

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



13 April 2011

Mrs E Young
Headteacher
Studley High School
Crooks Lane
Studley
B80 7QX

Dear Mrs Young

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 4 and 5 April 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 schools will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of five lessons, including one jointly observed.

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

Achievement in art, craft and design

Students' achievement in art, craft and design is satisfactory with good features.

- In Years 7 to 9, students make good progress in developing their subject knowledge, understanding and skills, in predominantly two-dimensional media. Most students express interest, particularly in practical activities.
- An above average proportion of boys and girls choose to take a GCSE in the subject. Girls consistently achieve results above the national average. However, in 2009 and 2010, boys' results were significantly below average.
- Boys and girls develop their confidence and creativity through drawing. They enjoy exploring a range of graphic media, which has a positive impact on the quality of sketchbook and mixed-media work.

- The use of three-dimensional and digital media is less well developed. Students' knowledge and understanding of craftworkers and designers are limited. However, they learn about a good range of artists.
- Students' strengths often lie in large-scale work that combines observation with imagination. Levels of independence vary widely, sometimes connected to uncertainty about individual strengths to exploit.

Quality of teaching of art, craft and design

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

- Learning environments created by staff include visually stimulating use of images created by artists and students, and resources that promote their curiosity. However, students' interaction could be invited more in lessons.
- Staff make direct use of the work of other students to raise aspirations. A Year 10 lesson observed benefited from a group of Year 11 students who shared their achievements and experience of responding to examinations.
- Lesson plans indicate that information about individual students is accessible. However, assessments are not always used to differentiate activities, or students' responses used to adapt the lesson planned.
- Advice shared collectively and improvements suggested individually are generally managed well, including the use of marking. Grades, marking and students' self-assessment are not currently integrated together.
- Practical activities are managed satisfactorily, particularly when following a teacher's well-prepared demonstration. Long introductions sometimes leave too little time for students to veer far from their shared starting points.

Quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design

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

- The curriculum provides students with a good range of topics covering the 'universal themes' in art, linked to the past and present, the local and multicultural, the real and imagined. Medium-term planning is a strength.
- Between Years 7 to 10, progression in developing students' subject knowledge, understanding and skills is promoted across two-dimensional media but digital and three-dimensional media are used infrequently.
- The range of accreditation available is currently limited to one GCSE option. However, vocational links are made through visiting practitioners, for example a photographer, linked to a focus on community.
- Currently, no visits to art galleries are incorporated into the curriculum. However, a gallery space within the school has recently developed which enables all students to appreciate work at first-hand.

- Cross-curricular links are made, but are not always explicit to the students. For example, work on 'feelings' explored through a personal development focus could be more clearly related to their art work about 'identity'.

Effectiveness of leadership and management of art, craft and design

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

- Following recent curriculum reorganisation, collaboration across the arts is at an early stage of development. However, staff in leadership roles are enthusiastic about sharing approaches and addressing issues together, where appropriate.
- The management of stimulus resources is a real strength. However, equipment available in school is not always maximised, such as the kiln or computer equipment accessible in other parts of the school.
- Subject documentation is expressed clearly, providing a good basis for further development. Appropriate priorities are identified. Improvement plans do not identify milestones or measures of success clearly enough.
- Subject self-evaluation is adequate. However, where particular projects have had a demonstrable impact on standards, for example visiting artists, analysis and actions have not embedded their impact in the long term.
- The subject has a good presence in the school, evident in displays of students' work in public areas. Subject staff are aware that achievements by different groups of students need to be promoted more consciously.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising students' attainment in the subject, particularly boys, by:
 - regularly using three-dimensional and digital media as students progress through the school
 - increasing opportunities for students to diversify and make choices, promoting their independence and creativity
 - using assessment information to challenge underachievement and inform individual students about the strengths on which to build
- supporting students in making links with other subjects by:
 - applying students' learning in other lessons, for example using their work in English to improve their annotation
 - increasing the use of direct experience and stimuli, for example, ideas and feelings developed through other art forms
 - developing the school gallery to share subject principles and practice, and to promote gallery visits outside school.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop art, craft and design education at 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Ian Middleton
Her Majesty's Inspector