to explore and consider new approaches in art education.

1.4 Research Question and Objectives

This study explores the research question: '*Can the implementation of visual journaling help to prioritise process in the Visual Arts Curriculum in the senior end of an Irish primary school*?' Teachers in the case study school under examination in this research - *St. Peter's Primary School*- have identified, during School Self-Evaluation process, a prioritisation of product over process in their engagement with the Visual Arts Curriculum. The first key research objective, therefore, is to explore the perceptions and experiences of these teachers and identify the potential factors that may contribute to this perceived priority of product over process in the senior classes. The second key objective is to introduce teachers, in the senior end of the school, to the approach of visual journaling in art education and to investigate and examine its implementation, outcomes and potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the Visual Arts Curriculum.

1.5 Research Rationale

This research study was motivated by three key factors:

Firstly, given the emphasis on the creative process outlined in the Visual Arts Curriculum and studies indicating that children's creativity abates as they progress through the primary school, it behoves primary teachers, particularly in the senior end of the school, to explore and consider new approaches that prioritise the creative process in art education.

Secondly, although gaining prominence internationally in second-level schools and higher education, visual journaling is largely unexplored in the context of the primary school classroom and in the Irish context. Research from an Irish case-study school will, therefore, provide valuable insights into the benefits and challenges associated with visual journaling in the Irish primary school context.

Thirdly, the researcher's involvement in the School Self-Evaluation on visual arts has led to a deeper interest in the perceived priority of product over process in art education.

1.6 Outline of Chapters

This introductory chapter has presented the critical emphases of the Visual Arts Curriculum, and the critical role of the classroom teacher within it. It has also defined visual journaling and located its current context and potential place in art education. Finally, it outlined the research question, objectives and rationale for this study.

Chapter 2 explores the literature on art education at primary school level. It is presented in three main sections. Firstly, it examines the research related to the development of the Visual Arts Curriculum in Ireland. Secondly, "Process-based" and "Product-based" art education are defined and the factors potentially contributing to the priority of product in art are interrogated. Finally, research and literature on key elements of visual journaling is reviewed. The literature review is considered a road map which provides insights, information and direction for this case-study.

Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology used in this study. It provides details of the case-study school and the participants involved. Data collection instruments are described and justified and the various steps in the data analysis are outlined. Ethical considerations are explored and the study's limitations are considered.

Chapter 4 presents and discusses the main findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data of this study. These findings are analysed in the context of the literature previously explored. This chapter aims to delineate and discuss the key outcomes of this study.

Finally, *Chapter 5* concludes this study. It outlines study limitations and presents recommendations for further research. In so doing, it also summarises the key findings of the study and highlights their potential relevance to the implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum in the primary school classroom.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review is organised into three sections. The first section examines the

literature and research related to the development of the Visual Arts Curriculum in Ireland, the

second section explores "Process-based" and "Product-based" art education while discussing factors

potentially contributing to the priority of product-based art education in the primary school. Finally,

prominent literature on key aspects of visual journaling in art education is reviewed with the chief

aim of understanding how visual journaling can be implemented in one primary school and the

potential benefits and value of doing so.

2.2 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum Development in Ireland

Developments in relation to the Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum in Ireland are

explored here, not alone to situate this work in its specific cultural and historical educational

context, but also to identify and highlight the recurrent challenges in relation to the prioritisation of

process-based arts education in the Visual Arts Curriculum.

2.2.1 The 1971 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum

The New Primary School Curriculum – Curaclam na Bunscoile – of 1971 was considered

highly innovative for its time (GoI, 1971). The child-centered pedagogy of John Dewey, who

contended that "if the adult generation imposes on the young its own values and its own

knowledge, the process is one of indoctrination rather than education", provided the philosophical

framework for the curriculum (Kelly, 2004, p.37). In the specific section on Art and Craft, the

Curriculum Handbook states that the "teacher-imparted lesson" was to be replaced with the "child-

centered approach" (GoI, 1971, p.286). Indeed, the child's role was never passive, rather work in Art

and Craft was to be a "self-activated learning process" (GoI, 1971, p.279). Furthermore, an emphasis

on the child's creative process was clearly the focus with the curriculum explicitly stating that the

"desired result is not the excellence of the finished product, but the experience gained by the child" (GoI, 1971, p.279). Callan (1995) notes that this marked a significant change from the previous "teacher as transmitter role" (p.93) iterated in past curriculums and encouraged the use of more guided discovery methods.

2.2.2 Reviews and Evaluations of the 1971 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum

In subsequent years, evaluations of the 1971 Curaclam na Bunscoile were carried out and, despite the thoroughness of its proposals, evidence suggests that emphasis remained largely on didactic approaches, with the intended focus on children's creative processes becoming lost (OECD, 1991). It is apparent that progress in the arts still needed to be made with Benson (1979) contending that Art and Craft activities in primary schools are "frequently conceived of as a pleasant means of passing time" (p.20). Furthermore, in 1990, the Primary Curriculum Review Body, in light of their findings on the implementation of the 1971 curriculum, recommended a major revision of the Art and Craft Curriculum in primary schools (GoI, 1990).

2.2.3 The 1999 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum

The advent of the revised Primary School Curriculum in 1999 saw the subject area of 'Art and Craft' re-conceived under the new title 'Visual Arts'. This broad new curriculum, encompassing the six key strands of drawing, print, paint, construction, clay, and fabric and fibre, aims to allow students to develop sensitivity towards a range of visual elements (GoI, 1999b).

In addition to the inclusion of aesthetic education, the critical emphasis of the revised curriculum, is on "understanding the creative process children go through in making art" (GoI, 1999a, p. 11). In the same vein as the 1971 curriculum, children at all times are to be "involved in a creative rather than in a passive or imitative way" (GoI, 1999a, p. 12). Indeed, Ní Bhroin (2012) maintains that the single, most fundamental principle of the Visual Arts Curriculum is that students have personal input into all of their artwork. In fact, the curriculum states "the process of making is as valuable as the final product" (GoI, 1999a, p. 11). Furthermore, this curriculum promotes 'guided

discovery' as the most pertinent approach to teaching art which allows the teacher to facilitate, rather than dictate children in their artmaking (GoI, 1999a, p. 54). The Visual Arts Curriculum, published over twenty years ago, has been described as "a cutting-edge curriculum informed by extensive research of its time" (NCCA 2020, p. 1) and an emphasis on the child's creative process is inherent within it. The curriculum has since been the focus of review, and evaluation.

2.2.4 Reviews and Evaluations of the 1999 Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum

Two official reviews and evaluations of curriculum implementation were conducted in 2005 by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) and by the Department of Education and Science Inspectorate (DES). Both reports, while primarily positive – outlining examples of effective practice – also indicate notable deficiencies in curriculum implementation. The NCCA's evaluation reported that almost one-quarter of classrooms were not supportive of student creativity, with over-prescriptive starting points (NCCA, 2005). Furthermore, and of key concern, the DES evaluation noted that, in some classrooms, "activities were almost entirely teacher-directed, with an overemphasis on copying and the production of 'template' or formulaic art, at the expense of creativity" (2005 p.42). Finally, and resonating considerably with both reviews, a small-scale survey carried out by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) (2010) found that teachers were consistent in highlighting the need for ongoing professional development in implementing the Visual Arts Curriculum.

Both the reviews by the NCCA (2005) and by the DES Inspectorate (2005), while now fifteen years old, provide an insightful and important snapshot of the range of challenges in relation to curriculum implementation within the visual art classroom. Specifically, challenges in relation to the prioritisation of process-based art education are evident. These challenges are echoed and affirmed in more recent literature with Murphy (2018) arguing that while there is a movement away from a linear view of education, books still arrange art lessons in instructional, regimented ways. Furthermore, Eckhoff (2013) states that "primary school art is often shallow, linear explorations of

art media and methods culminating in a predetermined model" (p. 365). Indeed, art-making in this

context is considered to be teacher-directed, product-oriented and lacking in artistic merit

(Schirmacher, 2002).

Just as the child-centered approach outlined in Curaclam na Bunscoile in 1971 was never

fully realised, it is clear that the potential for process-based art education elucidated in the Primary

School Curriculum in 1999 has never been fully realised either. While the evaluations of the NCCA

(2005) and the DES Inspectorate (2005) outline many positive developments, Coolahan (2008) places

the spotlight on the "significant deficiencies" (p. 38) in art education in primary schools. In relation

to pedagogy, the 1999 Primary School Curriculum for Visual Arts seeks a return to the child-

centered, inquiry-based, teacher-facilitated methods espoused in the 1971 curriculum and most

importantly highlights the need to focus on the creative process in the visual art classroom

(Coolahan, 2008). Such a call for a return to this approach implies that these pedagogical approaches

may have been lost in classrooms between 1971 and now. It is, therefore, the aim of this research to

introduce an approach to teachers that may aid in the prioritisation of the creative process in the

primary school classroom.

2.3 Process-based Art Education Vs. Product-based Art Education

Boyd and Cutcher (2015) maintain that educators' pedagogical decisions are crucial as they

directly influence children's learning outcomes. Thus, many contend teachers must effectively justify

what, how and why children do what they do in the classroom (Beal, 2001; Edwards, 2014).

Therefore, to understand the benefits of a process-based art education it is essential to explore what

this approach entails and to examine its supposed antithesis – product-based art education.

2.3.1 Process-based Art Education

Process-based art education allows the learner to experiment with and reflect on the

process at hand. Thus, the focus shifts from end-product or outcome, to doing and experiencing in

the here-and-now moment (Edwards, 2014). According to Alter, Hayes and O'Hara (2009), when approached as a 'process', art education provides children with the opportunity to express themselves and demonstrate gained knowledge, ideas and emotions in non-verbal ways. Furthermore, McLennan (2010) contends that art education that focuses on the creative process, provides children with "authentic, differentiated, and holistic methods of exploration and learning" (p. 81). Indeed, such quality art education has been linked with establishing positive learning environments for students, promoting the development of imagination and self-expression (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009).

2.3.2 Product-based Art Education

In contrast, product-based art education is based on specific formulae with all participants following the same set of directions, resulting in products that are often very similar (McLennan, 2010). Stone and Chakraborty (2011) contend that when children participate in these activities, lower-level thinking prevails and they are offered little or no opportunity to make decisions, to create meaning or to experiment with a variety of materials. Indeed, in the words of the curriculum: "A pre-defined end product, developed through a pre-ordained process ('cut here', glue there'), is likely to exclude creativity and be of little educational value" (GoI, 1999a, p.55). Furthermore, Boyd & Cutcher (2015) maintain that emotional relief, often experienced in art making, is hindered as the child has no opportunity to express their own emotions.

2.3.3 Issues and Challenges of Product-based Art Education

While benefits of engaging students in more structured activities are evident in the literature – including children's exposure to techniques and tools and the opportunity for them to practice listening and fine-motor skills (Edwards 2014; Kenny, Finneran & Mitchell, 2015) – McLennan (2010) maintains that rigorously following actions limits the scope of children's creativity. Indeed, Barnes (2015) argues that "when teachers show the child an example of what [an artwork] should look like, the child's opportunities for creativity and problem solving are greatly reduced" (p.12). Furthermore,

research suggests that imitative procedures adopted by product-based arts education conditions the child to "adult concepts" that they cannot produce alone, and thus, frustrate the child's own creative ambitions (Edwards, 2014).

One of the main aims of the Visual Arts Curriculum is to encourage teachers to provide activities that "help the child to make sense of the world" (GoI 1999b, p.2). With this objective in mind, the question arises as to what benefits are present when the purpose of an activity is to replicate a teacher's creation, resulting in thirty similar 'art products'? Reminiscent of Freire's (1970) "banking concept of education" (p. 72), when such product-based activities are adopted the inherent message for children is that they are "receptacles to be filled, with the information bestowed to them by the more knowledgeable teacher" (McLennan, 2010, p. 82). To negate this "banking concept of education", Freire proposes educators embrace a ''problem-posing model of education'' (1970, p. 79), where students are encouraged to explore the process of artmaking. Many contend, when the creative process is valued and encouraged in this way, a strong foundation for creative thinking and problem solving is developed (Edwards, 2014; Hetland et al., 2013; Winner, Goldstein & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). These skills are not only necessary to prepare children to thrive in an unknown future but will ultimately allow students to take a leading role in their own creative journey.

2.4 Contributing Factors to the Priority of Product-art over Process-art in Visual Arts Education

Understanding why teachers often place emphasis on product-art over process-art in the Visual Arts Curriculum requires an exploration of some of the constraints which teachers face daily in the primary school classroom and which are evidenced in research findings in this area. Three factors of critical importance are: outside pressures and prioritisation of other subjects (Breacháin & O'Toole, 2013; McLennan 2010); inadequate arts knowledge and teacher confidence (Barnes, 2015;

Granville, 2011); and immediate and simple 'solutions' online (Chapman, Wright, and Pascoe, 2019).

Each of these factors (illustrated in Figure 2.1) will be examined in turn.

Figure 2.1

Contributing Factors to the Priority of Product-Art
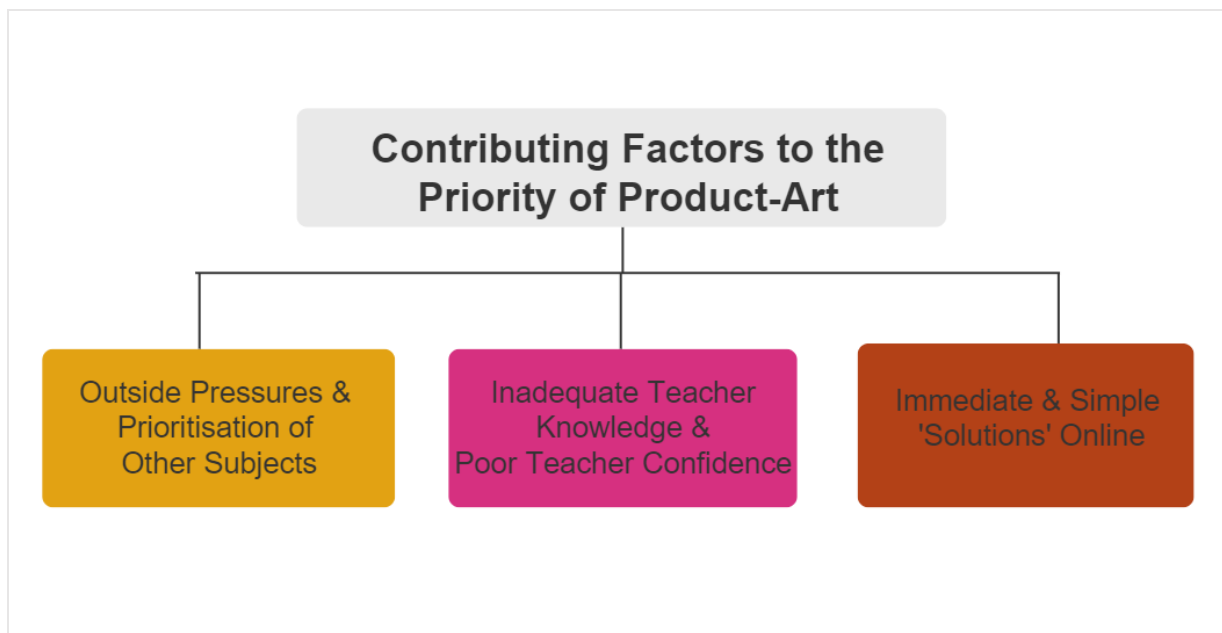
2.4.1 Outside Pressures and Prioritisation of Other Subjects

According to Beghetto (2019) teachers are under the evaluative eye of school stakeholders. Indeed, Smaller (2015) states that teachers "have always been under the yoke of surveillance" (p. 151). In such overtly monitored contexts, Ingersoll (2003) maintains teachers' flexibility in the classroom is stifled and their priorities predetermined. Indeed, among some generalist teachers an emphasis on the creative process in visual arts can be seen to be less of a priority (Tarr, 2004).

McLennan (2010) maintains that in some cases, rushed, empty activities are engaged with by teachers for the "production of materials to decorate the classroom walls and fridges of children's homes" (p. 83) or for reporting purposes. This evidence implies that activities in visual arts can be derived from external demands rather than from a critical understanding and appreciation of curricular aims.

In addition, increased emphasis on standardised testing for literacy and numeracy can challenge educators to provide quality art education (Barnes, 2015; Donovan & Pascale, 2004; Hetland et al., 2013; Irwin, 2018). A small-scale survey carried out by the INTO (2010) confirms this with teachers expressing concern that time spent on the art subjects decreases time available for the important core disciplines. As a result, in Ireland, initiatives such as *Creative Schools,* a flagship of the *Creative Youth* plan*,* have been developed which "aims to put the arts and creativity at the heart of children and young people's lives." (GoI, 2018, p.44).

However, despite such initiatives, Long (2015) observes that after reports of depleting levels of numeracy and literacy in Ireland in the PISA 2009 study (OECD, 2010), there is a danger that teachers do not spend the necessary time on visual arts focusing solely on children's literacy and numeracy skills. Indeed, consequent to the PISA results, the Irish government published "The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young People 2011–2020", aimed at improving these levels (DES, 2011). Many maintain that quality visual arts education has suffered as a result of such strategies (Hetland et al., 2013; Southworth, 2008) and presents a significant threat to the holistic nature of the Irish curriculum (Breacháin and O'Toole, 2013). Indeed, Breacháin and O'Toole point out that the aims of the strategy confirm "that the original threat to the Arts is still imminent albeit in a new guise" (2013, p. 404).

With this curricular hierarchy and outside pressures from parents and management present, some teachers have competing priorities for their time and focus across a school day (Chapman, Wright & Pascoe, 2019; Lingard, Martino & Rezai-Rashti, 2013). As a result, as Bamford (2010) observes, when it comes to planning, especially in areas perceived as lower priority, art activities are sourced to keep children 'busy and happy' for a short period of time, rather than with, what McLennan (2010) describes as, process-based activities that encourage children to explore art in meaningful and creative ways.

2.4.2 Teacher Knowledge and Confidence

The second area that impacts teachers' lack of emphasis on process-based art education is that of limited arts knowledge and low confidence in teaching visual arts. Primary teachers often report a lack of confidence in their artistic capabilities (Duncum, 1999; Irwin, 2018). According to Granville (2011) a teacher's own artistic ability is a strong deterrent when it comes to teaching art lessons, consequently visual art at primary level have always been limited by low levels of teacher confidence.

Boyd and Cutcher (2015) point out that teacher-directed art lessons are arguably the predominant method used in the classroom. Research shows that Irish primary school teachers lack confidence in teaching the arts, with almost 20% of them citing their lack of knowledge as a major challenge to implementing the Visual Arts Curriculum (NCCA, 2005). This lack of knowledge impacts on a teacher's understanding of the curriculum and subsequently teachers turn to ways that are quick and easy - leading to art that is overly product-oriented (Barnes, 2015; Chapman, Wright & Pascoe, 2019). Thus, it could be construed that teachers may be reluctant to engage in process-based art education and rely more on "templated" work as it is an immediate solution that has a tangible result.

The Teaching Council reports that research studies in Ireland have pointed to the value of CPD for teacher practice and curriculum implementation (Mooney-Simmie, 2007; Murchan et al., 2005). Thus, it could be argued that if shown how to implement process-based art lessons, teachers who lack confidence in their own skills may come to recognise that engaging in authentic artistic processes over making "facsimiles" is an achievable and worthwhile enterprise.

2.4.3 Immediate and Simple 'Solutions' Online

In light of outside pressures, subject hierarchy and poor teacher knowledge and confidence in teaching art, Chapman, Wright and Pascoe (2019) contend that primary teachers turn to immediate and simple 'solutions' online. A survey carried out with U.S. educators in 2014 confirmed

this and found that Pinterest was the third most popular website used among elementary school teachers for ideas for art lessons (Carpenter, Cassaday & Monti, 2018). Online platforms such as Pinterest, Twinkle and Instagram offer ready-made answers for teachers in time-poor and pressured teaching environments (Huber & Bates, 2016; Schroeder, Curcio & Lundgren, 2019). The visual nature of these websites is attractive and tempting rather than what can be observed as the current text-heavy format of the Visual Arts Curriculum. It is, perhaps, therefore unsurprising that teachers look for more immediate, visual, and seemingly 'tested' content for their teaching.

Many posit teachers turn to sites such as Pinterest as they find assessment of art difficult because of a perceived subjectivity in judging student artwork (Carpenter, Cassaday & Monti, 2018; Chapman, Wright and Pascoe 2019). Similarly, in Ireland assessment of visual art was either deemed unnecessary or a challenge (INTO, 2010). In the online space of websites such as Pinterest, teachers can see what the finished "product" looks like and can compare and contrast their own students' work on that basis. According to Ewing (2012), this creates a 'standard' to judge their own students' artwork against and consequently further supports a focus in arts teaching on product rather than on process.

