

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)



11 July 2011

Mrs J Blacoe  
Headteacher  
Horsforth Newlaithes Junior School  
Victoria Crescent  
Horsforth  
Leeds  
LS18 4PT

Dear Mrs Blacoe

### **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 29 June 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 three lessons.

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 broadly average skills and abilities on entry into Key Stage 2, pupils achieve well and make good progress. By the time they leave Year 6, their achievements are at least average and often above.
- Pupils explore and manipulate materials and develop their creativity successfully in a range of two- and three-dimensional media. They use their sketchbooks well, to practice skills, develop ideas and refine their work. However, some pupils say they would like even more experience of clay.
- Pupils' drawing skills are particularly well developed because of the many planned opportunities they have to hone them in different contexts and for

different purposes. For example, in their collaborative work for their 'Big Draw' project, or in their literacy and design and technology work.

- Pupils' behaviour and personal qualities are excellent. Leaders' successful focus on developing pupils' self-esteem and confidence through the arts adds to their good achievements in the subject and their highly developed communication and team-working skills in art, craft and design lessons.
- Such an approach, together with sensitive support from adults in class, helps pupils who may have had past difficulties with aspects of the subject to successfully overcome their barriers and to enjoy and achieve equally well, from their individual starting points.

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

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

- Staff are highly motivated and have enthusiastically embraced the increased focus on art, craft and design within the whole-school curriculum.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well to take account of pupils' previous achievements and interests. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils contribute successfully to pupils' enthusiasm and willingness to take an active part in lessons; whether working on their own, in pairs or on class projects like their rain forest mosaics.
- Teachers make good use of the higher level teaching assistant's skills. As a visual artist, she successfully brings her expertise and different ways of doing things to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and deeper understanding of techniques and potential qualities of different materials.
- Teachers' regular use of 'key questions' or 'question bubbles' for pupils to discuss and consider in all art lessons adds substantially to their accomplished skills of self-review and peer-assessment. These skills, together with teachers' ongoing oral assessment of their work in lessons and regular assessment of pupils' work, helps them to understand how well they are doing and to consider how to improve or refine their work.

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

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

- The subject has developed well recently, with art and craft themes that link to other subject areas. Pupils say they enjoy the subject because they are involved in developing the themes; thus capturing their own interests which helps to sustain their very positive and mature attitudes in lessons.
- There is good coverage of different types of work such as landscape, portraiture, three-dimensional works and an increasingly successful use of digital media, including animation and the use of digital photography.
- The subject is enriched well by after-school clubs, homework projects and art weeks. Pupils say they particularly enjoy extended opportunities to

work on art such as the 'Big Draw' week, where they worked together to develop a huge 'Our Future' montage using a wide range of materials.

- The curriculum includes a range of opportunities to work in the school grounds and local area. Visits out of school are many but not all fully capitalise on the art and craft opportunities available.
- Leaders make satisfactory use of local artists and craftworkers and have plans in place to extend links further. Links with 'Groundwork Leeds' are good and add a practical, environmental dimension to pupils' work. For example, their recent work making charcoal, then using it for their observational drawings in the school grounds.

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

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

- Art, craft and design is afforded a high status and, alongside other creative arts, is at the forefront of the developing curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the subject by the coordinator are good and include regular scrutiny of teachers' planning, lesson observations, discussions with pupils and review of teachers' regular formal assessments.
- The subject coordinator constantly strives to develop the subject by using evaluation to inform improvement planning. For example, he is aware that the range of visits out of school could be broadened to include more local galleries and craftworkers and has plans to tackle this.
- To develop teachers' confidence and skills, the coordinator provides, or procures, in-service training and disseminates the good practice in school or within the wider family of local schools, with whom he regularly liaises.
- He keeps up to date with developments in the subject by networking with other local coordinators and securing the involvement of arts and crafts organisations such as 'Artforms' to share their expertise and innovative approaches.

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

- increasing pupils' experience and progression in using clay
- extending opportunities for pupils to develop their art, craft and design work during visits out of school, including work with contemporary artists and craft workers.

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**