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Mrs M Naylor
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Naylor

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 17 May 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: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work and observation of four 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

Achievement in art, craft and design is satisfactory.

- From below average abilities on entry into Reception class, children make good progress in their creative development. They learn to confidently express their ideas and manipulate tools and materials, which they often choose for themselves, for example, when deciding to paint or print their 'jungle animals' or creating their paintings on the computer.
- Pupils progress satisfactorily as they move through school and they leave Year 6 with achievements similar to those expected for their age. Recent improvements to the subject are hastening progress but have yet to make a difference to pupils' achievements by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils' photography skills are good and they have many opportunities to hone their expertise and creativity. High-quality publications celebrate

their achievements. Opportunities to develop ideas, drawing and design skills through the use of sketch books are more limited.

Quality of teaching in art, craft and design

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

- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good because of teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and positive relationships engendered by them. Sound teacher knowledge and use of stimuli like photographs or interactive whiteboards help to maintain pupils' interest in their work.
- Teachers' planning ensures that lessons provide suitable coverage of the curriculum and link effectively to other subjects. Skills and techniques are taught carefully, providing a secure grounding for pupils in the subject.
- Teachers generally use similar starting points in lessons but pupils have few opportunities to develop diverse outcomes from such starting points. Consequently, pupils' abilities to experiment, develop their creative and independence skills, or take risks are limited.
- Teachers' regular oral feedback, constant support in lessons, pupils' own evaluations and peer-evaluations help them to understand how well they are doing informally. Formal assessment of pupils' work is developing but this information is not always used well enough by teachers to make sure pupils' individual skills and knowledge are always built on progressively.

Quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design

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

- The developing creative curriculum is adding to pupils' stated enjoyment and to their achievements in the subject. A good range of activities is embedded in cross-curricular topics, particularly those involving working in two dimensions. In Key Stage 1 and 2, opportunities to work in three dimensions are more limited.
- The subject is enriched successfully through many visits out of school and visitors to school. This stimulates pupils' interest in the arts and provides them with opportunities to work alongside craftworkers and artists such as those from the Drumcroon gallery or the local specialist art school.
- Pupils talk proudly about their collaborative work with local artists such as their large-scale Heritage Trail paintings, now displayed in the local Infirmary and the long mural which has pride of place in the school hall.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in art, craft and design

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

- You and your team of senior leaders have maintained a successful focus on developing the subject during the lengthy absence of the coordinator.

Accurate self-evaluation has ensured that you all know the areas that are going well and what could be better.

- Collectively you have already tackled some issues. For example, ensuring all aspects of the programmes of study for the subject are fully integrated into teachers' planning and lesson delivery. Action plans are in place to tackle areas identified for further improvement.
- Professional development opportunities ensure that staff have a sound skill-base. Working alongside visiting professionals helps to up-skill staff and give them confidence to teach aspects of the subject with which they have previously been unfamiliar. The recent 'Take one Picture' training, held at the National Gallery in London, has provided an added stimulus and focus for future developments in the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- hastening pupils' achievements in the subject by:
 - ensuring that teachers always use the assessment information they have about pupils' skills and abilities to plan lessons that ensure that these are built on progressively and stretch them to achieve their best
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to develop ideas, practise skills and reflect on their work through the use of sketchbooks
 - providing more opportunities for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 to work in three dimensions.

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