Chapman, Wright and Pascoe (2019) consider that the use of these websites would pose less concern if teachers could dovetail the suggested chosen activities with curriculum aims and methodologies in a meaningful way. However, their research finds that this is not the case and that curriculum connections are few and far between; and that these websites can at times provide 'things to do' but do not necessarily improve or encourage the creative journey of the student.

2.5 Visual Journaling in Art Education

The review of literature pertaining to the development of the Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum in Ireland clearly indicates the range of challenges in relation to the prioritisation of the creative process. Integral factors contributing to this lack of prioritisation include inadequate teacher

knowledge and poor teacher confidence. However, Banks and Smyth (2011) point out when

challenges arise in schools, "teachers should be encouraged to be active participants in their own

CPD" (p.12). It is therefore the aim of this research to introduce visual journaling as an approach in

art education, to primary school teachers, that may potentially contribute to the prioritisation of

process in the Visual Arts Curriculum. This section explores prominent literature on key aspects of

visual journaling in art education.

2.5.1 Definition of Visual Journaling

According to Evans-Palmer, visual journaling, or artistic journaling as it is often referred to, is

"an artistic process for recording personal insights with constructed images and written reflections"

(2018, p.19). Visual journaling is a micro-ethnographic method that encourages pupils to obtain

meaningful personal experiences through emphasis on the creative process (Powell, 2010; Sanders-

Bustle, 2008; Song, 2012). Students use physical notebooks and are encouraged to document their

artwork in progress, through the use of drawings, photographs, text and experimentation with

media (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017). Essentially, as Todd-Adekanye (2017) points out, visual journaling

can become a key approach to the artmaking process.

2.5.2 History of Visual Journaling

Historically, the sketchbooks of Leonardo da Vinci and notebooks of Frida Kahlo, WB Yeats

and others illustrate the use and value of journaling. According to Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017), such

sketchbooks with pioneering designs epitomise the manifold thought processes that are essential to

good artwork. In terms of the use of journals in art education, in recent years Howard Gardner's

(1996) 'processfolio' has been evident in the art classroom (James, 2019). In a processfolio students

record progress on a project: early sketches, false starts, written entries, self-critiques and the final

product (Gardner, 1996). "In its totality the processfolio represents a kind of evolving cognitive map

of work in progress" (Gardner, 1996, p. 144). This hybrid portfolio and journal combination allows

students to converge their thought processes and final product. Popovich (2006) also advocates for

Gardner's processfolio, asserting that it should be an important feature in curriculum and assessment in art education.

Though it is clear that the concept of the visual journal is not new, Sanders-Bustle (2008) points out that educational methodology has long encouraged the development of the sketchbook and its counterparts into that which "encourages conceptual development and fosters creative processes and critical inquiry" (p.9). Quesenberry (2014) identifies that the visual journal can provide art educators a way to augment these traditional methods, transforming them into a place to demonstrate creative processes.

2.5.3 Theoretical Framework of Visual Journaling

This research is guided by multiple learning theories such as the constructivist theory and John Dewey's theory of the aesthetic experience (1934). Piaget articulates that "children have real understanding only of that which they invent themselves" (cited in Papert,1999, p.105). This view maintains that children do more than just absorb knowledge conveyed to them, but rather they actively reconstruct this knowledge through their own explorations. According to Thompson (2015), a constructivist approach to learning supports this view as it encourages personal exploration and active learning, thus enabling students to construct their own learning. Essentially constructivist teaching puts the child at the centre of the learning process and leaves behind transmission models of instruction and the linear learning that is common in many schools (Thompson, 2015). This approach to learning is employed to its fullest when using a visual journal that similarly allows students to oversee their own learning in the art classroom and places the teacher in the role of facilitator.

Finally, John Dewey's theory of aesthetic experience (1934) places significance on the process within art education. Dewey's theory makes clear that the transition from emotion to aesthetic meaning making involves a focus on process. According to Dewey (1934), it is through the steps of experience, reflection and action that the student engages in learning and meaning-making.

Dewey (1934) believed that a work of art is not an immediate reaction to an isolated event but rather a process that occurs over time. He maintains that the mere application of paint on canvas does not create meaning for the artist; rather it is the process that informs the selection of the brush, the colour and the placement that generates a meaningful product (cited in Scott, 2010). The visual journal does not advocate a series of individual artworks, but rather encourages the student to understand how to transfer lived experiences into aesthetic experiences. Thus, the visual journal in art education permits the student to mirror Dewey's understanding of the aesthetic experience.

2.5.4 How are Visual Journals Created?

Irwin and de Cosson describe visual journaling as an educational approach that is "nonlinear, multi-modal, and multi-dimensional" (2004, p.45). Due to its personal and individual nature, there is no definite set of characteristics for visual journaling. However, literature and research on visual journaling frequently observe the following four components illustrated in Figure 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2

Four Components of Visual Journaling
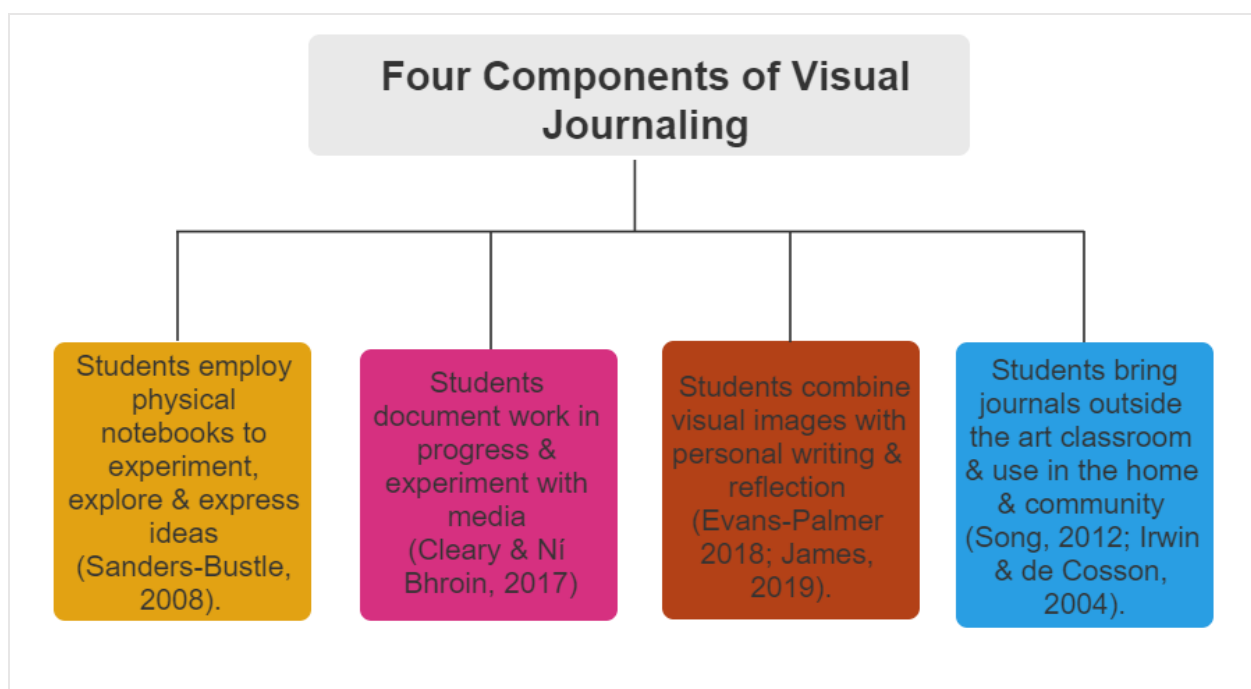
Taking these components into consideration, the visual journal is a combination of the visual and the written and is used by the student to discover and develop their own creative processes. Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) when using art journals with student teachers in Ireland, encourage their students to engage with physical notebooks, using drawing, handwriting, images and other 'tactile' materials. This view is also supported by Irwin and de Cosson (2004) who encourage students to write, draw, collage, paint, tear, and smudge in their art journal with the only requirement being to document real life as they experience it. Thus, the visual journal must be used outside of the art classroom and brought into students' home and community (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

Many caution that the goal of visual journaling is not to create a series of individual artworks, but rather to encourage students to understand and value the process of their learning (Evans-Palmer, 2018; Quesenberry, 2014). For this goal to be achieved, the educator must stress that the journal includes personal reflection. Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) call their students to reflect on their experience including: development of skills and technique; their feelings and opinions about the art lesson; and challenges they encounter. Importantly, all of this reflective practice is recorded in their visual journals.

2.5.5 Implementing Visual Journaling

Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) outline six factors to aid in the implementation of visual journaling in art education:

1. Teachers from the onset must show examples of journal pages, highlighting individual techniques.

2. Teachers communicate with students what is explicitly expected of them.

3. Teachers must provide an outline or guide which includes sample questions to aid with reflection e.g. What was it like for you working with this new material?

4. Teachers must specify the type of journal their students use, considering the differing approaches to art-making their students will be employing, like collage.

5. Teachers must allow students the opportunity to use their journals in class for in-class reflection.

6. A three-week review is recommended, where students can swap and discuss their journals with the teacher and peer-assess.

Willcox (2017) discusses three more factors that further aid in the implementation and overall success of visual journaling:

1. Very minimal grading is applied by the art teacher; therefore, students feel free to experiment and the process of art-making is emphasised.

2. Teachers must create space and time for students to work on their journals in the classroom and at home.

3. Teachers give "individualised feedback to scaffold progress and to help students grow" (p.15).

2.5.6 The Benefits of Visual Journaling for Students

While the prevailing aim and advantage of visual journaling is to spotlight the creative process in artmaking (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017; James, 2019; Willcox, 2017), the literature emphasises multiple other benefits of visual journaling for students. Five of these benefits (illustrated in Figure 2.3) are explored in this section.

Figure 2.3

Benefits of Visual Journaling for Students

Visual Journals as Safe. Research such as that conducted by Willcox (2017) has revealed a relationship between visual journals and the creation of a safe space for students. In her case-study of a high school visual arts teacher, Willcox (2017) found that by using visual journals as a key component of the art curriculum, a safe space for creative risk-taking was provided for students. In fact, she observes that "visual journals gave students the freedom to explore ideas, experiment with materials, and discover techniques; they also allowed multiple opportunities for fresh starts" (p.14). Consequently, Willcox (2017) concludes that visual journals establish a safe space for students to embrace "failures" as learning opportunities.

In the same vein, Todd-Adekanye (2017), in his research on the impact of visual journaling with thirteen- to fifteen-year-olds, identified that students' confidence levels increased by 53.3%

from the beginning of the study (p.45). This research supports the view that the visual journal provides students with a psychologically safe place to grow in confidence and in problem solving (Todd-Adekanye, 2017). Similarly, in her case-study of pre-service elementary teachers, Evans-Palmer observed that visual journaling "raises students' perceptions of their capabilities" (2018, p.19). Additionally, once students understand that their journal is not a product-oriented portfolio, but rather an evolving record of artistic growth, they feel safe to experiment with materials (Evans-Palmer, 2018).

This research is compelling in outlining the critical role of visual journaling in secondary schools and in pre-service art education - promoting experimental approaches and creating a safe learning environment. However, as much literature reminds us, as primary children grow older, they seem to lose their confidence in relation to art education (Barnes, 2015; Boyd and Cutcher, 2015; Desailly, 2015). Therefore, the researcher contends that visual journaling could provide a welcome approach in art education towards the senior end of primary school also.

Visual Journals as Creative. In 2013, the UK's Department for Education outlined the key stages of the National Curriculum for Art and Design Programmes of Study. Visual journals were highlighted as an approach necessary from the second key stage of learning, to explore and enhance creativity in many subjects (Department for Education [UK], 2013). This objective of using journals to promote creativity is borne out by Quesenberry (2014), who found that 85% of participants in his research wrote that the use of visual journals encouraged them to be more creative with their ideas. Moreover, 73% of students displayed artistic improvements due to being involved in the creative process. As Daher and Baer (2014) point out, implementing journals into an art curriculum reassures students that creativity is a habit that can be learned.

Visual Journals as Collaborative. Not only does journaling create a safe space for students where creativity can be enhanced, but research also indicates that visual journals have a positive impact on collaboration within the art classroom (Machina, 2011; Quesenberry, 2014). As noted by

Rhodes (2018), the visual journal offers opportunities for pair and group work through the use of 'journaling circles' and 'collaborative journals'. Todd-Adekanye (2017), in his study, concluded that progress for one particular student was influenced by his peers who continually helped him through conversations and he states: "What gave me confidence is going around and complimenting people on their work. This small act helped me feel good about the work I was creating" (Todd-Adekanye, 2017 p.47). Given that collaborative learning is one of the principles of learning in the Primary School Curriculum - which notes that this work facilitates the child's social and personal development (GoI, 1999c, p.17), the introduction of visual journaling in the primary classroom, facilitated by this research, may also afford these children opportunities to benefit from the particular advantages of working collaboratively.

Visual Journals as Inclusive. Brennan (2019) maintains that in order to engage students experiencing learning difficulties, an art educator must provide opportunities for children to devise their own images and offer opportunities for choice, formative assessment, and reflective practice - all characteristics of a visual journal. A small-scale study involving second grade students carried out by Bieg (2011), showed that visual journals widen the learning circle to include often marginalised children. Furthermore, in relation to gifted learners, Hurwitz and Day (2009) claim that many of these children have intense personal interests and "are happiest when submerged as individuals in their own artistic agenda" (Hurwitz & Day, 2009, p.97). The visual journal allows for this time and consequently may reduce the pressure on the child to be perceived as socially normative and enhance a sense of personal freedom (Bieg, 2011). In addition, while engaging in reflection in their journals, a challenge that these learners often crave is provided for (Hurwitz & Day, 2009). Collectively, the studies outline a critical role for visual journaling in enhancing the inclusion of all learners within the primary school.

Visual Journals as Reflective and Meaningful. Several small-scale investigations address the benefits of reflection in visual journaling (Barnes, 2009; Scott, 2010; Quesenberry, 2014). Scott

(2010), in her research with secondary school students, revealed that through personal reflections, the journal allows students to come to know themselves on a more intrinsic level. Scott's (2010) research is complemented by Quesenberry's (2014) study involving ninth graders. Quesenberry (2014) found that the visual journal serves as a place for exploring identity, including self-doubt. Barnes (2009) further notes that reflective writing in a journal not only reinforces the art curriculum but allows students to make sense of what they are learning rather than merely imitating.

Additionally, many studies note that opportunities for choice, inherent in visual journaling, consequently, creates meaning for students (Bieg, 2011; Kalin et al., 2007; Song, 2012). Song (2012) maintains that by encouraging students to "take their own paths, choose their own media, and develop their own approaches", the visual journal gives the student "more ownership of what they have created" (p. 72). Similarly, Bieg (2011) found that the open-ended approach to journaling encouraged his younger students to develop their own artistic voice. As noted by Kalin et al. (2007), the personal choices, and unique creative challenges deeply-rooted within the journal process "allows for the development of individual voice and agency" (p. 205).

Boyd and Cutcher (2015) observe that children are often not encouraged to question or reflect upon their artwork, but instead are simply left alone to enjoy the fun element of creating art. In the same vein, Douglas and Jaquith (2009) highlight the need for teachers to allocate sufficient time for reflection in the art classroom. In light of these and considering the combination of literature and findings presented, the researcher argues that the visual journal may serve as an effective antidote to this challenge in the primary art classroom and may serve as a place where students can achieve meaning-making through reflection and choice.

2.5.7 The Benefits of Visual Journaling for Teachers

The literature emphasises benefits of visual journaling on teachers. Three of these benefits are explored in this section.

Visual Journals as Assessment of Student Learning. James (2019) asserts that there is an aspiration in visual arts to develop a resource that gathers physical evidence of student thought-processes as well as displaying a final outcome. The visual journal can be used to make this aspiration a reality. According to Strickland (2019), journaling in art education can be an invaluable tool for formative assessment, allowing the teacher to provide ongoing feedback to students. Visual journaling is the model platform for assessing growth of student thinking by "capturing individual responses and growth over time" (Ritchhart, Church, & Morrison, 2011, p. 16). In the same vein, one of the most important impacts of journaling observed by Kelly (2019) was its power to communicate the thought patterns, motivations and strengths and weaknesses of students, to teachers. From primary to secondary schools, through to higher education, Kelly (2019) claims that journals can be used as an approach in art education to aid in the assessment of student learning through ways alternative to traditional and standardised assessments.

Visual Journals as Assessment of Teaching. In Cleary and Ní Bhroin's study (2017), a surprising outcome which emerged after implementing visual journals with student teachers was rich feedback on their teaching approaches. Through the reflective practice inherent within the visual journaling process, teachers who employed visual journaling in their classroom were afforded honest feedback from their students. Students mainly commented on the challenges they encountered throughout the creation of their art journals. This consequently influenced teachers' future practice in the art classroom.

Visual Journals as Collaborative. A second outcome for Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) was the sharing of ideas and collaboration seen amongst the educators who implemented visual journaling. Grennan (2017) states that continually coordinating a purpose for the arts in the school leads to a more organised approach to learning. For example, when teaching practices and resources are shared, an overall effective arts education can be established. This indeed was the case in Cleary and Ní Bhroin's (2017) study. Each teacher devised their own course within the framework required by

DES and the NCCA. This resulted in "rich exchanges and sharing of particular interventions that are successful and perhaps not so successful" (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017 p. 9). Given that the INTO (2010) found that many teachers in the primary school called for ongoing professional development in implementing the Visual Arts Curriculum, it is the contention of the researcher that the visual journal offers a response to this quest in terms of peer education through a collaborative approach.

2.5.8 Challenges Encountered in Visual Journaling

Desire for Perfection. Smith and Henriksen (2016) contend that in order to succeed creatively, one must be willing to try and fail. Ultimately to fail in the creative process is essential. However, Willcox (2017) reminds us that while some students embrace these "failures" and begin again, other students can become paralysed in their creativity. This challenge is echoed in Quesenberry's (2014) research where one student's desire for perfection while visual journaling inhibited his progress. Quesenberry maintains that this unattainable aspiration resulted in the student becoming frustrated and unmotivated to continue with his ideas. It was noted that the student worked slowly "due to the fact that he felt each mark needed to be precise" (2014 p. 70). Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) state that this desire for perfection may be offset by showing students examples of working journals rather than perfect products. They suggest that books such as An Illustrated Life: Drawing Inspiration from the Private Sketchbooks of Artists (Gregory, 2008) be avoided as they lack evidence of the messiness and processes of true journaling. Furthermore, certain pages for rough work or process such as mind-mapping should be considered and allocated (Kelly, 2019; Quesenberry, 2014).

Varying Levels of Engagement. Another challenge faced by many (Bieg 2011; Machina 2011) was the varying levels of engagement seen by students employing visual journals. Murphy (2018), while facilitating children's art lessons in primary schools, observed children's lacklustre involvement when materials were chosen for them, however interest improved once a variety of materials were afforded. Indeed, Machina (2011) asserts that offering choice and creating student-centred journal

assignments, can abate this challenge. Bieg (2011) further elaborates that at times, younger students struggle to create content in their visual journals. However, by giving them a starting point or prompt, with opportunities for choice, focus and engagement is enhanced immensely (Bieg, 2011).

Rising Popularity of ePortfolios and eLearning. Justifying the use of a manual journal in this increasingly digital age is another challenge encountered in visual journaling. Wilks, Cutcher and Wilks (2012) note that by using digital technologies in the art classroom, mistakes can be corrected quickly and easily. However, Smith and Henriksen (2016) remind us that art educators should make clear to students that mistakes and failure are associated with improvement. It is believed that the handwritten and hand drawn combinations, along with reflections in a physical journal deepen the level of learning (Evans-Palmer, 2018; Willcox, 2017). Furthermore, Mangen and Velay (2011) point out that the sensation of touching a pencil and paper and writing by hand strengthens the learning process. The visual journal is inherently tactile in nature with opportunities to add scraps of textured materials and to experiment with painting, drawing and stitching (Rhodes, 2018). Thus, the visual journal "provides a unique, sensory forum for experimentation" not possible when using digital technologies (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017, p.11).

2.6 Conclusion

This literature review has outlined the literature and research in relation to the development of the Primary School Visual Arts Curriculum in Ireland and has identified the recurrent challenges relating to the prioritisation of process-based arts education in it. Additionally, three factors of critical importance contributing to the priority of product-based art education were outlined and examined. Finally, visual journaling in art education was explored concerning definitions, history, theoretical framework, creation, and challenges. Crucially, how visual journaling can be implemented in one primary school was outlined and the benefits of visual journaling on students and on teachers were considered at length. This study hopes to identify potential factors that

contribute to the perceived priority of product and explore teachers' perspectives on visual

journaling and examine its implementation and outcomes. The research design is outlined in the

following chapter.

Chapter Three: Research Design

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the overall research design used in this case-study. Firstly, the

paradigm influencing the research study is discussed. Secondly, the research question and objectives

are outlined, including information about this study's site and participants. Thirdly, the chosen

research strategies, the research instruments and the manner of data collection are described and

justified. Finally, ethical considerations are explored and the study's limitations are acknowledged.

