

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



4 February 2011

Mrs A Reed  
Headteacher  
Withington CofE Primary School  
High Street  
Withington  
Cheltenham  
GL54 4BQ

Dear Mrs Reed

### **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 3 February 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, other staff, pupils and some parents and carers, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of all pupils in lessons.

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.

- In this very small village primary school, with between two and six pupils in each year group, pupils' attainment is extremely wide-ranging on entry. Their attainment, rightly, is recorded individually. Work seen in lessons and in portfolios of past pupils' work indicates that standards are broadly in line with expectations nationally.
- Good provision in pre-school ensures that from the age of two years, children develop their creativity through meaningful play. In the rest of the school, pupils in both classes make at least satisfactory progress and some, especially the older pupils, make good progress. Their work shows sufficient progression over time. Achievement is satisfactory overall.

- The pupils behave well and the school's promotion of independence and organisational skills shines through in art and design activities. They work in cooperation with each other from pre-school through to Year 6, sharing resources and offering each other encouragement.
- The older pupils show significant interest in the subject and are keen to express their thoughts and feelings about their own and others' work. They do not, however, use subject specific vocabulary routinely even though this is modelled by staff well.
- Pupils' drawing skills are underdeveloped because they do not practise regularly enough and use their sketchbooks to promote experimentation and to develop their drawing and critical skills.
- The pupils have a satisfactory understanding of artists' work that influences their own work but this is limited to White European painters from different times and countries.

### **Quality of teaching of art, craft and design**

The quality of teaching of art, craft and design is satisfactory with some significant strengths.

- Teachers' planning and organisation are good. They are underpinned by robust systems for assessing and recording individual pupils' attainment and progress in relation to the development matters and early learning goals for creative development in the Early Years Foundation Stage and from Key Stage 1, National Curriculum targets for art and design.
- Pupils are guided to self-assess in lessons but are not always provided with sufficient guidance on steps to success to measure it accurately.
- In their teaching, staff demonstrate sufficient subject knowledge and use examples appropriately to help pupils to know what is expected.
- Pupils are encouraged to experiment and trial ideas. As a result they work productively and with sustained interest.
- Relationships are strong and behaviour is managed appropriately. Some teaching seen demonstrated extremely sensitive yet firm behaviour management.
- Lessons are strongly inclusive. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported very effectively to ensure that they have full access to activities and secure success.

### **Quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design**

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

- All pupils benefit from a range of first-hand experiences of original art, craft and design through day visits, residential trips and visiting artists.

- Parents and carers are complimentary of the range of experiences that their children participate in and the willingness of staff to 'go the extra mile' in organising and providing extra-curricular art activities.
- The curriculum is monitored extremely diligently to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement, coverage is secured and new techniques are introduced at regular intervals. This is particularly important given the four-yearly rotating cycle of whole-school themes that the school has developed to accommodate as many as four year groups in one class.
- Pupils' art makes a valuable contribution in the local community through exhibitions of work in the church and the village hall that are admired by local residents.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management of art, craft and design**

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

- Following the subject leader's recent promotion to another school, you have put secure interim plans in place to ensure that the requirements of the subject curriculum continue to be met.
- You know where the best practice exists because you work so closely with teaching staff throughout the week and observation of their work is ongoing. This places you in a prime position to offer support and guidance as required.
- You utilise the skills and interests of others within the school to promote the subject effectively. Non-teaching staff contribute strongly to the learning process through the good support they offer.
- Resources are used well and spaces in the school are used flexibly so that pupils are able to work on larger scales.
- Links with other schools, art galleries or people in the community with skills and interests in the subject are relatively underdeveloped.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- Raising attainment from average to above average by:
  - developing pupils' use of sketchbooks, especially for drawing
  - extending their knowledge of artists, designers and craftworkers from different times, cultures, continents and genders
  - developing links with specialists to share their particular skills and subject expertise with staff and pupils.

I hope 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 published on the Ofsted website. It may also inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in

the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Linda Killman**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**