

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)



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Mrs L Wylam  
Associate Headteacher  
Brinsworth Manor Junior School  
Brinsworth Lane  
Brinsworth  
Rotherham  
S60 5BX

Dear Mrs Wylam

### **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 13 and 14 March 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: observation of five lessons; interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; and analysis of pupils' work.

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

#### **Achievement in art, craft and design**

Achievement in art, craft and design is good.

- From generally below average abilities on entry into Year 3, pupils make good progress and attain standards at least in line with expectations by the time they leave in Year 6; some attain highly.
- Pupils quickly learn to draw from observation of a wealth of natural and made objects, in school and in contrasting local and regional environments. They develop good observational drawing skills and become particularly adept at confidently expressing their ideas in pen and ink.
- As pupils move through school, they successfully develop skills and achieve well using a wide range of materials and media, such as textiles, charcoal pastels and a variety of paints; as seen in the delightful and

varied watercolour rural landscapes that Year 6 pupils completed following their visit to Castleton.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are successfully supported and encouraged by teachers and well-trained, well-deployed teaching assistants. This adds greatly to their stated enjoyment of, and achievements in the subject.

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

The quality of teaching of art, craft and design is good.

- Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Their enthusiasm is infectious and pupils thrive in an atmosphere of trust and fun. All lessons are characterised by very good relationships and pupils' outstanding behaviour.
- Lessons are carefully prepared. Subject skills and knowledge are meticulously taught through teachers' good use of questioning and demonstration of techniques and styles. Such strategies aid pupils' understanding and help them to move on quickly in their learning.
- Occasionally, lessons are too teacher-led, with similar expected end points, or a limited range of decisions or choices for pupils to make. When this happens, although pupils enjoy their work and make good progress, it limits opportunities to develop their creativity and independence skills fully.
- Teachers' ongoing oral assessment of pupils' progress in lessons is good, enabling pupils to reflect on the strengths of their work and consider how to improve it. Teachers formally assess pupils' work each half-term but not all teachers make sure that future lessons take full account of this information.

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

The quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design is good with an outstanding range of opportunities provided for pupils to develop their observational skills.

- Lesson observations, portfolios of pupils' work, work on display in classrooms and corridors and photographs show the wide array of opportunities that pupils have to work successfully in two, and increasingly in three dimensions.
- The subject coordinator's regular evaluation of the curriculum ensures that any gaps in pupils' skills or experiences are identified and tackled quickly.
- Pupils talk enthusiastically about their views on the work of the wide range of artists they study such as Seurat, Van Gogh and Holbein. They say that they like opportunities to develop their ideas through computer-based art packages but some say that they would like an even wider range.
- Work with a local Creative Partnership has provided pupils with good opportunities to explore art, craft and design for prolonged periods. They

are currently working on an innovative project with local artists and film-makers, developing large-scale works to enrich the school grounds and provide a vibrant welcome to infant pupils on their transition into junior school.

- All pupils benefit from involvement in the annual 'Picture This', National Gallery project. They report proudly about pupils in the school who have displayed their achievements at the regional Magna exhibition space where the pupils, the public and staff from the National Gallery attend.

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

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

- The subject coordinator's outstanding commitment to the subject, strong specialist knowledge and enthusiasm are helping to continually raise achievement and pupils' enjoyment.
- She shares her enthusiasm successfully and provides very good support, training and coaching to other staff, especially newly qualified teachers and teaching assistants.
- Subject evaluation is effective and the coordinator has a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject; developing clear action plans for the few areas that need improvement.
- The coordinator monitors the quality and impact of the subject through observation of pupils' work and achievements, discussions with staff and evaluation of the curriculum against the National Curriculum programmes of study. Plans are in place to monitor teaching and check the impact of teachers' use of assessment to provide added rigour.

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

- ensuring that all pupils have opportunities to develop open-ended responses to similar starting points
- enabling pupils to develop their ideas, skills and knowledge with a wider range of computer software
- ensuring that the regular assessment of pupils' work is used by all teachers in lessons so that all pupils can make the best possible progress from their individual starting points.

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 published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to 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

**Margaret Farrow**

**Her Majesty's Inspector**