3.2 Paradigm

According to Creswell (2013), to guarantee methodological good practice, researchers need

to work within an established paradigm. An interpretivist paradigm best represents the nature of

this study. Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2007) maintain that the interpretivist paradigm is

concerned with the individuals involved within the study. Similarly, Easterby-Smith et al. (2013) point

out that by working within this paradigm, the participants and their experiences are the major

concern. An interpretivist paradigm underpins the nature of this study as the participants and their

experiences and perceptions are at the centre of the design. Studies located within an interpretivist

paradigm are often small-scale (Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2007; Denby et al., 2008). This

research aims to follow the principles of an interpretivist paradigm and to do so, the research study

is small in scale. While this can be a limitation, it is justified within this study as the perceptions and

experiences of a group of teachers in one case-study school using visual journaling has yielded rich

data.

3.3 Research Question and Objectives

This research involved a single-site case-study which investigated and examined the current

visual art practice in the senior classes of the primary school. Then, having introduced teachers to

visual journaling, the research examined the implementation and outcomes of visual journaling in art education after a seven-week period. This study explored the question as to whether the use of visual journaling can help to prioritise process in the Visual Arts Curriculum in the senior end of an Irish primary school.

As such, the specific objectives of the research study were:

1. To identify key factors that contribute to the priority of product over process in the visual art classroom.

2. To identify the key enabling factors necessary for visual journaling in art education.

3. To identify the key inhibiting factors encountered when implementing visual journaling in art education.

4. To identify the key teaching methodologies that support visual journaling in art education.

5. To examine the perceived outcomes visual journaling had on student learning in the visual art classroom.

6. To examine the perceived outcomes visual journaling had on teacher practice in the visual art classroom.

3.4 Site and Participants

The research site is a co-educational, moderately-sized, primary school. *St. Peter's Primary School* is the pseudonym used throughout this research study. Eight teachers participated in the research. All teachers who participated are currently teaching from Second to Sixth Class (see Table 4.1).

3.5 Case-Study Research Design

Yin (2014) describes a case-study as an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the "case") in depth and within its real-world context" (p.16). Similarly, Cohen,

Mannion and Morrison (2007) advocate the use of a case-study when the researcher aims to capture effects in real contexts. As this study seeks to investigate the potential impact of the contemporary concept of visual journaling in the real-world context of an Irish Primary School, the case-study approach was selected.

Bell and Waters (2014) support the use of a case-study when "an 'instance' is identified which could be the introduction of a new way of working… or an innovative development in an institution" (p.12). Furthermore, they state that a case-study can be used as "means of identifying key issues that merit further investigation" (p.12). This school, in a School Self-Evaluation prior to this study, identified a prioritisation of product over process in the implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum. This key issue merited further investigation on current visual art practice and therefore, a case-study is appropriate.

3.6 Mixed-Methods Design Approach

As this case-study pertains to the perceptions and experiences of teachers, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were implemented in order to explore the research problem in detail. Denscombe (2014) argues that combining methods in this way, allows the researcher to develop a fuller, more in-depth account of the situation. He also notes that the mixing of methods can be a valuable research strategy for validating findings and checking for bias. As the researcher was closely familiar with the case-study school, they may be inherently and unknowingly biased (Holmes, 2020). Therefore, a mixed-methods design is suitable. This research also shares a concern for practical solutions to real-world problems. Punch (2005) outlines that a mixed-methods approach is problem-driven, in the sense that the research problem and, more specifically, answers to the research problem, are the overriding concern.

Creswell (2012) outlines that a case-study is an "in-depth exploration of a bounded system based on extensive data collection" (p.465). Therefore, this research sought to develop a

comprehensive understanding of the case by collecting multiple forms of data. The data collection

and analysis occurred in three phases: 1) Quantitative data from online questionnaires; 2)

Introduction to visual journaling and implementation phase; 3) Qualitative data from focus group

interviews.

3.7 Questionnaires

The findings of a School Self-Evaluation in the case-study school, completed prior to this

research, identified a prioritisation of product over process in the implementation of the Visual Arts

Curriculum. In the first phase of the research, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire

with the aim of further exploring that claim. It sought to gather information about current visual art

practice, views on process-based art education and factors within the school that may challenge its

implementation. The questionnaire was relevant to the research objectives and was guided by the

content of the reviewed literature. Denscombe (2014) advocates the usefulness of a questionnaire

as it "brings things up to date...providing information about the current state of affairs" (p.8).

3.7.1 Questionnaire Design

Bhaskaran and LeClaire (2010) point out many advantages of web questionnaires including

higher completion rates and reduced errors. Careful consideration was taken when designing the

layout and content of this questionnaire and it was divided into the following three sections:

1. Current Visual Art Practice

2. Process-Based Art Education

3. Challenges of Process-Based Art Education.

As Oppenheim (1992) observes, a hidden purpose of each question in a questionnaire is to

guarantee that the respondent will continue to answer. Therefore, the sequence of questions is

deemed crucial. Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2007) outline the following common sequence of a

questionnaire which the researcher generally adhered to:

1. Unthreatening factual questions.

2. Closed questions about given statements, evoking responses that require perceptions and experiences.

3. Open-ended questions that seek reasons for responses.

3.7.2 Pilot Study of Questionnaire

According to Marshall (2005) piloting a questionnaire is essential "to check the reliability and validity of the questionnaire, to remove any flaws… and to allow the researcher to then redraft the questionnaire" (p. 135). Researchers also maintain pretesting is crucial to a questionnaire's success as it can uncover ambiguities such as vague instructions which can consequently lead to inaccurate answers (Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2007; Frankel & Wallen, 2006). Many advocate testing on the study population (Bell & Waters, 2014; Marshall, 2005), therefore, the pilot questionnaire was proof-read and examined by two Primary School Teachers. Modifications were made to the overall lay-out of the questionnaire and the wording of some of the Likert scale items. The questionnaire was found to take on average ten minutes to complete.

3.7.3 Distribution and Collection of Questionnaire

In the interest of safety in the current Covid-19 pandemic, the self-completion questionnaires were distributed digitally to the participants via the online platform *Google Forms* (see Appendix A)*.* The participants are familiar with this tool, having completed questionnaires through this platform in the past. To guarantee a good completion rate, the teachers received the questionnaire directly to their school email account. The responses from the participants were then stored online by Google Forms and were only accessible by a secure link issued to the researcher.

3.7.4 Analysis of Questionnaire

Given the small-scale sample size, the questionnaires were analysed using a combination of Google Forms tools and Microsoft's Excel package. Tables were compiled to illustrate data emerging from the Likert-scale items and bar charts were used to illustrate data from the frequency items and

rank-order item. Additionally, the responses to the open-ended questions were categorised into themes.

3.8 Introduction to Visual Journaling and Implementation Phase

3.8.1 Introduction to Visual Journaling

The researcher conducted and completed an introductory half-day workshop on visual journaling with the eight participants. According to Murchan et al. (2009) the workshop method is seen as an active and constructive process that is problem-oriented, encouraging teachers to become more effective learners. It is imperative to note that a Professional Learning Community (PLC) has previously been developed in the school and the key purpose of any collaborative session of the PLC is seen as "enhancing teacher effectiveness as professionals, for students' ultimate benefit" (Stoll et al., 2006, p. 223). The participating teachers were introduced to core aspects of visual journaling in art education including the definition, key characteristics, tips for implementing and many practical examples. A very detailed interactive eBook (see Appendix B) was created by the researcher and shared with the participants. This eBook can be viewed through the following link: https://read.bookcreator.com/mcpyzP4ITqP72PuhYENt74V2E0z1/hKfdslJ5Smm6LEwLlBD7Wg

'The Art of Teaching Art to Children' (Beal, 2001) was a primary text where the researcher drew content. The layout of the eBook generally follows Beal's sequence of six material experiences common to elementary classrooms: painting, drawing, collage, printing, construction and clay. Each page of the eBook has been mapped onto the Visual Arts Curriculum and visual journaling literature to strengthen its validity and reliability.

3.8.2 Implementation Phase

Participants then implemented visual journaling with their pupils over a seven-week period. Due to school closures, the platform *Google Meet* was used to introduce and implement visual journaling in the 'virtual classroom' for the first four weeks. This online platform was chosen as it is

familiar to both the teachers and students, with the full curriculum previously taught online with an attendance rate of 95%. All students had access to a device and art packs including an art journal. In week four, in an interactive collaborative session, participants had the opportunity to discuss and share ideas and raise any questions they had. This was deemed necessary, as according to Stoll et. al (2006) by engaging in collective and reflective inquiry, educators in PLCs jointly explore best practices in teaching and learning that helps them make informed decisions in the future.

3.9 Focus Group Interviews

The third phase of the case-study, the qualitative component, involved two focus group interviews with the eight teachers. Laws (2003) advocates the use of focus groups when in-depth information is needed "about how people think about an issue – their reasoning about why things are as they are, why they hold the views they do" (p.299); therefore, focus group interviews were deemed an appropriate form of research. Creswell (2012) highlights that interaction among interviewees in a focus group will likely produce the best information "when interviewees are similar to and cooperative with each other" (p.218). Given that all participants are colleagues and have entered into a unified endeavour to implement visual journaling into their art lessons, focus group interviews were appropriate. The aim of the focus group was to gain greater insight into the perceptions of teachers and to allow them to collectively explore their experiences of visual journaling.

3.9.1 Semi-Structured Interview Format

Semi-structured interviews for the focus groups were decided as most fitting. According to Denscombe (2014), in semi-structured interviews the interviewer has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. Most significantly this format lets "the interviewee develop ideas and speak more widely on the issues raised by the researcher" (p. 186).

The content and construction of the interview schedule was guided by the reviewed literature. An interview schedule was formulated and consisted of a series of primary questions and supplementary follow-up questions (see Appendix G). This is recommended to ensure that the interview makes good use of time and resources, gathers relevant data and allows a variety of responses from one interviewee to another (Verma & Mallick, 2004). The questions outlined in the schedule were based around the following three major themes:

1. Enabling and Inhibiting Factors for Visual Journaling

2. The Perceived Outcomes of Visual Journaling on Student Learning

3. The Perceived Outcomes of Visual Journaling on Teacher Practice

The interview schedule contained primarily open-ended questions. Cohen, Mannion and Morrison (2007) maintain that these questions avoid influencing interviewees and allow room for the specific views of the interviewees. Additionally, data is gathered on the more intangible aspects of the study such as perceptions and problems (Cohen, Mannion and Morrison, 2007). However, Flick (2011) suggests that such open questions be combined with more focused questions, to lead the interviewee beyond common, superficial answers.

3.9.2 Pilot Study for the Focus Group Interviews

Creswell (2012) recommends a 'pilot test' of a questionnaire for two main reasons. Firstly, the piloting of an interview allows the interviewer to develop experience and become more adept with the interview process. Secondly, because the pilot group provides feedback of the interview schedule, the researcher can modify or change the questions to reflect those concerns. Therefore, the interview schedule was piloted with two Primary School Teachers. This helped highlight possible ambiguities that may emerge.

3.9.3 Conducting the Focus Groups Interviews

Given the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions in place on group meetings, the focus group interviews were conducted via *Google Meet*. This tool was chosen as the participants were familiar

with Google Meet, having previously completed five months teaching online through this platform.

Braun, Clarke and Gray (2017) outline that in online interviews "participants may experience less

social pressure than they do in face-to-face social interactions, especially when sharing personal

experiences" (2017, p.279). However, Denscombe (2014) warns that technical difficulties during

online interviews, such as delays in connectivity, may hinder the flow of the interview. Therefore,

where possible, interviewees participated in the focus groups in the school setting, as Wi-Fi

connection is very strong.

As the research involved a small-sized case-study, the sampling procedure was straight-

forward. Two focus group interviews were conducted with four participants in each (see Table 4.1).

Throughout the focus groups the interviewer investigated the perceptions and experiences of the

participants. The use of elaboration and clarification probes, suggested by Wellington (2000),

enabled the interviewer to verify participants' interpretations and helped the interviewer gain

further insights where necessary.

3.9.4 Analysis of Focus Group Interviews

Firstly, all data from the focus group interviews was transcribed verbatim from the

recordings. The interviewers field notes were included and particular attention was paid to pauses,

tone of voice and any relevant gestures presented by the interviewees. The data was then analysed.

According to Denby et al. (2008), the aim of data analysis is to produce a condensed form of data

where notable patterns have been identified. Inductive analysis was chosen to construe the data as

themes arose from the data rather than from preconceptions (McMillan and Schumacher 2001).

Creswell (2015) outlines that coding requires the researcher to take apart the text data gathered,

analyse it and put it back together to establish themes. According to Elliot (2018) there are multiple

decisions to be made about coding, therefore, an adapted six-step framework form Braun and Clarke

(2006) was utilised. This assured that the data was analysed effectively and was organised.

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Marino Institute of Education requires all research activity involving people as participants to be subjected to ethical scrutiny, therefore, prior to the commencement of study, ethical clearance was sought from Marino Ethics in Research Committee (MERC). A research ethics application was submitted to MERC and clearance for the study was obtained. Throughout all stages of the research study, the ethical codes and guidelines developed by MERC were considered and adhered to.

3.10.1 Access

A letter was issued to the Board of Management in the case-study school, informing them of the intended research (see Appendix C). Permission was then granted to conduct research with access to the school's teaching staff. Copies of the questionnaire and the interview schedule were given to the Principal and the Board of Management.

3.10.2 Informed Consent

MERC draws attention to the importance of gathering informed consent from participants. Denby et al. (2008) outline the four elements of consent: competence, voluntarism, full disclosure, and comprehension. Prior to the commencement of the study, participants were given an information sheet (see Appendix D) providing information about the research topic and the processes involved in conducting the research. Consent was obtained from all the participants for both the questionnaire and focus group interviews (see appendices E & F). Before consenting, participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time and the voluntary nature of their participation. Full transparency about how the data will be used and stored was also informed, ensuring full disclosure.

3.10.3 Anonymity and Confidentiality

Consistent with Murphy and Dingwall's (2001) principles of 'ethical theory' which state that research should be beneficial and avoid harming participants, several actions followed data collection. The online questionnaire enabled the participants to remain anonymous. While the face-

to-face nature of the focus group online cannot guarantee anonymity, pseudonyms were used to help protect the participants during the interviews. Participants were also assured that, insofar as is possible, all details and discussions relating to this research will be confidential and captured in a manner which respects this. All raw data are stored in a folder on a password-protected laptop. The collected data will be deleted or destroyed after a period of 13 months from the day of submission.

3.11 Researcher Positionality

For this research study it is imperative to acknowledge the researcher's positionality, as this may influence aspects of this study (Coghlan and Brydon-Miller, 2014). The researcher was closely familiar with the case-study school and the participants and was also involved in the implementation of visual journaling. Holmes (2020) discusses many advantages of having an insider position including: the researcher can ask more meaningful questions due to prior knowledge of the school; and the researcher may be more trusted to acquire a more truthful understanding of the research data.

Nevertheless, Holmes (2020) also highlights disadvantages of an insider position including: the researcher may be inherently and unintentionally biased; and the participants may be reluctant to disclose sensitive information to a colleague.

The researcher acknowledges and considers both advantages and disadvantages of being an insider and understands that these may have far-reaching implications on data gathering and interpretation (Mercer, 2007). The utmost care was taken by the researcher to utilise the benefits of being an insider, while also protecting the research from the potential drawbacks.

3.12 Validity and Reliability

External validity "refers to the degree to which the results can be generalised to the wider population, cases or situations" (Cohen, Mannion & Morrison, 2007, p. 136). As this study involved a

single school, external validity would not be possible. Due to the dependence on the participants' individual perceptions and experiences, the results of this case-study cannot be generalised beyond the sample in this study. Nevertheless, Bassey (1981) argues that "if case-studies are carried out systematically and critically, if they are aimed at the improvement of education, if they are relatable and if by publication of the findings, they extend the boundaries of existing knowledge, then they are valid forms of research" (p.86).

According to Flick (2011) *internal validity* is defined as how far the results of a study can be analysed unambiguously. Therefore, it was accepted that internal validity is more related to this small-scale case-study. To ensure internal validity in a case-study, Yin (2014) outlines numerous analytical strategies which were used by the researcher. These include: examining plausible and rival explanations; and analysis of the case-study by establishing an explanation about the case.

Internal consistency reliability was examined in the data collected. The Likert Scale items in the questionnaire obtained the views of the participants and were then followed up by open-ended questions to allow participants to express attitudes freely. Bell and Waters (2014) also suggest that to check for reliability, piloting of instruments is essential. Therefore, the researcher ensured a pilot test of the questionnaire and interview questions was carried out to ensure that the intended was being measured.

Korstjens and Moser (2018) identify criteria for qualitative research, including transparency and reflexivity. To ensure transparency, focus group interviews were transcribed verbatim. Self-reflexivity was also essential to improve transparency, trustworthiness and for the research to assess their own preconceptions (Korstjens and Moser 2018; Tracy 2010). The researcher engaged with and implemented visual journaling in their own classroom to better understand what was being asked of the participants and to provide transparency about engagement with visual journaling. While unconscious bias has already been declared, completing this implementation increased awareness of these biases and how they may influence this study.

3.13 Limitations

As this research study consisted of a single-site case-study of a primary school, the results are consequently small-scale and the limitations need to be recognised. Critics of a case-study approach highlight that "generalisation is not always possible" (Bell & Waters, 2014, p.12). Case-studies give rise to questions about the replicability of the research. However, Bassey (1981) points out that "the relatability of a case-study is more important than its generalisability". Similarly, Wellington (2000) highlights how case-studies can be illuminating and illustrative and can portray a strong sense of reality. It is imperative to note that given its single-school context, the specifics of this study cannot be generalised across all Irish primary schools. Nonetheless, it attempts, in a small way, to provide an insight into the potential of introducing and implementing visual journaling in the visual art classroom in an Irish primary school setting.

3.14 Conclusion

This chapter detailed the research approach taken to examine a single-site case-study school. It has provided a comprehensive account of the steps taken throughout the research process. It has sought to describe and justify the use of a mixed-methods approach in this research and outlined in great detail how the data was gathered, collected and analysed through questionnaires, implementation phase and focus group interviews. The researcher's positionality, ethical issues, validity and reliability were also considered and explored and the limitations of the research were acknowledged. Each decision made has been mapped onto methodological literature to enhance awareness, validity and reliability.

Chapter Four: Findings and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines and examines the key findings from this research. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were implemented in this study. Firstly, the profile of participants is described. The chapter then presents and analyses the quantitative data from the online questionnaire - which provides information on the visual art practices in the school prior to the implementation of visual journaling. The chapter then explores the findings from the qualitative research on the implementation of visual journaling in the case-study school. These qualitative findings are drawn from the focus group interviews. Five dominant themes emanating from the qualitative data are presented:

1. Enabling factors for the implementation of visual journaling;

2. Inhibiting factors to the implementation of visual journaling;

3. Teaching methodologies that support visual journaling;

4. The perceived outcomes of visual journaling on student learning;

5. The perceived outcomes of visual journaling on teacher practice.

4.2 Profile of the Respondents

The online questionnaire was completed anonymously by eight mainstream teachers within the case-study school. After the seven-week implementation phase of visual journaling, two focus group interviews were then held with the eight participating teachers (Table 4.1), with four participants in each.

Table 4.1

Participant Profile

Pseudonym	Years of Teaching Experience	Class	Focus Group
Claire	0-5	Sixth Class	FG 2
Karen	0-5	Sixth Class	FG 1
Michael	0-5	Sixth Class	FG 1
Laura	20+	Fifth Class	FG 2
Siobhán	5-20	Fifth Class	FG 2
Beth	5-20	Fourth Class	FG 1
Eva	5-20	Third Class	FG 1
Ciara	5-20	Second Class	FG 2

4.3 Visual Art Practice Prior to the Implementation of Visual Journaling

The findings of a School Self-Evaluation which had been undertaken in the case-study school in the year prior to this research, identifies a prioritisation of product over process in the implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum. The questionnaire, which the respondents completed anonymously, sought to further explore this claim and situate the work in its specific context.

4.3.1 Time Spent on Visual Art

The Primary School Curriculum suggests that a minimum of one hour be allocated to visual art per week (GoI, 1999c, p.70). As depicted in Figure 4.1, only 12.5% of the respondents spend less than 30 minutes on visual art per week, with 62.5% spending above the minimum of one hour. Thus, before the implementation of visual journaling, the majority of teachers in the case-study school allocated sufficient time for visual arts. However, interestingly in the open-ended section of the questionnaire, Respondent 7 did express concern in relation to the *quality* of time spent stating "Art can often be a subject timetabled for Friday afternoons and can be given little thought or planning as a result of this…quick and easy lessons using templates are sometimes used". These sentiments echo

the evaluations of curriculum implementation carried out by the Inspectorate (2005), whereby it was declared, in some classrooms, over-prescriptive starting-points hampered the realisation of the curriculum objectives. Additionally, many contend teachers sometimes view art as a break or a 'reward subject' and subsequently give it less thought (Barnes, 2015; Hickman, 2004).

