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Mrs L Lavelle
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Lavelle

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: art, craft and design

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 26 September 2011 to look at work in art, craft and design.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: discussions with you as subject coordinator and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of art, craft and design is satisfactory.

Achievement in art, craft and design

Achievement in art, craft and design is satisfactory.

- From broadly average starting points, pupils make steady progress during their time at the school. By the time they leave for secondary school their attainment is at least average and sometimes above.
- Pupils who lack confidence or find the subject difficult make similar progress to their peers because adults' carefully targeted guidance in lessons builds their confidence to 'have a go'. Pupils with special talents make good progress because of additional experiences provided.
- Pupils say that they enjoy the subject and this is evidenced in their good behaviour and their exemplary attitudes. They particularly enjoy the collaborative experiences they have when they work with visiting artists and are proud of the interesting displays of their work that adorn the school and which they showcase regularly to the local community.

Quality of teaching in art, craft and design

The quality of teaching in art, craft and design is satisfactory with good aspects.

- Consistent strengths are teachers' enthusiasm and very good relationships engendered between themselves and their pupils. As a result, pupils display confidence and enthusiasm when experimenting and exploring the range of materials provided, particularly two-dimensional media. Less teaching is focused on pupils' learning about three-dimensional concepts.
- Lessons are planned effectively; learning objectives are clear and regularly referred to. Teachers use a suitable range of artefacts, demonstration and technologies, such as interactive whiteboards to explore images and artists' work to broaden pupils' understanding of artists or techniques and to help make lessons interesting.
- Skills are carefully taught, particularly pupils' drawing skills, which are honed effectively through a range of experiences from memory, imagination and direct observation.
- Teachers' regular oral feedback in lessons celebrates pupils' achievements and helps them to consider the qualities of their work. As they move through school, pupils become increasingly adept at evaluating their own work and that of their peers. Until recently, opportunities to challenge all pupils fully, by adapting tasks to meet their individual starting points, have been limited.
- Regular, formal assessments of pupils' work are enabling teachers to more accurately plan pupils' next steps and consequently help pupils to better understand how well they are doing and what to do to improve further.
- From Year 3, all pupils are provided with sketchbooks but they are not always used regularly or effectively enough.

Quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design

The quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design is good.

- The subject has a high profile within the creative curriculum and is embedded within half termly topics; some specifically art and craft-led. This helps to make the subject relevant to pupils and to their understanding of its place in history, culture and the creative economy.
- The curriculum is enriched successfully by the use of experts within school and visitors, including from the Forge, a local arts organisation. Artists work alongside staff, helping teachers to develop their skills and confidence further.
- Planned visits to a satisfactory range of local galleries and museums over the year and half-termly 'Smart Clubs', where pupils can develop their artistic skills and talents in a less formal way, enrich the subject further.
- Training opportunities for teachers have led to good use of information and communication technology in the subject. Pupils talk enthusiastically

about their animation and other artwork developed on computers and their developing photography and filming skills.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in art, craft and design

The effectiveness of leadership and management in art, craft and design is satisfactory with emerging strengths.

- As subject coordinator, you spread your enthusiasm successfully across the staff and pupils and lead by example. You are well supported by the deputy headteacher in the shared drive to improve the subject further.
- Since your recent return from leave you have quickly identified the subject's strengths, are already tackling identified improvement areas and are proactive in providing professional development opportunities for colleagues by coaching and supporting less confident staff.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are regular, through lesson observations, scrutiny of planning and review of pupils' achievements.
- Detailed progression guidance and more formal assessment processes have recently been developed; helping teachers to better meet pupils' individual starting points in lessons and to monitor their progress. Actions are too new to have had an impact on pupils' achievements by the end of Year 6.
- You constantly seek out ways to broaden pupils' experiences. For example, by developing art links with a partner school, keeping informed about current practice through networks with art professionals regionally, and partnership with a local secondary school's art department.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- providing more opportunities in lessons, for pupils to experiment with three-dimensional media and explore three-dimensional concepts
- embedding the recently developed assessment processes across the school
- developing a more effective and consistent use of sketchbooks across the school.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop art, craft and design in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Farrow
Her Majesty's Inspector