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Miss Susan Halliday
Meanwood Community Nursery and
Primary School
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Dear Miss Halliday

Ofsted 2010–11 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 9 November 2010 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons, including one in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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

Achievement in art, craft and design

Pupils' achievement in art, craft and design is satisfactory.

- From below average starting points, children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because of the wide range of interesting activities and learning opportunities that promote their creative, personal development and independence skills well.
- Improvements in provision for creative development over the last three years have meant that by the end of Reception most children are now working securely within the early learning goals.
- Pupils make steady progress through Key Stages 1 and 2 and achievements are generally in line with national expectations. The achievements of pupils attending the fine art after-school club are often good.

- The pace of pupils' progress has increased since summer 2010 as a result of developments in assessment and the curriculum; but these have yet to have a full impact in terms of better achievements for pupils overall.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good. They express their ideas confidently and work equally well independently or collaboratively with an appropriate variety of tools and materials.
- All pupils' achievements in art, craft and design are celebrated, as evidenced in the diverse and interesting range of displays around the school. However, pupils say that they would like more opportunities to display their achievements to a wider audience, as artists would.

Quality of teaching of art, craft and design

The quality of teaching of art, craft and design is satisfactory

- Subject teaching is improving because of the school's prioritisation of the creative arts across the curriculum and the continuing professional development of teachers through close working with a 'Creative Partnership'.
- Teachers are enthusiastic about their subject and have worked hard to develop their own skills, knowledge and understanding. Lessons are well prepared and resources are deployed effectively. Although all pupils plan and develop their ideas on paper or through discussion, they are not always taught how to use sketchbooks to develop their ideas and practise skills.
- Teachers' continual oral feedback helps pupils to reflect on how well they are doing and the next steps that they may wish to take. Pupils speak proudly about how they use the 'compliment sandwich' when assessing the art of their peers: providing an improvement point in between two positive comments.
- The use of pupil interviews provides an additional, clear view of pupils' perceptions of their achievements and what they could improve. However, written assessment of pupils' work is just developing. This has hindered faster progress by pupils in lessons because until recently work has not always been pitched at the individual starting points of all pupils.

Quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design

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

- Pupils learn to manipulate an appropriate range of materials, media and tools. They experience working in two and three dimensions and are adept at utilising information and communication technology to develop their ideas and present their work, such as their work in the style of Picasso. The school is aware that more opportunities to develop pupils' three-dimensional work would enrich the subject further.
- The curriculum is planned to build pupils' knowledge and skills progressively in most respects and there is a range of opportunities to develop their satisfactory drawing skills from imagination, memory and observation.
- Teachers' use of the creative arts such as drama, role play and music in the wider curriculum is successfully helping to fire pupils' imaginations. This is

impacting positively on their sustained interest in, and enjoyment of, their art work.

- Therapeutic art sessions are used particularly well to engage and interest some of the most vulnerable pupils and in helping to build their confidence and self-esteem.
- The subject is enriched effectively through after-school clubs and the range of opportunities for pupils to work with local artists and craftworkers through the Creative Partnership initiative. Pupils recall these experiences with great enthusiasm and say that they would like more opportunities to showcase their work in the wider community.

Effectiveness of leadership and management of art, craft and design

The leadership and management of art, craft and design are satisfactory.

- The subject is valued highly and is an integral part of the recent drive to embed the creative arts across the school. During the substantive coordinators' maternity leave the acting coordinator has quickly gained the skills, knowledge and understanding to ensure that the subject continues to develop in order to raise pupils' achievement and enjoyment.
- The coordinator has an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement through monitoring of planning, teaching, pupil interviews and regular work scrutiny. However monitoring is not yet focused fully on how well all teachers are using pupils' individual starting points in lessons to ensure that all make the best possible progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- Raising achievement in art, craft and design further by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work in three dimensions
 - developing the use of sketch books
 - refining assessment procedures to ensure that all teachers use pupils' prior learning in lessons
- Seeking ways to display pupils' achievements in the wider community.

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

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Farrow
Her Majesty's Inspector