Figure 4.1

Average Time Spent on Visual Art per Week

How Long Do You Spend on Visual Art per Week?

- 12.5%
- 25%
- 62.5%

■ 0 - 30 mins ■ 1 Hour ■ 1 - 2 Hours
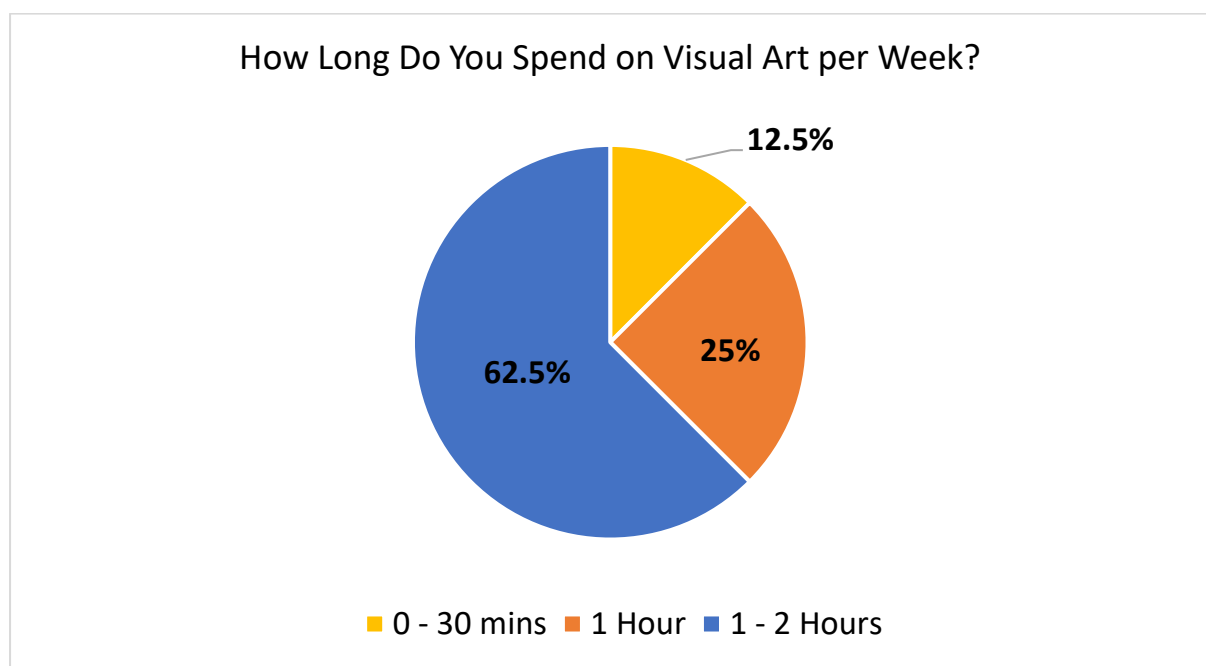
4.3.2 Engagement with Visual Art Strands

All strand areas of the Visual Arts Curriculum had been incorporated into teachers' practice prior to the introduction of visual journaling, as depicted in Figure 4.2. However, the strand areas of Paint and Colour, and Drawing dominate practice. Clay, Fabric and Fibre, Print and Construction were strands respondents practised to a lesser degree, with, for example, clay-based lessons "seldom" being covered by 87.5% of respondents. This imbalance between two and three-dimensional media limits the implementation of the broad and balanced visual arts programme (DES, 2005). Indeed, authors posit that the teaching of a wide range of media is a prelude to supporting a child's creativity (Edwards, 2014; Murphy, 2018). Thus, it could be argued that the

creative endeavours of students in this school were not fully fostered due to a lack of exposure to all

strand units.

Figure 4.2

Frequency of Strand Engagement
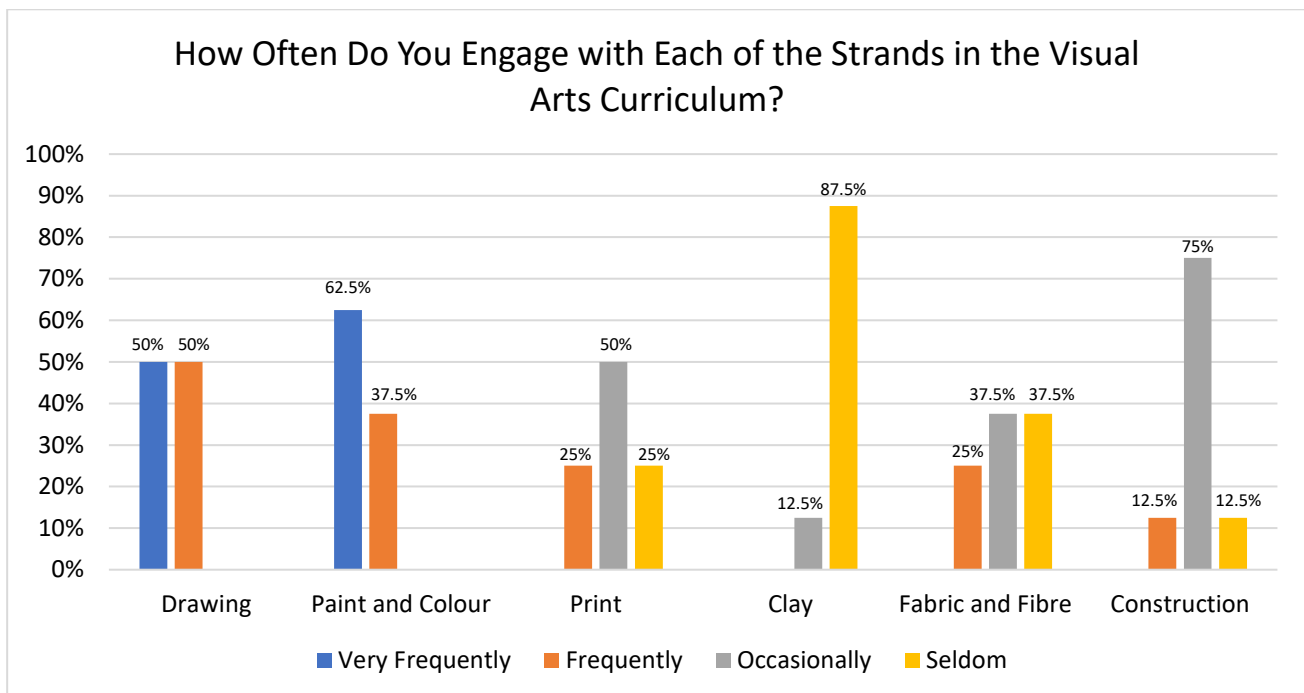
Interestingly, when asked in the questionnaire to respond to the statement, *Students should*

be given opportunities to explore a wide variety of art materials and methods for using them, a

significant 100% of respondents 'strongly agreed' with the statement. It is evident, therefore, that in

this school there is a disjunction between theory and practice. These results are in line with the

recommendations made by the NCCA (2005) that "further support and ideas for using the 3-D Visual

Arts strands would support teachers in continuing to implement the full Visual Arts Curriculum"

(p.5).

4.3.3 Teacher Pedagogy in Visual Art

The pedagogical aim central to the Visual Arts Curriculum is to instil creativity and

uniqueness into children's artwork at school (GoI, 1999b). In order to achieve this aim, the curriculum urges the teacher to take on the role of "facilitator" of the creative process, rather than instructor of a set of predetermined activities (GoI,1999a, p.54). As shown in Figure 4.3, responding to the statement, *I follow a specific formula for art lessons with all students following the same set of directions*, the vast majority of teachers (75%) responded that they 'frequently' or 'very frequently' do so. 25% of respondents reported that they 'occasionally' employ such linear art lessons.

Figure 4.3

Following a Specific Formula for Art Lessons
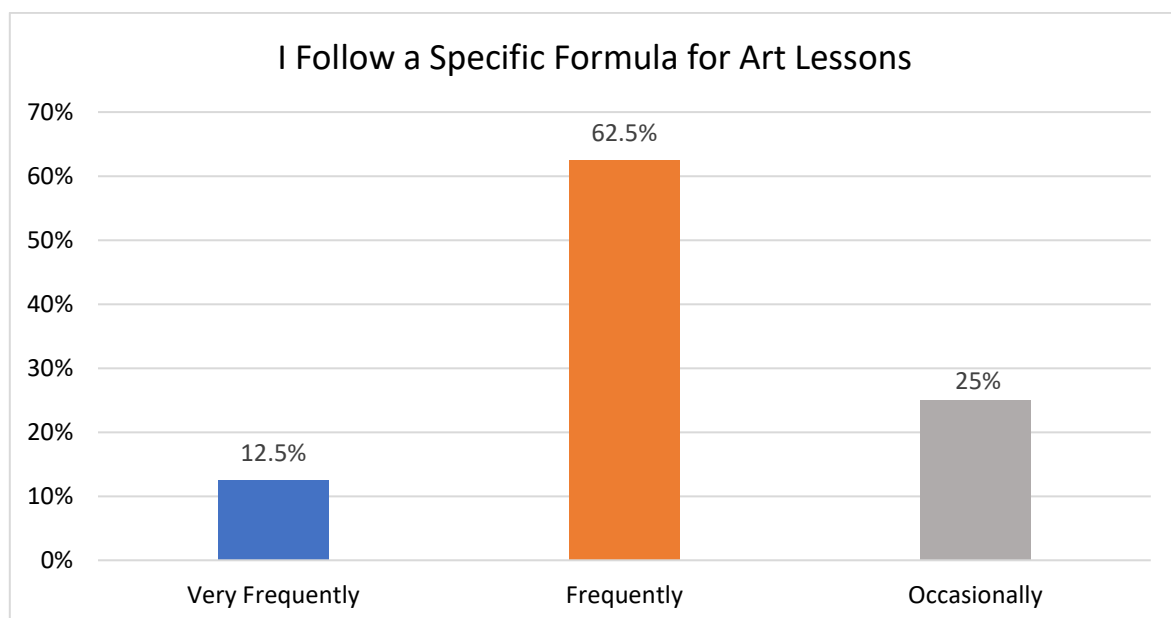
Furthermore, as shown in Figure 4.4, the majority of respondents, 87.5%, end up with multiple artworks that look similar at the end of a lesson. Thus, the quantitative data indicates that the majority of teachers employ a more dictatorial approach to teaching art. Indeed, Respondent 5 indicated a lack of choice given in their art classroom stating: "I am providing them a choice on only what the final product will be". McLennan (2010) contends that rigorously following directions by the teacher limits the scope of children's creativity. Indeed, Stone and Chakraborty (2011) maintain that lessons focused on making 'facsimiles' offer little or no opportunity for creativity, imagination or

higher-level thinking. Thus, it could be argued, that the children's unique creative ambitions in this school were hindered due to a lack of 'guided discovery' approaches employed by teachers.

Figure 4.4

Resulting in Similar Artworks
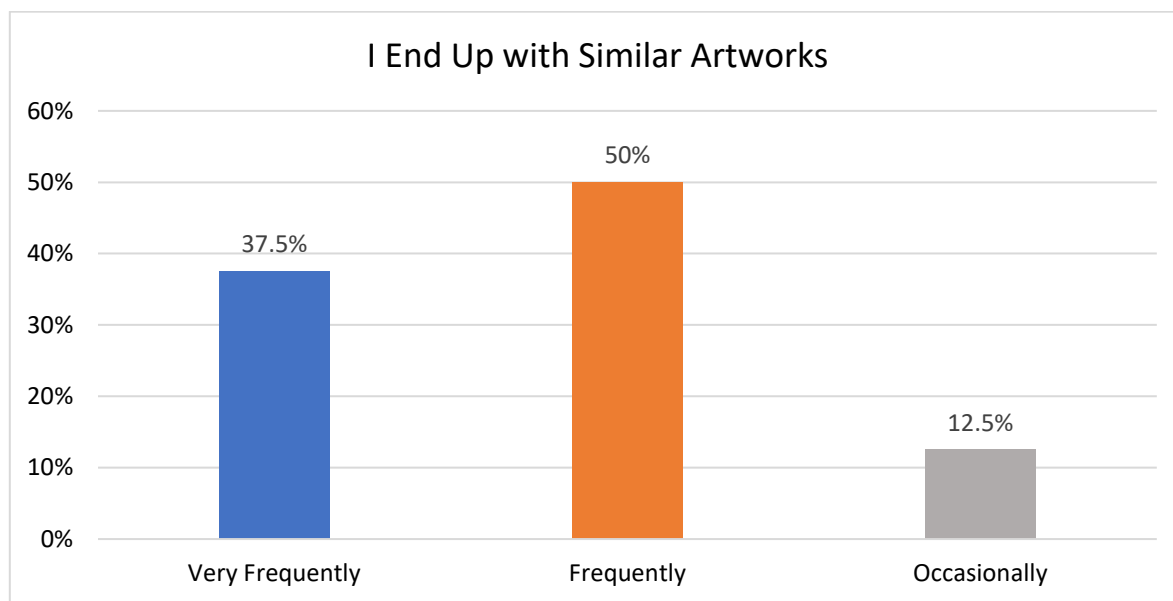
However, in contrast, as outlined in Table 4.2, a significant 75% of respondents 'strongly agreed' and a further 25% of respondents 'agreed' that students should be involved in creative ways rather than imitative ways in an art lesson. Additionally, 87.5% of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that in an art lesson the children should remain the designers, with the remaining 12.5% of respondents "undecided". A palpable disjunction is evident yet again between teachers' beliefs in relation to the creative process and their current implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum. Indeed, Respondent 3 identified that one of the main benefits of the creative process is that it "gives the teacher an opportunity to guide the children through the process as opposed to dictating how their art should look."

Table 4.2

Teachers' Opinions on Process-based Art Education- Student Agency

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Students should be involved in a creative rather than a passive or imitative way	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%
In an art lesson the children should remain the designer	37.5%	50%	12.5%	0%	0%

Many authors affirm that effective art education should concentrate on the child and his or her own experiences (Darling-McQuistan, 2017; Hickman, 2004; Southworth, 2008). Indeed, the preferred pedagogical approach to the teaching of art attempts to divert teachers away from a step-by-step linear lesson. Nevertheless, the quantitative research data in this study, prior to the implementation of visual journaling, finds that a directive approach to teaching art is predominantly utilised; consequently, offering little opportunity for individual creative expression or a focus on the creative process (Boyd & Cutcher, 2015; McLennan, 2010; Stone & Chakraborty, 2011).

4.3.4 Teacher Focus in Visual Art

The quantitative research also investigated teacher focus in visual art and found that the end product, and more specifically the display of it, was repeatedly prioritised. When asked to indicate the frequency with which they focus on displaying students' finished artwork, as illustrated in Figure 4.5, a significant 50% of respondents stated that they 'very frequently' do so. A further 25% of respondents stated that they 'frequently' focus on displaying the end product and 25% affirmed they occasionally did so. While exhibitions of children's artwork can enhance recognition of children's authority (Boyd & Cutcher, 2015), research has demonstrated that when students expect evaluation, their creativity can become stifled (Amabile, 1996; Hennessey, 2019).

Figure 4.5

Focus on Displaying Students' Finished Artwork
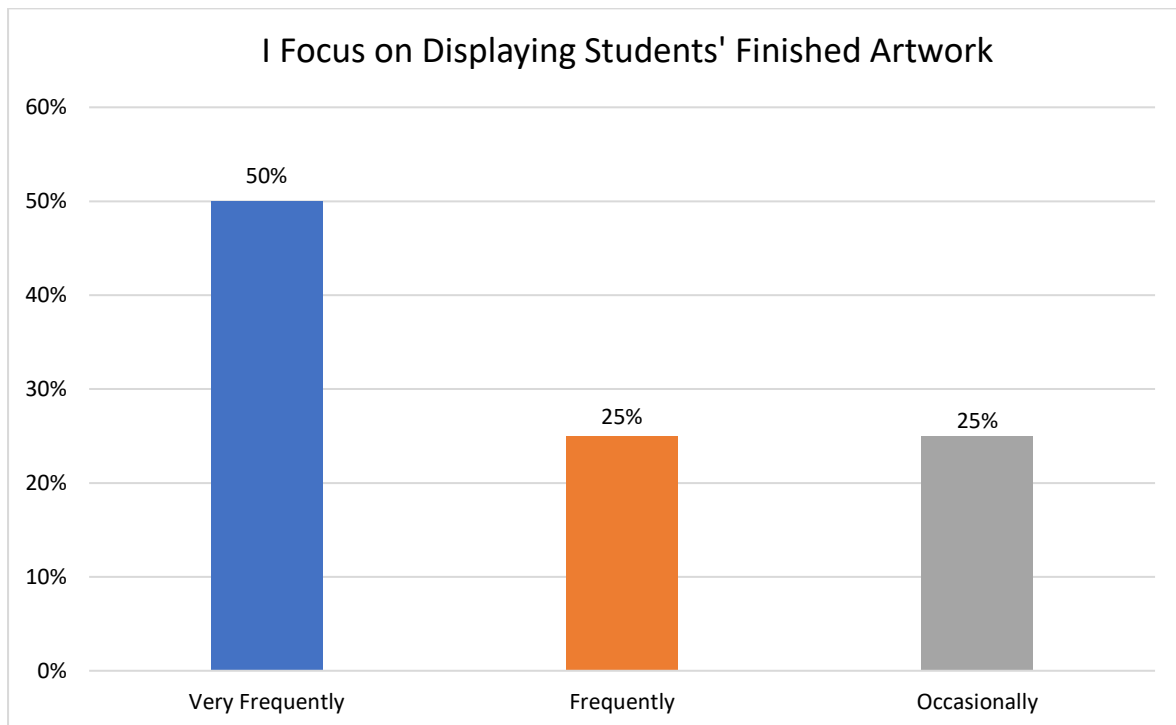
Furthermore, as illustrated in Figure 4.6, in ranking why teachers use websites for planning lessons, 40% of respondents chose 'Pictures of the Final Product' and 40% chose 'Ideas and Inspiration'. Thus, it is evident that teachers in this case-study not only prioritise displaying the end product but it is palpable that teachers favour using websites that have a picture of the final art product, coupled with a linear lesson. Indeed, Respondent 7 wrote: "Many teachers get inspiration from an example of the finished product they see on a website... along with step-by-step instructions on how to complete it."

Figure 4.6

Main Reasons Teachers use Websites for Art Lessons
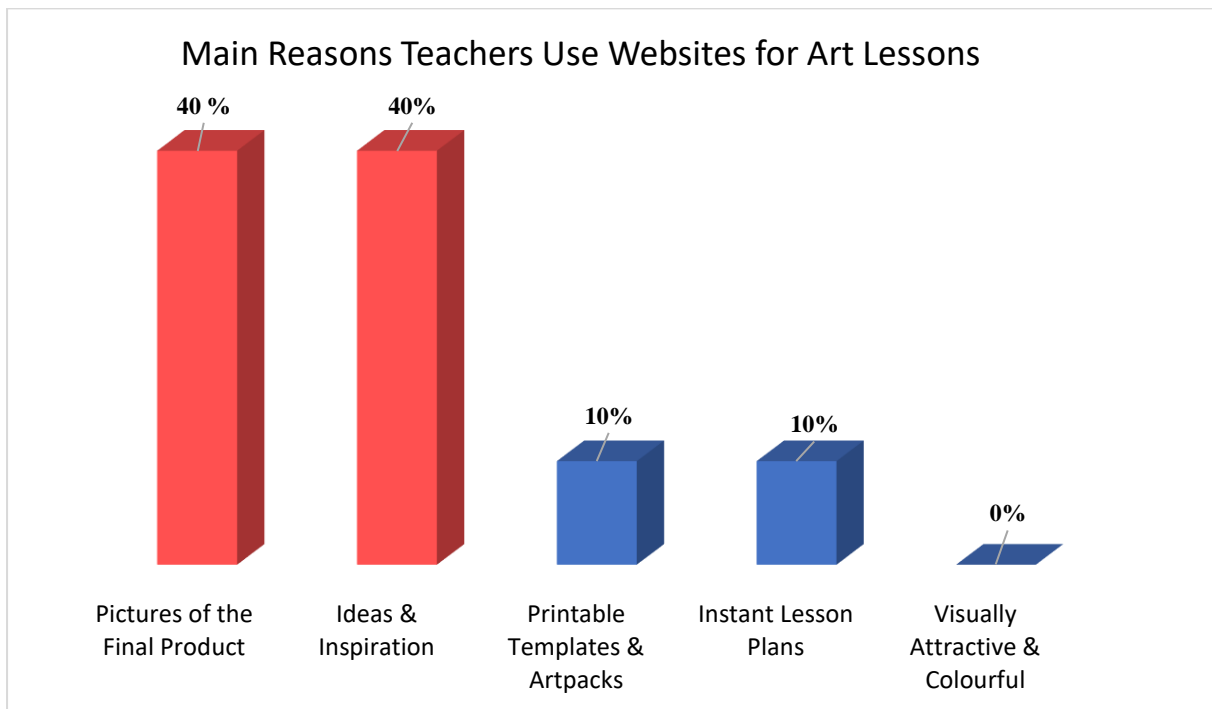
Emphasis on individuality is regarded as a key component of successful art education; Eisner (2002) points to the need for diversity of outcome while Hickman (2004) warns that the process of artmaking should not be threatened by teachers placing focus on the end product. Indeed, the Visual Arts Curriculum (GoI, 1999b) echoes the contentions of the aforementioned authors by affirming "A purposeful arts education… emphasises the creative process and so ensures that the child's work is personal and has quality" (p. 2). Nevertheless, in this case-study school, it is clear that the creative process emphasised within the curriculum is overshadowed by an overriding concern for the production of an end product. This was further elucidated by Respondent 8 who observed that "The view that art is primarily a product is deeply ingrained… it will take time to genuinely change this mindset."

Despite the fact that teachers placed emphasis on the final product, another disconnect in teachers' values and behaviour was evident in the research findings. As outlined in Table 4.3, a

notable 100% of respondents 'strongly agreed' that the process in artmaking is as important as the end result. However, when asked to respond to the statement, *Students' artwork should be displayed throughout the process and not just the final result,* the findings were mixed with 62.5% of respondents either 'agreeing' or 'strongly agreeing' with the statement, 25% of respondents were undecided and a further 12.5% disagreed. Respondent 6 offered more clarity on this issue explaining "I am reluctant to hang up and display sketches or unfinished art as it is likely to not meet the expectations of those looking at it, as the end product shown is generally accepted as a success."

Table 4.3

Teachers' Opinions on Process-based Art Education- Product Vs. Process

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The process of art making is as important as the final product	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Students' artwork should be displayed throughout the process	12.5%	50%	25%	12.5%	0%

4.3.5 Factors Impeding the Creative Process

Given that the School Self-Evaluation had highlighted the prioritisation of art product over process, the challenges faced by teachers in focusing on the creative process were also explored in the questionnaire.

Pressure from School Stakeholders and Time Constraints. Barnes (2015) observes that teachers, challenged by myriad issues, are likely to teach art lessons with the ultimate goal of producing an attractive display. He points out that this contributes to excessively product-oriented art education. Indeed, this seemed to be the case in this study, as illustrated in Table 4.4, where 75% of respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that *Pressures from school, colleagues and parents to decorate classroom walls* was a barrier to process-based art education. However, 12.5% disagreed

with this statement and 12.5% were undecided. Furthermore, 75% of the respondents 'strongly agreed' and 25% 'agreed' that prioritisation of other subjects was a challenge to process-based art education (see Table 4.4).

Table 4.4

Challenges that may act as Barriers to Process-based Art Education- Outside Pressures

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Pressures from school, colleagues and parents to decorate classroom walls	50%	25%	12.5%	12.5%	0%
Prioritisation of other subjects	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%

In the open-ended section of the questionnaire, all respondents were acutely aware of the pressures from multiple stakeholders to produce and display art of a particular type. Respondent 1 stated "I feel the need to have children's artwork on display… parents walk by as well as other colleagues, so I tend to focus on the end product." Similarly Respondent 6 affirmed the pressure felt - particularly when visitors or parents were in the school - "to have both classroom and hallways decorated colourfully, demonstrating eye-catching and decorative art pieces." These findings echo much literature, whereby teachers under the evaluative eye of school stakeholders, shift priorities due to perceived requirements (Beghetto, 2019; Ingersoll, 2003; Smaller, 2015).

Additionally, all respondents identified that pressure in the school to focus on core subjects impinged on the regularity with which they could take a process driven approach to art. Respondent 6 asserted that core subjects "are deemed to be more important by some of the stakeholders involved in the children's education". Respondent 1 further reflected that "core subjects come first…which leads to art being on the outskirts of the curriculum." Indeed, increased emphasis on standardised testing for literacy and numeracy- identified in this case-study school- is cited in much

of the literature as a challenge to educators in affording sufficient time and effort to quality art

education (Barnes, 2015; Hetland et al., 2013; Irwin, 2018; Hunter-Doniger, 2018).

Inadequate Knowledge and Poor Teacher Confidence. Generalist teachers who teach a wide array

of subjects often report that they lack self-confidence in their artistic capabilities (Duncum, 1999;

Irwin, 2018). Other factors such as poor art knowledge and insufficient in-service training can also

challenge teachers to supply high-quality art education (Harker Martin, 2017). As shown in Table 4.5,

75% of the respondents either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' that 'inadequate arts knowledge/skill'

was a barrier to the priority of the creative process in art. Furthermore, 75% of respondents stated

that 'poor teacher confidence' was a barrier, with a significant 82.5% of respondents identifying

'limited CPD' as a challenge to the priority of process in art.

Table 4.5

Challenges that may act as Barriers to Process-based Art Education- Poor Knowledge, Confidence &

Limited CPD

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inadequate Arts Knowledge & Skills	25%	50%	25%	0%	0%
Poor Teacher Confidence	37.5%	37.5%	12.5%	12.5%	0%
Limited CPD	12.5%	75%	12.5%	0%	0%

Furthermore, all respondents expressed concern about inadequate knowledge and lack of

confidence in the open-ended section of the questionnaire. Respondent 5 noted the primary

challenge as a "lack of knowledge of the different art skills and elements." Similarly Respondent 8

stated that "teachers who hold the view that they are 'not good at art' subscribe to the product-

based definition" and noted that for these teachers "it's not that process-based art is considered and

then dismissed, it's that it's not considered at all."

Other respondents were concerned that limited CPD may be acting as a barrier to the priority of process-based art education with Respondent 5 affirming that "CPD courses are something I would like to engage in, but repeatedly core subjects are prioritised." Similarly, Respondent 2 professed a need for change and CPD:

> For some time, I have been dissatisfied with the way I am delivering visual art education and with the generalised expectations of what is an acceptable product. When introduced to the ideas of focusing on process rather than product it instinctively felt both authentic and liberating. I want to learn more.

4.3.6 Conclusion

A clear picture of visual art implementation in this case-study school emerged from the quantitative data:

- Teachers focused largely on a directive approach, thus students had little creative input in their artwork. In this sense artwork was pre-defined by the teacher.
- Teachers favoured replication art and placed emphasis on the final product and the display of same.
- Three critical impeding factors to the priority of process-based education in this school were identified: pressure from school stakeholders; time constraints; and inadequate art knowledge and poor teacher confidence.

Thus, these findings support the claim - identified previously in School Self Evaluation process - that this case-study school prioritised product in art education. However, a palpable disjunction was evident between teachers' beliefs in the importance of the creative process and their current implementation of it. Indeed, the data suggests that teachers understand and value a process-based art education and, significantly, indicate a desire and willingness for change. Therefore, the introduction and implementation of visual journaling in art education – an approach in art education

focused on the process of artmaking (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017; Evans-Palmer, 2018; Kelly, 2019) - was substantiated and indeed advocated for within this case-study school.

4.4 The Implementation Phase

Following completion of the questionnaire, all teachers attended a half-day work-shop on visual journaling in art education and were introduced to key methodologies and practices. There was then a seven-week implementation phase. Following the implementation phase, two focus groups were held with the eight participating teachers (see Table 4.1) to explore their experience of visual journaling. From the qualitative data gleaned from the focus groups, three factors emerged as potential powerful enablers of the implementation of visual journaling in art education. Four factors emerged as potential challenges to visual journaling, along with three teacher methodologies that supported visual journaling implementation. Furthermore, teachers identified four key outcomes in terms of pupils' learning and four key outcomes in terms of teacher practice as a consequence of their implementation of visual journaling in their Visual Arts Curriculum.

4.4.1 Enabling Factors to the Implementation of Visual Journaling in Art Education

Three factors emerged as powerful enablers to the implementation of visual journaling during the focus group sessions. These are: teacher professional development; practical resources; and support and collaboration. These are now explored and are depicted graphically in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7

Themes Emanating from Implementation of Visual Journaling in Art Education

Teacher Professional Development. Boyd and Cutcher (2015) advocate that educators need to be committed to and understand the value of an effective arts programme. From the outset, the participants' fervour for implementing visual journaling in art education was evident. This was demonstrated in Beth's assertion that "it's been fantastic to try something new" (FG1). Similarly, Laura's remarks speak to an enthusiasm for professional development within this case-study school:

> The very first thing I felt when you introduced the idea of journaling was excited and
>
> relieved because for years I have never been quite happy with the way I was teaching
>
> art…. This is natural, this is the way it should be (FG2).

The Teaching Council (2012) unequivocally states that it is the responsibility of the teacher to maintain and improve the standard of their professional practice. While the participants' enthusiasm for change was a palpable enabler, the qualitative data suggests that participation in the initial visual journaling workshop further facilitated implementation. Indeed, for Claire this workshop provided her with ideas and methodologies but notably also boosted morale and "gave teachers structure and confidence" (FG2). These sentiments were shared by Karen who professed that the workshop "filled everybody with confidence...it was inspiring and was a very good introduction" (FG1).

Practical Resources. Teachers perceived that the practical art resources provided by the school greatly facilitated and enabled the implementation of visual journaling. Resources that were supplied and seen to be of key importance included: the art journals; the art cart (containing a range of art materials); and an eBook on visual journaling practice and methodologies. In their study with student teachers, Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) affirm that specifying the type of journal used encourages appropriate implementation. Similarly in the context of this study, providing identical art journals to all students not only allowed for immediate implementation, but also lessened comparison between students, with Beth asserting "when the children all have the same journal... they're not comparing and showing off" (FG1).

Additionally, participants perceived the art cart to be an enabling factor to visual journaling. According to Eva, not only did the art cart "provide a wealth of different resources that the kids can have unlimited access to" (FG1), but her students became more aware of the different materials that could be employed in their journals. These sentiments echo Edward's (2014) contention that providing accessible and suitable materials for students enables mastery of the artistic endeavour.

Finally, the eBook that was shared in the introductory workshop (see Appendix B)- consisting of information on visual journaling, tips for implementation and practical lesson ideas - was deemed very beneficial by all participants in the focus groups. This was summed up by Beth who stated that

"The eBook has been a fantastic resource, pointing us in the direction of the different methodologies for many of the different strands" (FG1).

> **Support and Collaboration.** Many posit that ideation, like creativity, requires other people's ideas and original input (Flannery, 2018). Indeed, Hargreaves (2001) notes that collaboration among professionals can provide teachers with access to new ideas and concurrently ignite their own creative vigour. The collaborative culture established among the participants - engendered from informal discussions on school corridors, a shared Visual Journaling Google Classroom page and a three-week review of implementation - were identified as invaluable supports that facilitated and enabled visual journaling implementation. Eva noted that "Talking to other teachers and discussing what we tried or what worked and didn't work was really beneficial" (FG1). Claire similarly professed that "collaboration is absolutely vital" and elaborated that "it helps to take away the pressure of getting things right and wrong and running out of ideas" (FG2). Indeed, collaboration was deemed necessary by all of participants for future implementation.

4.4.2 Inhibiting Factors to the Implementation of Visual Journaling in Art Education

> While many factors were identified as enabling visual journaling in this case-study school, aspects which had the potential to inhibit its implementation also emerged during the focus group sessions. These have been grouped as online teaching; time constraint; varying levels of engagement; and, the challenge of change. These are now explored and again are depicted graphically in Figure 4.7.

> **Online Teaching**. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all teachers were required to introduce and implement the first four weeks of visual journaling online as the school was closed due to the national lock-down. Therefore, individual support - which the research literature has repeatedly hailed as an essential component when presenting a new creative agenda (Gude, 2013; McArdle, 2012) - was not possible. Indeed, Karen stated that "I realise now that we are back in school, [the children] need that little bit of support" (FG1). While the lack of support online was a palpable

inhibitor, the lack of art resources at home posed further challenges. This was voiced in Michael's assertion that "trying to teach a new skill was very difficult when the kids and I had limited materials" (FG1). This echoes literature on visual journaling whereby unlimited resources must be available and explored to allow for effective implementation (Bieg, 2011; Willcox, 2017).

Additionally, teachers highlighted the lack of space as an initial barrier. However, once students returned to school, the space within the classroom environment encouraged the students in their artmaking. Indeed, Laura observed that her students are "working so much better now because they've space". She continued, "They're everywhere… on the floors in school, out in the corridors, on the steps... that was a component I didn't realise they needed" (FG2). These findings resonate powerfully with educational researchers who have long observed how the physical features of the learning environment can influence student behaviours and motivation (Ames, 1992; Beghetto, 2019; Martin, 2006).

Time Constraints. Authors posit that students need sufficient time for their own creativity to develop (Cremin, 2015; Desailly, 2015; Jesson, 2012; Sternberg 2019), and for participants this essential unlimited time was clearly not possible to give in the online or classroom setting. This lack of time to embrace a more individual and creative approach to art emerged as a concern in the focus groups. Eva stated "it's really hard because you don't want to stop their creativity… I am definitely held back by time" (FG1).

The prioritisation of other subjects, identified previously in the quantitative data as a barrier to process-based art education (see Figure 4.4), similarly emerged in the qualitative data. Granville (2012) maintains that the Irish education system does not recognise the value of art in education, with recent curricular developments focused solely on literacy and numeracy (DES, 2017; Breacháin & O'Toole, 2013). Indeed, many authors note that art is often side-lined as an 'extra' subject that is seen as inferior to literacy and numeracy (Barnes, 2015; Carpenter & Gandara, 2018; Hickman 2004; O'Toole, 2012). This was echoed in Ciara's assertion that "I'm conscious of the other subjects after

being in lockdown, especially maths… they would spend all day journaling if I let them but I can't"

(FG2).

The data suggests that subject hierarchy was an inhibiting factor to the implementation of

visual journaling in art education. However, providing journal videos and links on 'Google Classroom'

for students to watch independently prior to the lesson in the classroom served as a vital buffer in

this case-study school, with Michael affirming that this method "gives you that extra bit of time that

we struggle for with this subject definitely" (FG1).

Varying Levels of Engagement. The qualitative data suggests that four teachers faced a

lacklustre engagement with the journaling process by a small number of students. The challenge of

engaging all learners is cited in much of the literature on visual journaling (Kelly, 2019; Machina,

2011; Todd-Adekanye, 2017). Cleary and Ní Bhroin (2017) observed both an artistically gifted

student not reflecting their true ability, along with other less artistic students hastily creating journal

pages. The findings in Cleary and Ní Bhroin's study reverberate with Claire's assertion that:

> Not all of them like it because it's such a new approach to art and particularly, I think
>
> my gifted learners... some of them find it slightly more challenging to have so much
>
> creative freedom, they enjoy the structure of a lesson (FG2).

Ciara similarly identified varying levels of engagement in her classroom commenting "kids that I

would have expected to enjoy it didn't. I was pushing them to take the leap and do it" (FG2). While

this challenge occurred at all ends of the artistic ability spectrum and in the majority of class levels,

the qualitative data suggests that the younger classes faced unique obstacles. Sandell (2012)

maintains that younger students need to be taught specific skills in order to reach their full creative

potential. Ciara referenced a lack of skills in her younger students and expressed frustration at the

fact she was "preparing materials and cutting stuff out for them" (FG2). Eva, echoed these thoughts

and asserted that the majority of her younger class "haven't really mastered bringing the art journal

home to finish something" (FG1).

The Challenge of Change. Guskey (2002) contends that developing proficiency in previously uncharted approaches to teaching and learning is a gradual, challenging process. Indeed, the challenge of change requires weighty effort and time (Bamford 2012). Reflecting on her experience of change, Laura specifically expressed that change was met with resistance among some of her students:

> One of them said to me one day, can we go back now to doing the real art? They were really comfortable that they were getting along great before... I think they felt a little bit lost at the start (FG2).

The qualitative data evidences that a desire for the perfect end product - cited as a challenge in much of the literature on visual journaling (Cleary & Ní Bhroin 2017; Quesenberry, 2014; Willcox, 2017) - still prevailed in some classrooms. Beth observed an innate tension in her students between creating a perfect page and working through the messiness of the creative process. She claimed that "yes they're more focused on the process but they're still wanting to have a beautiful picture at the end to put up on display on the wall" (FG1). Ciara, Eva and Beth stated that the tradition of art competitions in the school, along with pressure to send home art products, heightened around special occasions, may have added to this challenge of change.

Additionally, participants identified pressure to produce displays from stakeholders in the school - cited as stifling to the creative process (Amabile, 1996; Hennessey, 2019). Claire asserted that "leading up to Easter, we were working so hard in our journals, and we were given templates of an easter egg to decorate" (FG2). Nonetheless, the participants' fervor for change was consistent and ultimately superseded this challenge of change.

4.4.3 Teaching Methodologies that Support Visual Journaling in Art Education

There were many important teaching methodologies that participants identified as necessary to support visual journaling in art education (see Figure 4.7). These are now explored.

Modeling the Creative Process. Many contend that the most effective way to foster

creativity is to model the creative process (Amabile, 1996; Amabile & Kramer, 2011). In the same

vein, Sternberg (2019) asserts that students do not learn to be creative by merely being told, but

rather when they are shown. Many participants agreed with this contention and found that

modeling the creative process was an effective methodology that supported visual journaling. This

was illustrated by Ciara's declaration that "modeling definitely works", she continued, "they

[students] need to see you trying out different techniques and practising skills" (FG2). Of note in this

regard is the fact that three of the participants - acknowledging the positive impact of modeling -

decided to keep a visual journal themselves. Karen stated, "I kept a journal myself for the first time…

then I feel confident to model the next day" (FG1). Eva echoed these sentiments and stated, "I felt

better about modeling once I had my own journal" (FG1). Evidently, modeling the creative process in

an art journal not only served as a powerful teaching methodology but also enhanced teachers'

confidence.

Providing an Outline. Authors observe that providing a concise overview of visual journaling

activities alleviates students' stress levels (Evans-Palmer, 2018; Sandell, 2012), and similarly in the

context of this study providing an outline was deemed a necessary methodology. While a small

number of teachers had reservations about prescribing what went into the journal, all participants

gave an outline as a scaffold only. Beth described how initially she "really needed to give a specific

outline to the kids", however, as the weeks went by, her students became more confident and she

"could release the reins more" (FG1).

When specifically asked what teachers found challenging in implementing visual journaling, many

mentioned the reflection phase. However, the qualitative data suggests that providing sample

questions aided the students to reflect on the creative process more effectively, with Eva stating

that "giving them more questions such as what might they do differently really helped them… and

they had more confidence to try it [reflect] then themselves" (FG1).

Providing Constructive Feedback. Research studies support the positive impact of

constructive feedback strategies in encouraging middle school students' creativity (Beghetto, 2006;

Beghetto & Kaufman, 2007). Similarly, in this research study, providing constructive feedback was

collectively perceived as a methodology that supported visual journaling. Discussing her use of

feedback, Siobhán noted "I'm encouraging the children to think more for themselves and they're

starting to give each other constructive feedback from that methodology" (FG2).

Many authors posit that children's art-making is likely to be improved by educators who

engage in dialogue with their students (Boyd & Cutcher, 2015; Eckhoff, 2013; Gude, 2013). This

approach was also favoured by participants in this study, who engaged in conversation with their

students asking them to explain choices in their art-making. This was elucidated by Michael who

stated, "I try to extend their thinking and get them to think outside the box...I say things like what

more could you do?" (FG1).

4.4.4 The Perceived Outcomes of Visual Journaling in Art Education on Student Learning

Teachers participating in the study identified four key positive outcomes in terms of pupils'

learning emanating from the implementation of visual journaling in their Visual Arts Curriculum (see

Figure 4.8). These are now outlined in detail.

Figure 4.8

Themes Emanating from Perceived Outcomes of Visual Journaling in Art Education
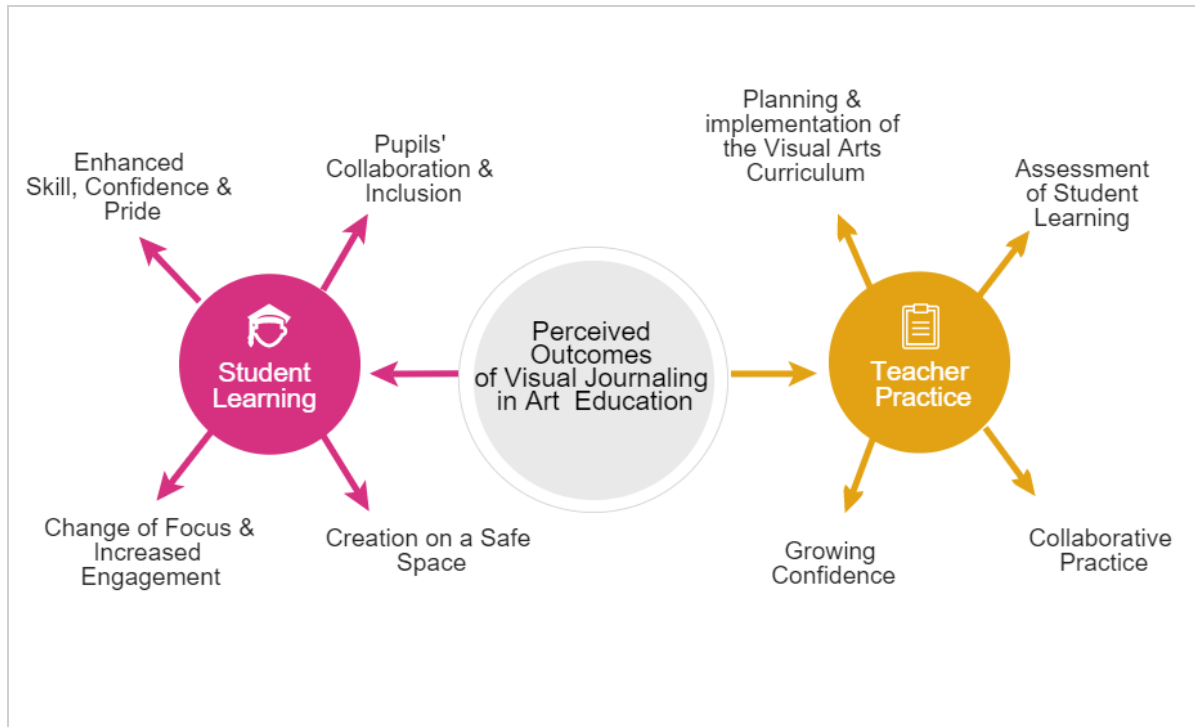
Enhanced Skill, Confidence and Pride. Swift and Steers (1999) argue that skills acquired through art education are more valuable to the workforce that standardised test results. Indeed, many contend that art promotes 'habits of mind' imperative for learners to be more creative and innovative (Hetland et al., 2013; Winner, Goldstein & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013). Utilising visual journaling as an approach in art education gives students, what Evans-Palmer (2018) describes as, "a tangible artefact that visually demonstrates artistic identity, having developed knowledge and skills in the process" (p. 24). Similarly, according to the participating teachers, implementing visual journaling contributed to enhancement of students' art skills and techniques. Claire explained in detail one pupil's recent endeavour:

> I feel their skills are improving, for example one child in my class this week... he used crepe paper, and ink, and he dyed them and used different techniques…That wouldn't have happened before because he didn't have the skill (FG2).

The Visual Arts Curriculum (GoI, 1999b) states that quality arts education "emphasises the creative process and so ensures that the child's… self-esteem is enhanced" (p.2). This echoes findings in this study as Siobhán considered that enhanced skill subsequently increased her pupils' confidence in art. She stated, "they are learning to trust themselves now" (FG2). Similarly, Eva detailed how over time, students' self-confidence increased, evidenced in their enhanced capacity to take risks, adding to current literature (Todd-Adekanye, 2017; Willcox, 2017). She stated, "They're seeing things [as] opportunities that they can try…they're learning to take more risks" (FG1). Some teachers further noted that as a consequence of this enhanced self-confidence, students' sense of pride also became apparent. This pride manifested itself in many ways: in showing their classmates their artwork; discussing their new pages with teachers; and sneaking their journal out at lunch break! Laura - referring to a child in her class with low self-esteem - recounted how she simply observed an expression on a child's face. She emotionally recalled:

> I just saw something on a kid's face I never thought I'd see, he just looked so pleased. The look of joy, I know he was thinking 'Oh look what I just did' but there wasn't a word said… it just happened (FG2).

Pupils' Collaboration and Inclusion Many contend that students should explore and critically analyse their artwork together (Gude, 2013; Sawyer, 2017; Stevenson & Deasy, 2002). Indeed, all participants observed the emergence of a collaborative atmosphere throughout the seven weeks study implementation phase. Beth noted that her students are "sharing each page as they are creating it." She also observed children "chatting to each other way more about their art journals than they would have been in traditional art lessons" (FG1). Interestingly - referring to her perception of improved collaboration - Laura was surprised that in her classroom "the competitive element is gone" (FG2).

As a consequence of this enhanced collaboration, participants further observed improved inclusion of all learners. Through the shared approach of the visual journal, Karen considered that

her students were "very accepting now of everybody else...", she continued, "they celebrate

everyone's different uniqueness and also their different thought processes" (FG1). Additionally, the

qualitative data implies that the continuous nature of visual journaling accommodates all ends of the

artistic ability spectrum, a benefit also cited in much of the literature on visual journaling (Bieg,

2011; Kelly, 2019; Machina, 2011). Eva perceived a reduced pressure in children who work more

slowly. She stated that "there's a sense of accomplishment for them even if they just get the

background done" (FG1). Similarly, Claire asserted that in her class "the gifted learners are

accommodated." She further elaborated that visual journaling afforded the time for these students

to delve into a topic and stated, "they enjoy being challenged and pushing themselves intrinsically"

(FG2).

These gains, agreed on by all participants mirror Hurwitz and Day's (2009) affirmation that

weaker and gifted learners in elementary school benefit from exploring and creating their own

images rather than relying on stereotypes that have no relevance or meaning.

Creation of a Safe Space*.* Understandably, given the back-drop of a global pandemic,

participants observed anxiety and worry in some children in their classrooms. Laura, referring to her

perception of student anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic, stated that she "didn't realise how

unsafe [the children] felt" (FG2), however, she considered that visual journaling helped to unveil

concerns among pupils. Similarly, Karen referred to the visual journals as a "safe space and an

outlet" for students during and after lockdown (FG1). According to Springgay, Irwin, Leggo and

Gouzouasis (2008), the creation of a journal page, through images and words, begins a complex

process of self-discovery and develops a sense of care. All participants echoed this view and

acknowledged the significance of children reflecting in their journal, and how personal writing

supported an understanding of self during this unprecedented time. This is evidenced in the

following quote by Claire:

We did a scribble journal page and one child, I just noted her comment, said 'I didn't know

what thoughts I had. I just knew I had a lot. And once I started scribbling and reflecting, I

learned to understand them (FG2).

This is significant, as Noddings (2003) observes in moments of vulnerability, there is a compelling

need for the teacher to offer a safe place where students can develop a sense of self and care.

While most teachers observed students referencing worries and emotions in their journals,

conversely Laura stated that her pupils were reluctant initially to share personal thoughts and

feelings for fear of being criticised by others. This echoes the findings of Evans-Palmer (2018),

whereby students were sensitive to negative judgments from others when trying out new processes.

While this hesitancy was prominent when first introducing visual journaling, Laura asserted that now

"they just seem much more willing… they're not afraid to be judged anymore" (FG2).

Change of Focus and Increased Engagement. Finally, and of major significance to the

primary research question, all participants observed a renewed focus on process by students in art

lessons as a consequence of visual journaling. The priority of the creative process - which saw

children exploring materials, discussing ideas and experimenting with differing techniques in their

journal pages- evolved gradually but consistently. This was exemplified by Michael's statement that:

A big new revelation for my class only recently is that it doesn't matter about the end

product... a page can be chopped and changed as much as you want. That was a big thing

and it was hard to establish at the start... all they wanted was this great page. But now we're

moving away from that (FG1).

This perceived outcome resonates with Cleary and Ní Bhroin's (2017) research, where they affirm

that "the tactile nature of drawing and writing in the art journal seemed to stimulate the creative

process in art making" (p.5).

This change of focus was something that teachers asserted had an immediate and lasting

impact upon student engagement. Laura declared "I can't stop them, they have [their journal] under

their desk, outside, they have it everywhere" (FG2). The prioritisation of process, not only increased

engagement but participants perceived students' artwork to be more meaningful. Indeed, Siobhán

stated "something has shifted… art doesn't have to just look like something, it means something as

well", she continued, "[artwork] is coming from them rather than coming from 'the next step is', so

it's just loaded with meaning" (FG2).

The establishment of more meaningful artworks is cited as an outcome in much of the

literature on visual journaling (Klug, 2002; Quesenberry, 2014; Song, 2012). As Evans-Palmer's (2018)

asserts, in a visual journal "material exploration, as opposed to assignments with imposed

conventions aiming for a prescribed model, welcomes innovation and engagement" (p. 23). Some

concern was expressed about the lasting effect of this new prioritisation and engagement.

Nonetheless, Vygotsky writes that creative practice focused on the continuous process tends to

perpetuate itself, regardless of interruptions (Vygotsky in Song, 2012).

4.4.5 The Perceived Outcomes of Visual Journaling in Art Education on Teacher Practice

There were many significant impacts on teacher practice reported by participants in this

case-study as a consequence of their implementation of journaling in their Visual Arts Curriculum

(see Figure 4.8). This section explores these in detail.

Planning and Implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum. It is clear from the qualitative

data that visual journaling aided participants in their planning for visual art lessons. While all

participants noted a new ease of planning for art lessons - with Laura observing that her planning is

now "happening much more organically" (FG2) - participants also acknowledged a renewed

understanding of the Visual Arts Curriculum. This is significant as many contend in order to provide

an effective art education, educators need to understand their arts programme (Boyd & Cutcher,

2015; McArdle 2012). Similarly, Chapman, Wright and Pascoe (2019) note that teachers'

understanding of their art curriculum is impacted by their practice. This was exemplified in the

following quote by Siobhán:

I do think that the curriculum makes an awful lot more sense… I feel it's more possible

to achieve what is set out in words. Before I felt like I was just scrambling to get everything

done… while trying to make a product at the same time. This [visual journaling] just covers

the curriculum way more effectively (FG2).

With a renewed understanding of the curriculum the participants' implementation of visual art

lessons consequently altered. This manifested itself in many ways: by incorporating more strand

units; by offering more choice; by allowing more time for process. As confirmed in the quantitative

data, prior to visual journaling, certain art strands dominated teacher practice (see Figure 4.2).

However, a common pattern to emerge from the qualitative data was the enhanced implementation

of all strand units. Indeed, as Karen asserted, journaling has encouraged her to "incorporate more

strands and to explore different strands like fabric and fibre" (FG1).

Additionally, in prioritising the creative process, teachers further recognised a change of

pace during art lessons. As identified in the quantitative data, teachers frequently focused on

displaying students' finished artwork (see Figure 4.4). Indeed, Beth affirmed that traditional art

lessons "felt very rushed" due to pressure to achieve an end product (FG1). Indeed, many contend

that in overly monitored and pressurised classroom, teachers have little agency (Smaller, 2015;

Ingersoll, 2003). Conversely, since using visual journaling, Beth considered that the pressure to get

an art lesson finished has lessened, stating "I've been rushing the kids less because I'm happy for

them to just work away on it, and they can revisit it the next week. It's given me a lot more freedom

in my teaching" (FG1).

Assessment of Student Learning. Teachers often report assessment of art challenging

(Carpenter, Cassaday & Monti, 2018; Chapman, Wright and Pascoe 2019). However, to truly

evaluate the contemporary learner, Popovich (2006) points out that an art educator cannot depend

solely on the final product which the student generates. Participants in this case-study found that

visual journaling provided an authentic way for assessing student growth over time - a view shared

by many notable authors on visual journaling (Evans-Palmer, 2018; James, 2019; Kelly, 2019). Furthermore, it offered an alternative to the traditional assessment evidenced in their previous practice. This was exemplified by Michael when he asserted "you're not judging that one finished product. It's a continuous assessment of each skill" (FG1), and by Claire who stated, "I always found art a very difficult thing to assess, but now I'm not just looking at one piece of art, I have a portfolio of work that has been created throughout the last few weeks" (FG2).

This outcome for teacher practice, shared by all participants, echoes profoundly with Strickland's (2019) assertion that the visual journal can be an invaluable tool for continuous formative assessment, encouraging student growth and learning in art education.

Collaborative Practice. A recurring concern in teachers' practice in that of teacher isolation (Glazier et al., 2016). Similarly, in this case-study some participants alluded to the feeling of seclusion prior to visual journaling, with Michael asserting "each teacher did their own individual work in art" (FG1). Nonetheless, the qualitative data suggests that visual journaling encouraged teachers to make concerted efforts to move from a culture of isolation to that of collaboration for art lessons. This collaborative atmosphere resulted in rich exchanges of lesson ideas and sharing of specific interventions that were both successful and unsuccessful among participants. This sharing of ideas - which the research literature on visual journaling has maintained as a positive outcome for teacher practice (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017; Todd-Adekanye, 2017) - was illustrated by Eva:

> Now we're collaborating together and chatting to each other about art ideas and what
> worked and didn't work…That kind of collaboration with your fellow teachers is really nice,
> because if you're stuck with something, then there's someone there to help you out and I
> find that really helpful (FG1).

Growing Confidence. Research reports that teachers in primary school lack confidence in teaching visual art (Alter, Hayes & O'Hara, 2009; Chapman, Wright & Pascoe, 2019; Ní Bhroin, 2012). Indeed, a lack of teacher confidence was evidenced in the quantitative data, prior to the

implementation of visual art journaling, in this case-study school (See Table 4.5). Conversely, at a gradual pace, by embracing visual journaling and successfully employing new methodologies to teaching art, the participants expressed growing confidence in teaching art. Michael asserted "I don't have a big fear anymore to model a skill for them [students]" (FG1). Similarly, Eva referenced heightened confidence as well as understanding:

> I feel I'm upskilling myself, and becoming more confident in teaching art. Whereas, previously, I might just be pigeonholed with my ideas... I think it's given me more confidence and more knowledge myself which is great (FG1).

While enhanced professional confidence is emphasised in the literature as an outcome of visual journaling (Irwin & de Cosson, 2004; Sanders-Bustle, 2008), some participants in this study voiced concern regarding its lasting effect. As identified in the quantitative data, prior to visual journaling, all participants agreed that inadequate arts knowledge and skill was a challenge to their art practice (see Table 4.5). Similarly, in the qualitative data, while Claire identified that her "own knowledge is better in art now especially in relation to different techniques", she also identified her uncertainty at modeling different techniques and stated, "I'd love more workshops to improve my own skills going forward" (FG2). Indeed, all participants identified a need for CPD to support visual journaling in the future.

4.5 Conclusion

The quantitative data presented in the first section of this chapter gave an overview of the visual art practice in the case-study school prior to the implementation of visual journaling. Then in the second section, the qualitative data explored the participants' experiences of implementing visual journaling in the art classroom and the key learning outcomes identified by them. Dominant themes and subthemes from both sets of data were identified, presented and explored. The quantitative and qualitative data was interrogated and analysed and addressed the research objectives outlined

in Section 3.3. In sum, the key findings of this study were:

- Three key factors that contribute to the priority of product over process in the visual art classroom were identified as: pressure from school stakeholders; time constraints; and inadequate knowledge and teacher confidence.

- Three key enabling factors in implementing visual journaling in art education were identified as: teacher professional development; practical resources; and support and collaboration.

- Four key challenges encountered while implementing visual journaling in art education were identified as: online teaching; time constraints; varying level of engagement; and the challenge of change.

- Three key teaching methodologies that support visual journaling in art education are: modelling the creative process; providing an outline; and providing constructive feedback.

- The perceived outcome of visual journaling on student learning was presented through four emergent themes in this research. These are: enhanced skill, confidence and pride; pupils' collaboration and inclusion; change in focus and increased pupil engagement; and creation of a safe space.

- The perceived outcome of visual journaling on teacher practice was also presented through four emergent themes in this research. These are: planning and implementation of visual arts curriculum; assessment of student learning; growing confidence; and collaborative practice.

Further analysis, along with the research's implications and recommendations are presented in the final chapter.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to consider the overall conclusions and recommendations emanating from this research study. Firstly, following on from the emergent themes outlined in chapter four, a summary and evaluation of the key findings of the research are outlined. Secondly, the implications of the study are presented. Finally, the limitations of the study are acknowledged and recommendations for further study deriving from the research are offered.

5.2 Summary and Evaluation of Key Findings

5.2.1 School Focus and Prioritisation Prior to Visual Art Journaling

The quantitative data evidenced that, in the case-study school, although teachers recognised the importance of the creative process, process-based art education was not a priority in their visual art lessons prior to the implementation of visual art journaling. The study elucidated three contributing factors to the priority of product-based art lessons including: outside pressures and prioritisation of other subjects; inadequate teacher knowledge and poor teacher confidence; and immediate and simple art lesson 'solutions' online. The purpose of implementing visual journaling was to enable the participants to juxtapose their beliefs and actions, with the ultimate aim of prioritising the creative process in art education.

5.2.2 Implementation of Visual Journaling in Art Education

This case-study introduced visual journaling in *St. Peter's Primary School.* The research explored and examined every aspect of the implementation of visual journaling in art education and identified three enabling factors - i.e. practical resources, teacher professional development and support and collaboration; and four inhibiting factors – i.e. online teaching, time constraints, varying levels of engagement and the challenge of change, to visual journaling in art education; along with three teaching methodologies - i.e. modeling the creative process, providing and outline and providing constructive feedback, that support visual journaling in art education - see Figure 4.7. Additionally,

this study highlighted key outcomes of visual journaling on student learning and on teacher practice. These are now summarised.

Outcomes of Visual Journaling on Student Learning. Teachers in this case-study identified enhanced levels of art-making skill and technique among students as a consequence of visual journaling. Furthermore, participants perceived improved student confidence, observed in students' capacity to take risks and explore with different materials.

One of the key principles of the Primary School Curriculum is to develop frameworks to serve the diversity of children and their needs (GoI, 1999c). Findings in this study reflect how visual journaling afforded inclusion of all learners. Furthermore, a collaborative atmosphere among students was observed with children demonstrating a renewed sense of pride in their artwork.

One of the key reported benefits of visual journaling is that it provides a safe space for students (Evans-Palmer, 2018; Springgay, Irwin, Leggo & Gouzouasis, 2008; Todd-Adekanye, 2017; Willcox, 2017). This aspect of visual journaling was of key significance in the course of this study – as it was partially conducted during the national lock-down which resulted from the global pandemic – COVID-19. Significantly, participants considered that visual journaling created a safe outlet for students to "voice" and visually explore their concerns during this vulnerable time and helped to unveil pupils' anxieties which may not have been ascertained by teachers.

Finally, and of major significance to the primary research question, the qualitative research highlighted a renewed focus on process in artmaking by students when visual journaling was employed. This change in focus saw children exploring art materials, discussing ideas and experimenting with different techniques in the pages of their art journals.

Outcomes of Visual Journaling on Teacher Practice. The research findings indicate that teachers' classroom practice changed and benefited from implementing visual journaling in art education. In this study participants enunciated a renewed understanding and appreciation of the Visual Arts Curriculum, consequently altering their planning and implementation of art lessons.

Teachers identified taking the 'guided discovery' approach to teaching art advocated in the Visual Arts Curriculum; offering opportunities for choice and meaning; incorporating more strand units; and resulting in less-rushed lessons.

Participants further reported that visual journaling served as a form of authentic assessment. Teachers established an invaluable collaborative culture in *St Peter's Primary School* from the shared goal of implementing visual journaling. Participants maintained that the rich exchanges and sharing of ideas, practices and resources reduced the feeling of isolation that had been a prominent finding in the quantitative data prior to the implementation of visual journaling. Finally, the study illuminated participants' growing confidence in their teaching and in modelling the creative process in their art lessons.

Overall, although small in scale, the findings of this study in terms of positive student and teacher outcomes as a result of visual journaling, mirror larger research studies and the current literature on visual journaling (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017; Evans-Palmer, 2018; James, 2019; Kelly, 2019; Sanders-Bustle, 2008; Todd-Adekanye, 2017; Willcox, 2017)

5.3 Implications of the Study

Visual journaling in art education presents challenges and issues that need to be addressed in order for visual journaling to be implemented successfully. The following key recommendations which are specific to the case-study school, but potentially applicable to the introduction of visual journaling in any primary school, emerge from this case-study.

5.3.1 Dedicated Time, Continual Resources & Support

This study provides substantial insights into the many organisational requirements that need to be considered when implementing visual journaling in art education in the primary school classroom. Firstly, time and space were the very basic but vital enablers for visual journaling in *St. Peter's Primary School.* Many contend that students need sufficient time for creativity to develop (Cremin, 2015; Desailly, 2015; Jesson, 2012; Sternberg 2019). Participants considered that one hour

per week was not enough time to implement visual journaling effectively. One possible way to counteract this would be for the teacher to provide material on an online platform such as 'Google Classroom' where students can become familiar with art concepts, prior to the art lesson.

Providing accessible and suitable materials for students when implementing any artistic endeavour is essential (Edwards, 2014). Indeed, all participants noted that it is imperative that the school continues to provide sufficient art materials for visual journaling. If possible, the school should create and continually replenish an 'art cart' with a wide array of materials for student exploration. It was also recommended that teachers should specify the type of journal students employ.

Again, in keeping with the wider literature on visual journaling, participants also considered that in order to manage varying levels of student engagement, the classroom teacher should provide an outline of journaling activities to scaffold students; and should model the creative process and show examples of artwork in progress to support learners when journaling.

5.3.2 Shared Vision and Whole-School Approach

This study emphasises the influence of school stakeholders on visual journaling implementation. Participants observed that while the school was supportive of the prioritisation of process-based art, traditions in the school such as art competitions were inconsistent with this aim and added to the challenge of change. Studies show that implementation of CPD is most effective when school policies do not conflict with new teaching approaches (Loxley et al., 2007). Thus, a coordinated purpose for the arts in the school, along with consistent levels of support by all stakeholders is essential and required for successful visual journaling implementation. This shared vision in art education would aid teachers' confidence and alleviate fears over potential misconceptions among stakeholders.

This study illustrates how visual journaling can be implemented in the Visual Arts Curriculum from Second Class to Sixth Class. This study further advocates the introduction of visual journaling in the junior end of the school. After teachers are given additional training and guidance on visual

journaling, they could collaborate and develop a contextualised, whole-school approach. This could create a spiral effect whereby students develop visual journaling skills gradually and consistently from Junior Infants to Sixth Class.

5.3.3 Collaboration

Central to this whole-school approach must be an acknowledgement that employing visual journaling is not an isolated endeavour. Given the establishment of the culture of collaboration identified by all of the participants in this study, it is imperative that the school continually reviews visual journaling implementation. Dedicated time should be allocated to allow the teachers to exchange lesson ideas and specific methodologies. If possible, teachers within the school should use a platform such as a Visual Journaling Google Classroom page, where videos, links and ideas for journaling lessons can be shared. This will establish and sustain an atmosphere of collaboration rather than isolation, seen commonly among teachers (Glazier et., 2016).

5.3.4 Professional Learning Opportunities

Contextualised, sustained CPD is considered to be of utmost importance for successful curriculum implementation (Banks & Smyth, 2012; Mooney-Simmie, 2007), however, such CPD is also considered as being currently lacking in art education (Chapman, Wright & Pascoe, 2019). Research indicates that teachers lack confidence and skill required to yield the full potential of the visual art curriculum (Duncum, 1999; Irwin, 2018). Indeed 82.5% of participants in this study identified limited CPD as a challenge to process-based art education. The initial visual journaling workshop in this study was deemed beneficial and essential by all participants. Nonetheless, many observe professional development not as a once-off, short-term intervention, but as a long-term process (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Putnam & Borko, 2000). More CPD on visual journaling, modelled on preferences presented in this study should be implemented in the near future.

5.4 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

While much has been learned from this research concerning the introduction, implementation and outcomes of visual journaling in the senior classes of a primary school, a limitation of this work is that it is a small-scale case-study. The data in this study was limited to the views and experiences of a modest sample of eight teachers. It is acknowledged that a wider sample of perspectives would be necessary in future research. Additionally, given its single-school context, the specifics of this study cannot be generalised across all Irish primary schools and future research is needed on visual journaling across a range of primary schools in order to examine a wider representation of this approach in art education.

As this study focused on teachers' perspectives of the outcomes of visual journaling both for themselves and for their students, a future study to measure and elucidate children's own learning experiences would contribute greatly to further ascertaining the value of visual journaling and the possible benefits for students.

Furthermore, this study focused on the senior classes in primary school and questions regarding the possible benefits and particular challenges of introducing visual journaling in younger classes in the primary school remain. This is also a gap in the wider literature on visual journaling in art education and affords an exciting opportunity which warrants further research.

Overall, this small-scale study highlights the positive outcomes of visual journaling for teachers and students in the senior classes in primary school. It highlights gaps that could be addressed by future researchers. While acknowledging its limitations, the results of this case-study should be of significance for the senior classes in primary schools interested in prioritising the creative process in art making.

5.5 Concluding Remarks

While this case-study is small in scale and findings cannot be generalised, this research has significant merit. While gaining prominence internationally and in secondary and higher education,

visual journaling in art education in Ireland, and most particularly in the primary school sector in Ireland, is sparse. This study has cracked the surface and the review of the literature and the findings of the case-study presented in this study provide a worthwhile insight into the enabling and inhibiting factors to visual journaling implementation, methodologies that support it, and potential outcomes for both teachers and students.

Significantly, the experiences and perceptions of the eight participants involved provide evidence of the capacity of the primary teacher to provide an arts education prioritising the creative process. Such an education not alone complements the aims of the Visual Arts Curriculum, but benefits teachers' classroom practice and importantly advantages pupils' learning in art education in many ways. That being said, visual journaling is recognised as an approach in art education and is not intended to replace the current Visual Arts Curriculum.

Given the emphasis on the creative process outlined in the Visual Arts Curriculum, and the responsibility a teacher has to facilitate rather than dictate to children in their artmaking, it behoves primary teachers to employ approaches in art education that prioritise the process of artmaking. Curricular reforms in both 1971 and 1999, while significantly strengthening the potential for a focus on the creative process in art education, were never fully realised. Perhaps now the time has come. From assessing the findings and recommendations in this study, we can confidently champion visual journaling as an approach to harness a core focus on the creative process in art education:

This [visual journaling] is natural, this is the way it should be… I am determined to embrace this and I am excited that the children in my classroom now have a space to create, experiment and to express themselves freely (Laura, FG2).

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Appendix A

Questionnaire

This questionnaire seeks to obtain and explore your current visual art practice and your views on process-based art education. A process approach to art education can be defined as "a sequence of steps or stages through which the creative person proceeds in clarifying a problem, working on it, and producing a solution that resolves the difficulty" (Davis, 2000, p.60). Essentially, in process-based arts education "the focus shifts from end-product or outcome, to doing and experiencing in the here-and-now moment" (Edwards, 2014, p. 42).

Section 1: Current Practice

Please supply the following background information on yourself and your current practice.

1.1. What class are you currently teaching?

☐ 2nd Class ☐ 3rd Class ☐ 4th Class ☐ 5th Class ☐ 6th Class

1.2. How many years teaching experience do you have?

☐ 0-5 ☐ 6-20 ☐ 20 +

1.3. On average how long do you spend on visual art per week?

☐ 0- 30mins ☐ 1 hour ☐ 1- 2 hours

1.4. Do you teach visual art as a stand-alone lesson or do you typically incorporate it into other subjects?

☐ Stand-alone lesson ☐ Incorporate into other subjects

1.5. Please indicate the frequency with which you engage with each of the strands in the Visual Arts Curriculum. *Please tick one box that most closely represents your practice for each of the six strands.*

Strand	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom
Drawing				
Paint & Colour				
Print				
Clay				

Fabric & Fibre				
Construction				

1.6. Please indicate the frequency with which you engage with each of the following statements. *Please tick one box that most closely represents your practice in the Visual Arts Curriculum.*

Statements	Very Frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Seldom
I focus on displaying the students' finished artwork.				
I feel pressured/obliged to display artwork that reflects the time of year (e.g. Christmas, parent-teacher meetings).				
I display sketches as well as finished artwork as exemplars to students.				
I follow a specific formula for art lessons with all students following the same set of directions.				
I end up with multiple artworks that look similar at the end of my art lesson.				
I engage in art competitions that reward students for their art product.				

1.7. Where do you currently draw inspiration/ ideas from for your visual art lessons? *Tick all that apply.*

☐ Pinterest
☐ Visual Arts Curriculum/ Teacher Guidelines
☐ Textbooks
☐ YouTube
☐ Art Gallery Websites

☐ Instagram
☐ Twinkl
☐ My own ideas
☐ Colleagues
☐ Other-*Please specify in box*

1.8 The following are a list of <u>reasons</u> why teachers use websites for their art lessons. *Please place these factors in rank order (1-5) where '1' represents the most important reason in your opinion.*

These websites provide instant and structured lesson plans	
These websites offer printable templates and art packs	
These websites show pictures of the finished product	
These websites are visual, attractive and colourful	
These websites provide ideas and inspiration for art lessons	

Section 2: Process- Based Art Education

2.1. The following are a list of statements on process-based art education. *Please tick one box to indicate your considered view on each of the following statements. Mark one box per row.*

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) In Visual Art lessons, students at all times should be involved in a creative rather than in a passive or imitative way.					
b) The process of art making is as valuable/important as the final product.					
c) Students should be given opportunities to explore a wide variety of art materials and methods for using them.					
d) Students' artwork should be displayed throughout the process and not just the final result.					
e) In an art lesson, the children should remain the designers.					
f) Students talking about their work and, when appropriate, as they work, is central to the creative process.					
g) Teachers should give multiple forms of feedback when responding to student work. (e.g., oral, written, visual)					

h) Students should give each other feedback in multiple forms throughout the creative process. (e.g., verbal, written, and visual).					

Section 3: Challenges of process-based art education

3.1 The following are a list of <u>challenges</u> that may act as barriers to the priority of process-based arts education. *Please tick one box to indicate your considered view on each of the following statements. Mark one box per row.*

Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree
a) Time commitment involved					
b) Curriculum overload					
c) Pressures from school, colleagues and parents to decorate classroom walls					
d) Inadequate arts knowledge/skill					
e) Poor teacher confidence					
f) Prioritisation of other subjects					
g) Limited continuous professional development (CPD)					

3.2 What do you think are the main benefits of engaging in process-based art education?

3.3 What do you think are the main challenges of engaging in process-based art education?

Appendix B

Visual Journaling in Art Education eBook

The Visual Journal in the Primary Art Classroom

Figure 1. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Journal Strip.*

Visual
Journaling
in Art
Education

Figure 2. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Sketchbooks.*

Visual Journaling in Art Education   1

What is Visual Journaling?

- Art journaling is *"an artistic process for recording personal insights with constructed images and written reflections"* (Evans-Palmer, 2018, p.19).

- Visual journals *emphasise process rather than product* (Powell, 2010).

- Visual Journaling can be considered a *"safe, creative, reflective resource which supports formative assessment of both learning and teaching."* (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017, p.1)

- Have a look at website 1 explaining The Many Faces of Art Journaling!

Video 1. Watch this flip through video for inspiration!

Visual Journaling in Art Education   2

Key Components of Visual Journaling

1. Students employ *physical notebooks* to experiment, explore, and express ideas (Sanders-Bustle, 2008).

2. Students *document their work in progress* through the use of drawings, photographs, text and *experimentation with media* (Cleary & Ní Bhroin, 2017).

3. Journaling *combines visual images with personal writing* and reflection (Evans-Palmer, 2018; James, 2019).

4. Visual journals must be brought outside the art *classroom* and employed in the *home and community* (Song, 2012; Irwin & de Cosson, 2004).

Figure 3: Bunkers Traci. (2011) *A Two Page Spread.*

Visual Journaling in Art Education   3

Enabling Factors of the Creative Process

- Display children's art work in Progress
- Visual Art must be valued and encourage in the classroom
- Provide sufficient space & time
- Engage children in one-on-on or small group conversations about their creations
- Present a wide variety of materials to choose from

Enabling Factors of the Creative Process

(McLennan, 2010)

Visual Journaling in Art Education   4

Goals of the Creative Process

According to Edwards (2014), the goals of the creative process for children are as follows:

- Play around with ideas.
- Explore a wide variety of materials and methods for using them.
- Take advantage of accidents.
- Honor the unexpected.
- Solve problems or dilemmas through trial and error.
- Allow feelings and emotions to lead the process of creating.
- View the process as a way to communicate thoughts and feelings with and without words.
- Children find something positive to say about their work.

Tips for implementing Visual Journaling

Cleary & Ní Bhroin (2017) outline the following tips for educators implementing this practice:

✓ Begin planning early, showing previous examples of journals, emphasising individual approaches.

✓ Make your expectations of students explicit from the beginning, showing examples of what it means to expand on their ideas, what it means to make it personal to them.

✓ Give an outline or guide which includes sample questions to help with reflection e.g. What was it like for you working in a group?

✓ Ask students to use notebooks in class, give them some opportunities to do pages at home also.

✓ Review after 3 weeks, during which students swap journals and peer assess.

Tips for implementing Visual Journaling

Willcox (2017) discusses three more tips for implementation:

✓ Provide minimal grading. Therefore, students feel free to experiment and the process of art-making is the main focus

✓ Teachers must create space and time for students to work on their journals in the classroom and at home.

✓ Teachers give "individualised feedback to scaffold progress and to help students grow" (p.15).

Strands & Concepts

Government of Ireland, (1999).

Strands & Concepts

Government of Ireland, (1999).
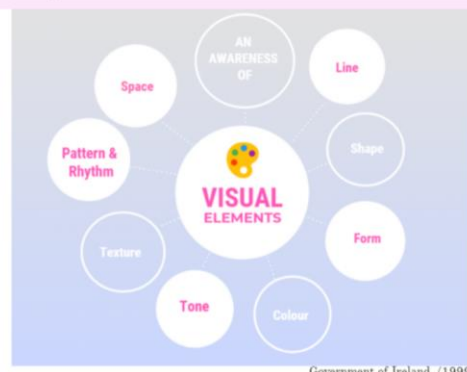
Supplies for Journaling

-Acrylic Paint
-Watercolour Paint
- Paintbrushes
 (small, medium, large)
- Sharpie Markers
- Colouring Pencils
- Watercolour Pencils
- Oil Pastels
- Chalk Pastels
- Patterned Paper
- Washi tapes
- Greaseproof Paper
- Old Magazines
- Glue Stick

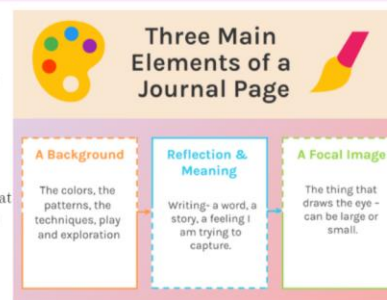*Whatever is in the journal cart or in their student packs!*

Figure 4. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Workbook.*

- Gel Medium
- Stencils
- Printing materials
- Plastic Cards *
- Cardboard
- Buttons
- Empty Spray Bottles
- Palette Paper
- Mini Paint Rollers
- Hair Dryer

Use what the students have!

Where can you start?

1. Pick a theme: *e.g. Together Again Like Peas in a Pod*

2. Choose a *Strand Unit* you wish to cover

3. Identify the *concepts* that you would like to focus on

4. Create!

Three Main Elements of a Journal Page

A Background — The colors, the patterns, the techniques, play and exploration

Reflection & Meaning — Writing- a word, a story, a feeling I am trying to capture.

A Focal Image — The thing that draws the eye - can be large or small.

Exemplar 1 · 11

*How to create a Journal Cover

Strand: Painting, Drawing, Fabric & Fibre, Print
Concept: Colour, Tone, Texture, Line, Shape, Space

-Paint one or two coats of gesso on the sketchbook cover.

-Let dry completely.

You might be able to see the cover a bit, but that's okay!
-For more texture, use a large brush and load it with gesso before painting.

- Pull out the watercolors and paint part of the journal as pictured.

-Tear a piece of washi and press along the edge of the art journal.

Figure 5. Moraitis, Jennie (n.d.)
Simple Art Journal Cover

Figure 6. Moraitis, Jennie (n.d.)
Simple Art Journal Cover

*How to create a Journal Cover · 12

-Now the children choose what they would like to have on the front of your journal.

-They can stick down stickers, fabric, paper or whatever they like.

-They can use stencils and any other materials like chalk pastels and oil pastel.

-Have a look at the website 2 'How to Make a Simple Art Cover' for inspiration!

- Figure 7, 8 & 9 are art journal covers created by college students!

Figure 7, 8 & 9.
Evans-Palmer,
Teri. (2018)
Journal Covers.

Exemplar 2 · 13

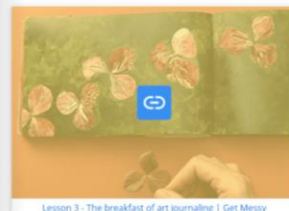### *The Breakfast of Art Journaling (How to Make the First Journal Page)

Strand: Painting & Drawing
Concept: Colour &Tone

-Ask the children to think of journaling like baking…

-You give you them steps to follow but they can feel free to be as liberal or as precise with this recipe as they like.

-The best part about art recipes is that children can follow them a million times and have a different result each time.

-It prevents them from thinking too much and just having fun with their art.

MESSY RECIPE

Smear some paint down on the page in one of your favourite colours

Use a piece of paper from your day and add it to the page

Write down words that you heard recently that have stuck with you

Create a blind contour sketch

*The Breakfast of Art Journaling (How to Make the First Journal Page) · 14

Lesson 3 - The breakfast of art journaling | Get Messy

Have a look at Website 3 for Vanessa's take on the recipe!

Figure 10 & 11. Retrieved from
https://getmessyart.com/class/how-to-start-art-journaling/lesson-3/

Exemplar 3 · 15

*Techniques & Tricks

1. Creating Backgrounds

Have a look at website 4 to learn about simple background techniques that can be created in less than 5 mins! These would be a nice starting point as often children are anxious of a blank, white page!

Have a look at video # 2 in website 5 that explains easy background techniques, cutting a stencil and using a brayer.

2.Finding a Focal Point

So you've figured out how to create backgrounds… now what? This website 6 shows a few examples of different ways children can add a focal point to their art journal page to get that 'finished' look.

Figure 12: Creating Backgrounds using a plastic card

Figure 13: Dube, Carolyn. (n.d.) *Finding a Focal Image.*

*Techniques & Tricks · 16

3. Using Prompts

Prompts are the key to:
1. Giving students something to art journal about when their mind is blank.
2. Pushing journaling to the next level and reaching deeper meaning in art journaling.
3. Getting kids to explore new techniques.
4. Sparking ideas.
5. Breaking a creative rut.

Have a look at website 7 lesson 'Prompts' and watch the 2 videos for examples of art journal pages using them!

The following two websites also provide more info on journaling prompts!
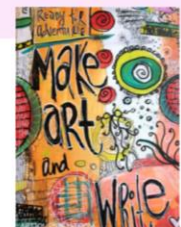website 8: Using Prompts
website 9: 365 Art Journal Prompts

Figure 14 & 15: Retrieved from
https://artjournalist.com/one-word-art-journal-prompts/

Exemplar 4 — 17

*Colour Theory

Strand: Painting & Drawing
Concept: Colour & Tone

BFF's are next to each other

Frenemies are across from each other

-Primary colors are colors that you cannot mix: blue, yellow, and red.

-Blue and yellow make green. Red and blue make purple. Yellow and red make orange.

- Have a look on website 10 **artfactory** to find out more!

COLOUR THEORY.
HOW NOT TO MAKE MUD!

Colour Theory. HOW NOT TO MAKE MUD!

Have a look at the PowerPoint that explains how NOT to make MUD!

Figure 16. Maguire, Katie (2019). Falling.

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*Colour Theory — 18

Video 2

Video 3

Watch videos 2 & 3 above explaining two Colour Theory Lessons you can do with your Students!

Additional Activities:

1. Students create a *colour strip* and draw and paint an image to match the colour strip- see Figure 16.

2. Children create their own image/design and paint it using different blended colours. There must be *no colours identical* on the page.

Reflection- What colours were their favourite? Why? How did mixing the colours make them feel? Was it frustrating/ calming?

Exemplar 5 — 19

*Layering

Strand: Painting & Drawing, Print
Concept: Colour, Tone, Line, Space, Texture

It's all about the layers and imperfection in these following examples. Putting layers on things can really change it. Layering also encourages children to embrace 'mistakes' and make something new!

Encourage children not to be worried about these 'mistakes' because when they try to be "perfect" they get focused on the worry and anxiety and can barely create a thing.

So, if you find a student worrying as they create a page, perhaps try these layering examples to help them understand that anything can be transformed!

Video 4. Three Circles

Video 5. Game Show Grids

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*Layering — 20

Video 6 & 7. Messy but Beautiful!

Figure 17: Dube, Carolyn (n.d.). *3 Circles.*

Exemplar 6 — 21

*Collage

Strand: Fabric & Fibre, Painting
Concept: Shape, Texture, Pattern

Video 8

Video 9

1. Exploring Collage

What matters here is *pattern, texture, and shape*. In the videos you'll see different glues to attach the papers but the main ones you will use are glue sticksand gel medium.

The more variety of papers, patterns and textures here the better.

Tip: Give students 3 seconds to choose what they are gluing down first- no overthinking!

The colours of the materials do not matter here because colour will be added on top.

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*Collage — 22

2. Teesha Moore

- Students can research/be shown modern collage artist on website 11 Teesha Moore and her Youtube Channel on website 12 for inspiration.
- These videos complete collages step by step and offer many practical and child-friendly tips!

Video 10

3. Hannah Hoch

- Students look at work of collage artist Hannah Hoch on website 13 who became associated with the Berlin Dada group.
- Study the art movement of Dadaism from website Artyfactory.
- After looking at the work of Hannah Hoch and other dadaist artists the children can then respond to these artworks by creating their own collage in their journal.
- This collage can be based on an issue within their world.
- The children write and reflect on this issue and what it means to them.
- Links here to SESE & English.

Figure 18 : Maguire, Katie. (2019) Inspired Collage: Hoch Style.

Exemplar 7

*Walking Sketches

Strand: Painting, Drawing, Print
Concept: Colour, Tone, Space, Texture

- Prior to their walk children look at the work of Shelley Rhodes on website 14.
- Rather than sketching in their journal, the students take long, thin strips of paper with them on their walk.
- As the students walk they mark and draw what they observe.
- Objects such as twigs, leaves, pebbles and shells can also be collected.
- Photographs are encouraged to be taken also.
- After the walk, the students add the colours they encountered using watercolor, chalks or coloured pencils. Other items such as berries and leaves can stain the page also.
- Children should be encouraged to label drawn items.

Video 11

Video 12: Nature Journal Flip Through

DoInk Nature Video

Figure 19. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Walk Sketch Strips.*

*Walking Sketches

24

- The image on the right is a journal page I created using leaves, twigs and mud collected while on a walk.
- Crepe paper and glue was added afterwards to help attach the image into my journal.
- This is a very simple example of how students could capture aspects of their walk in their journal.

Figure 20. Maguire, Katie (2020) *Leaf Journal Page*

In Figure 21 I placed leaves in a basin of water for 5 days. I then sketched the results!

Figure 21. Maguire, Katie (2020). *Leaves.*

Exemplar 8

25

*Using Photographs and Photograph Manipulation

Strand: Drawing, Painting, Construction
Concept: Line, Pattern & Rhythm, Shape, Form

- Students take photographs while on their walk. They then manipulate the photos after their walk.

- Photographs can be changed in various ways. A slideshow explains practical ways of how to manipulate photos. Simple techniques such as creasing, piercing and sanding can be experimented with by students.

- Alternatively, the photograph can be edited prior to printing. For example the brightness can be turned up, creating a bleached space for mark making and further drawing.

- Students can explore scale and layout by increasing or decreasing the size of the photograph. Students can also stitch into the photograph if printed onto fabric initially.

Photograph Manipulation

Practical Things to Try
Practical Ideas- Photograph manipulation

Practical Things to Try Slideshow

Video 13: Creating Mark Making tools

Figure 22. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Handmade pens and marks.*

*Using Photographs and Photograph Manipulation

- Students can create their own marks bu using paint. Watch video 14 for more inspiration!

- Students can also be encouraged to make their own mark making tools to manipulate their photographs.

- Picture to the left shows handmade pens and marks created by Shelley Rhodes, in the classroom these pens can be made from safer materials such as cardboard.

- Video 13 is a great resource that details how to create marks using everyday materials found in the classroom.

Exemplar 9

27

*Using Words and Text

- Students look at the famous journals of both Frida Kahlo and Leonardo da Vinci on website 15 & 16 and discuss the importance of reflection and writing.

- These journals provide an intimate view of the artists thoughts and processes, somewhat like a behind-the-scenes of their famous artworks.

- Text and words allow the child to reflect upon what they have created and add meaning to their artwork.

- Please see the slideshow at the bottom of the page for practical tips to get children to begin using words and text. Simple techniques such as distorting and elongating words and using multiple implements at once are described.

Strand: Drawing
Concept: Line, Space, Pattern & Rhythm

Using Words and Text

Practical Things to Try

Using Words and Text
Practical Things to Try with Text Slideshow

Figure 23. Kahlo, Frida (n.d.). *The Diary of Frida Kahlo.*

Figure 24. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Layered Text.*

*Using Words and Text

28

Scribble Journaling!
Scribble journaling lets students do 2 things at once. It lets them get their thoughts out on a page and it takes pressure off.

Pressures such as the:
pressure to like their handwriting
pressure to think of something deep and meaningful.
pressure to use proper grammar and spell words correctly
pressure that comes with being vulnerable and putting their feelings and thoughts on a page

Video 15: How to Scribble Journal!

How to scribble journal:
- Leave no spaces between words.
- Try to write as fast as you think, and don't worry about grammar.
- Try writing in cursive and in print.
- Try writing big and try writing small.
- Try writing with your non dominant hand.
- Try writing with a variety of different materials.

What if your students are stuck for what to write about?
- Encourage them to look around the room and start writing down what they see or hear.
- Play a song and write some of the words they hear.
- Write what they did the day before.

- Look at Website 5 Lesson 4 'Lettering and Details' for more inspiration!

Exemplar 10 — 29

Fabric and Fibre Within Journals

-Children learn about Debbie Lyddon, a textile artists that features fabric and fibre in her artwork.
- Look at simple Running Stitch video children can use to add fabric to their drawing.
-Once children have experimented with different stitching techniques, they can create a simple line drawing into their journal and add whatever stitching they would like.
-Figure 25 is an example of a line drawing and running stitch I created!
- Children can also simply glue or stitch add their fabric pieces into their journal.

Video 16

-Older students or teachers of younger classes can watch the video 16 'Beginners Hand Stitching for Paper Crafts' to explore Fabric and Fibre even more!

Figure 25. Maguire, Katie (2020). *Girl on Fabric Swing.*

Figure 26. Rhodes, Shelley. (2018). *Bay Collage Series.*

Exemplar 10 — 30

Fabric and Fibre Within Journals

Strand: Fabric & Fibre, Drawing, Painting
Concept: Texture, Line

Video 17

Video 18

- 'Fabric' can be a cloth you used to clean up a mess or even the paper towel or baby wipe you or the kids used to clean your hands!

- Save these colorful scraps, these scraps can become an important element in an art journal page.

-A baby wipe was the focal image of this journal. One of the 3 main elements on a page.

- Have a look at the videos on this page to see how to use a baby wipe as part of a journal page!

Figure 27: Dube, Carolyn (n.d.). *Baby Wipes.*

Exemplar 11 — 31

*3D Journals

Strand: Construction, Fabric & Fibre
Concept: Form, Shape, Texture

Figure 28. Payne, Sally (n.d.) *Sketchbook with three-dimensional drawings.*

- Children's sketches in their journals do not always have to be 2D.

- 'Drawings' can be made using wire or by combining wire with fabric, crepe paper or other materials.

- Figure 28 shows Sally Payne's sketchbook with three-dimensional drawings.

- Hang 3D 'Drawings' from fishing line in the classroom and photograph the shadows in sunlight! Add these photographs to the children's journals.

- Visit website 17 Lisa Kokin and website 18 Sally Payne for more inspiration on 3D artwork in journals.

Exemplar 12 — 32

*Collaborative Journals

Figure 29. Rhodes, Shelley; Payne, Sally; Brook, Andrea (2018) *Collaborative Journals.*

- Students work on a collaborative journal, which involves several people working in the same book or in each others book.

-The journal is passed from one person to another in a 'journal circle'.

-Students agree on a general theme and work on two to three pages before swapping with their group.

-Students can swap in such a way that they do not always follow on from the same person.

- The main aim is to respond in some way to the previous page.

- Visit website 19 Book and look at Youtube video 19 for inspiration.

When to know a page is finished? — 33

* When to stop

Ask the children to answer the following 3 questions:
Do I like the background?
Do I like the focal image?
Do I like the meaning or words?

Video 20

- Get the children to talk about their page with someone in their class or with their teacher.
-Just the act of sharing about it will often get children to notice something they hadn't before!
- Have a look at the video where Carolyn asks herself these 3 questions and finished her art pages!

Create a movie of the students journal creations!
-Once students are happy and finished with their journal pages, they can use the Film maker app to create a movie of their journal.
-This is a perfect way to document the students progress and differing processes.
-Please see video of a film I created using the Film Maker app of my very own visual arts journal!

List of Websites Used — 34

Website 1: https://kristalnorton.com/the-many-faces-of-an-art-journal/

Website 2: https://www.littlegirldesigns.com/simple-art-journal-cover/

Website 3: https://getmessyart.com/class/how-to-start-art-journaling/lesson-3/

Website 4: https://kristalnorton.com/art-journaling-101-background-techniques/

Website 5: https://www.bloknote.nl/artjournalschoolhouse/

Website 6: https://kristalnorton.com/art-journaling-101-finding-a-focal-point/

Website 7: https://getmessyart.com/class/how-to-start-art-journaling/lesson-5/

Website 8: https://kristalnorton.com/art-journaling-101-using-prompts/

Website 9: https://artjournalist.com/one-word-art-journal-prompts/

Website 10: https://www.artyfactory.com/color_theory/color_terms_2.htm

Website 11: http://www.teeshamoore.com/

Website 12: https://www.youtube.com/user/tracyvmoore/featured

Website 13: https://www.youtube.com/user/tracyvmoore/featured

Website 14: http://www.shelleyrhodes.co.uk/sketchbooks/4559639593

Website 15: https://www.hagitaz.com/en/frida-kahlos-art-journal/

Website 16:https://www.vam.ac.uk/articles/explore-leonardo-da-vinci-codex-forster-i#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-865%2C-111%2C3204%2C2211

Website 17: http://www.lisakokin.com/book-art-small-sculptures-one.html

Website 18: https://www.instagram.com/sallyaladepayne/

Website 19: http://www.lookatbook.com/

List of Videos Used

Video 1:
https://youtu.be/1I9vFdOsCmQ

Video 2: vimeo.com/222576793

Video 3:
https://vimeo.com/177115802

Video 4:
https://vimeo.com/179121323

Video 5:
https://vimeo.com/179139399

Video 6:
https://vimeo.com/177151165

Video 7:
https://vimeo.com/177171770

Video 8:
https://vimeo.com/178100515

Video 9:
https://vimeo.com/178195233

Video 10:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uEtI_kklJ8k&t=72s&ab_channel=TracyMoore

Video 11: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7kQoyZ1pRw&ab_channel=Arts%26CulturalTravel

Video 12: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6J_wx4N6G0&ab_channel=IHeartArt

Video 13: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4qD7Wyygtzk&t=853s&ab_channel=KarenBurchill

Video 14: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vwhDNBa3Us4&ab_channel=AmberK.Creative

Video 15- https://vimeo.com/33399b323

Video 16: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjzSR4swifw&t=4s&ab_channel=ChristineMeyer

Video 17: https://vimeo.com/178374277

Video 18: https://vimeo.com/178406052

Video 19: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4tM-WFAcxCk&t=229s&ab_channel=TorrieGass

Video 20- https://vimeo.com/220167624

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Dube, C. (n.d.) Retrieved from: https://mixedmedia.carolyndube.com/art-journaling-fundamentals-course-overview/

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Powell, K. (2010). Viewing places: Students as visual ethnographers. *Art Education*, 63(10), 44-53.

Rhodes, S. (2018). *Sketchbook Explorations. For Mixed- Media Artists*. London: Batsford.

Sanders-Bustle, L. (Ed.). (2003). *Image inquiry and transformative practice: Engaging learners in creative and critical inquiry through visual representation*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Appendix C

Letter to the Board of Management

Dear Management,

I am currently continuing my Masters of Education in Marino Institute College Dublin, and as part of my second-year programme, I am required to complete a thesis in a chosen area of study. The focus of my research will be to explore teachers' perspective on visual journaling in the primary school classroom and its potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the Visual Arts Curriculum.

As part of my research, I wish to collect data by administering an online questionnaire, implementing an introductory course on Visual Journaling and conducting focus group interviews with the teachers in your school. To this end, I am seeking the approval of the Board of Management.

Please let me know if there is any further information I can provide.

Kindest Regards,

Katie Maguire.

Appendix D

Information Sheet

"An Exploration of Teachers' Perspectives on Visual Journaling in the Primary School Classroom and its Potential to Contribute to the Prioritisation of Process in the Visual Arts Curriculum."

What is the project about?

This study explores the question as to whether the use of visual journaling can help to prioritise process in the Visual Arts Curriculum in the senior end of an Irish primary school. This study will investigate and examine the current visual art practice in this school and the potential factors that may currently contribute to the priority of product over process in this school. Participants will then be introduced to the approach of visual journaling in a half-day workshop and will implement visual journaling in their classroom for seven weeks. By interviewing teachers in focus groups, I hope to uncover the preliminary outcome that visual journaling may have had on teacher practice and on student learning in the visual art classroom and its potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the Visual Arts Curriculum.

Why is it being undertaken?

This school, in School Self-Evaluation process, identified a prioritisation of product over process in the implementation of the Visual Arts Curriculum. This key issue merited further investigation on current visual art practice. Furthermore, current research on art education reflects the importance of students working through creative processes and relating to the content as learners. It is therefore, the aim of this research to introduce an approach to teachers that may aid in the prioritisation of the creative process in the primary school classroom. One such approach is visual

journaling. For this reason, I believe it important to introduce and examine the preliminary visual journaling may have on student learning and on teacher practice.

What are the benefits of this research?

It is hoped that (a) we gain a better understanding of the current visual art practice in the school b) we identify the enabling and inhibiting factors to the implementation of visual journaling c) we examine and understand the impact visual journaling had on teacher practice d) we examine and understand the impact visual journaling had on student learning.

Exactly what is involved for the participant (time, location, etc.)

If you are kind enough to agree to participate in this study, participation will involve the completion of a short and confidential 10-minute online questionnaire. This questionnaire seeks to gather information about your current visual art practice and your views on process-based art education. Participants will also be asked to partake in a half-day visual journaling online workshop. Here, teachers will be introduced to core aspects of visual journaling including tips for implementation and practical examples. A detailed eBook on visual journaling will be given digitally to each participant. Participants will be required to implement visual journaling in their art lessons for seven weeks. In week four, participants will have the opportunity to take part in an interactive collaborative session, to discuss and share ideas and raise any questions they may have. Finally, participants will be required to partake in a focus group interview with three other colleagues. Given the current Covid-19 pandemic and school closures, it is predicted that the implementation of visual journaling will be introduced online in our 'virtual classrooms' using the platform *Google Meet*. *Google Meet* will also be used for online focus-groups where necessary.

Right to withdraw

You are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without consequence.

How will the information be used / disseminated?

The datum from your questionnaire and focus group interviews will be combined with that of the other participants in this study. I will then code the data using inductive analysis to compare common themes.

How will confidentiality be kept?

The online questionnaire will enable participants to remain anonymous. While the face-to-face nature of the focus group cannot guarantee anonymity, pseudonyms will be used to help protect the anonymity of the participants. All information gathered will remain confidential and will not be released to a third party.

What will happen to the data after research has been completed?

The collected data will be deleted or destroyed after a period of 13 months from the day of submission.

Contact details:

If at any time you have any queries/issues about this study my contact details are as follows:

Email: kmaguiremva19@momail.mie.ie. Contact Number: 0873118961

If you have any concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact my advisor for the project Eileen Keane at eileenkeane@mie.ie.

This study has been considered from an ethical perspective by the Marino ethics in research committee. Should you have any questions or concerns about the ethical approval or conduct of this study, please contact MERC@mie.ie

Appendix E

Questionnaire Consent Form

Dear Teacher,

I am currently undertaking research for my Masters in Education at Marino Institute of Education,

Dublin. The focus of my research will be to explore teachers' perspectives on visual journaling in the

primary school classroom and its potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the Visual

Arts Curriculum.

With a view to achieving a more in-depth exploration of this research area, I would like you to

complete a web-based online questionnaire. The questionnaire asks you to respond to questions

about your current visual art practice and the potential factors that you think may contribute to a

priority of product in the visual arts classroom. You are under no obligation to complete the

questionnaire, or to answer all questions presented in it. If you come to a question, you do not wish

to answer, simply skip it.

I hope you will be willing to participate because your responses are important and a valued part of

the study. Your participation will remain strictly confidential and all details and discussions relating

to this research will be entirely confidential and captured in a manner which respects this. The

questionnaire will be conducted through the online platform 'Google Forms' which allows you to

remain anonymous. Your name will not be attached to any of the data you provide. You are

welcome to discontinue participation in the study at any time, should you wish to do so. All data will

be kept safely by me until 13 months from the day of submission, when it will be deleted or

destroyed. My research will be viewed by my college thesis supervisor and by an external examiner

and will be available after that in the Library in Marino Institute of Education. If you wish, I will be very happy to provide you with a copy of my work.

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this research. Should you have questions regarding your participation, please contact me at 0873118961 or email me at kmaguiremva19@mommail.ie. You may also contact my advisor for the project, Eileen Keane at eileenkeane@mie.ie. *This study has been considered from an ethical perspective by the Marino ethics in research committee. Should you have any questions or concerns about the ethical approval or conduct of this study, please contact MERC@mie.ie*

Yours faithfully,

Katie Maguire.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT:

By clicking the link below you will agree to the following and be taken to the start of the questionnaire:

- You have read the above information
- You voluntarily agree to participate
- You are 18 years of age or older

Please click HERE to proceed to the questionnaire.

Appendix F

Focus Group Consent Form

Dear Teacher,

I am currently undertaking research for my Masters in Education at Marino Institute of Education,

Dublin. The focus of my research will be to explore teachers' perspectives on visual journaling in the

primary school classroom and its potential to contribute to the prioritisation of process in the Visual

Arts Curriculum.

With a view to achieving a more in-depth exploration of this research area, I would like to conduct a

focus group interview online through the platform 'Google Meet' to learn about the preliminary

outcome that visual art journaling may have had on teachers' practice and on student learning in the

visual art classroom. During the focus group interview, I will take note of some of your responses

and I will record the interview so that I can have a record of everything. If there are any questions

that I ask that you prefer not to answer, you need not contribute. If you would like to leave the focus

group at any time you are free to do so also.

There are no risks to you in this study. The data collection will be carried out in a sensitive and non-

stressful manner. Pseudonyms (false names) will be used when transcribing and analysing the

content of the focus group interview. While the face-to-face nature of this focus group cannot

guarantee anonymity, I assure you that insofar as is possible all details and discussions relating to

this research will be confidential and captured in a manner which respects this. All data will be kept

safely by me until 13 months from the day of submission, when it will be deleted or destroyed. My

research will be viewed by my college thesis supervisor and by an external examiner and will be

available after that in the Library in Marino Institute of Education. If you wish, I will be very happy to provide you with a copy of my work.

Your participation in this research is voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any time. If you have questions about this research, please feel free to contact me at 0873118961 or email me at kmaguiremva19@mommail.ie. You may also contact my advisor for the project, Eileen Keane at eileen.keane@mie.ie*. This study has been considered from an ethical perspective by the Marino ethics in research committee. Should you have any questions or concerns about the ethical approval or conduct of this study, please contact MERC@mie.ie*

Thank you sincerely for your consideration. I will give you a copy of this form for your own records.

Yours faithfully,

Katie Maguire.

If you agree to participate in this research project please indicate below:

I agree to be interviewed for this research project (please tick one):

Yes ☐   No ☐

I agree to be recorded during this interview (please tick one):

Yes ☐   No ☐

_____   _____

Participant's signature   Date

Appendix G

Interview Schedule for Focus Groups

Introduction Questions: Experience of Visual Journaling

1. What has been your overall experience of implementing visual journaling in your art classroom?

- *Write a quick rapid response – positives and negatives.*

Topic 1: Enabling and Inhibiting Factors for Visual Journaling

1. What specific factors in this school do you think have been important in enabling the teacher to implement visual journaling in art?

- *Have the resources in the school made a difference?*

2. Have there been factors that have presented barriers to visual journaling in art?

- *Did online teaching present specific challenges and/or opportunities for visual journaling?*

Topic 2: Implementation Phase

1. What were the most effective methodologies in your teaching that supported the implementation of visual journaling?

- *Did you model the creative process?*

2. What was your experience of the student reflection phase in visual journaling?

Topic 3: The Perceived Outcome of Visual Journaling on Student Learning

1. Do you feel visual journaling has supported your pupils' learning in the Visual Arts Curriculum in any new ways?

- *Have they improved their art skills/knowledge?*

- *Have they tried new resources/tools in artmaking?*

2. Do you feel your pupil's attitudes to visual art lessons have changed?

- *Do they take risks and experiment with materials?*

3. In your experience do you think pupil's enjoy visual journaling in art?

4. Do you think visual journaling in art education is inclusive of all students?

- *Are students with learning difficulties/ gifted learners accommodated?*

Topic 4: The Perceived Outcome of Visual Journaling on Teacher Practice

1. Has your classroom practice in visual art changed?

- *Have you tried any new teaching methodologies or resources?*

2. Has visual journaling impacted on your assessment of children's learning? How?

Conclusion Questions: The Future

1. Would you recommend using visual journaling as an approach in art education to other primary

schools? Why/ why not?

2. Will you continue to implement visual journaling in your art curriculum?

3. Do you think visual journaling should be part of the Visual Arts Curriculum for the whole school?

- *What do you think will be needed to support visual journaling in the school in the future?*

- *What do you think may inhibit visual journaling in the future?*