

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



5 October 2011

Mrs D Wheeler
Headteacher
Minster In Sheppey Primary School
Brecon Chase
Sheerness
Kent
ME12 2HX

Dear Mrs Wheeler

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 15 September 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 eight lessons.

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

Achievement in art, craft and design

Pupils' achievement in art, craft and design is good.

- The children's overall creative development is below that expected on entry to the Reception year. Boys and girls make a good start, enjoying creative activities so that their creative development starts to catch up with their peers nationally when they join Year 1.
- Between Years 1 and 6, progress continues to be good so that attainment is average by the time pupils leave the school. Here too both boys and girls enjoy the subject, behave well in lessons and most work hard.
- Pupils make good progress in exploring the properties of materials and processes. For example, when Year 6 pupils compared pastels with chalk

and watercolour pencils during work linked to William Morris, and when Year 2 pupils used a range of mixed media in work based on Arcimbaldo.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge of other creative practitioners' work. They adapt what they see well to support their own creativity, but the range of work to which they are exposed is relatively narrow.
- Good progress is made by pupils in learning to evaluate and refine their learning. In most lessons, they understand the purpose of their activities and the features of good work so as to guide their decisions. However, this is not always the case and in some lessons pupils are not able to take enough responsibility for developing their own individual responses.

Quality of teaching of art, craft and design

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

- Teachers and other staff work hard to prepare lessons. They are unafraid to encourage potentially messy work because work routines are secure and pupils tidy away well. Lessons seen often included interesting objects to work from and innovative materials to work with such as painting with sticks, twigs and sponges.
- Activities are managed efficiently by staff, with good use of time and resources. Discussion is rightly a key aspect of lessons, helping address the weak speaking and listening skills of a significant number of pupils.
- Display is used well in classrooms, and most other areas of the school, to support learning. For example, to remind pupils about other artists' work.
- The majority of lessons include good introductions to practical activities and/or the work of other creative practitioners, make good provision for pupils of differing ability and involve staff in assessing progress with pupils so as to identify the next steps toward clear goals. Weaker evidence of these features typifies the minority of lessons which are only satisfactory and in which pupils are less able to move their work forward.

Quality of the curriculum in art, craft and design

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

- In the Reception class, pupils are introduced to a wide range of techniques and processes in two and three dimensions. The latter has been broadened over the last year and has enabled boys to engage more fully.
- Older pupils have a wide range of opportunities to use two-dimensional processes ensuring good progression in painting and collage. They enjoy working in three dimensions but their experiences here are not as systematically mapped to ensure good progress and coverage of different approaches, including in craft and design disciplines.
- Pupils regularly encounter the work of other creative practitioners, which reinforces the importance of referring to others. However, they see too

little work by contemporary practitioners, or work at first hand, to give them a comprehensive understanding of a range of approaches.

- The school is well focused on improving the links between the subject and other curriculum areas to foster pupils' creativity. This is work in progress but where pupils are offered powerful experiences which broaden their knowledge and understanding of the world, the potential is evident. For example, Year 5 pupils had very much enjoyed visiting the local beach as stimulus for painting connected to a project about their area.
- There are some opportunities for pupils to attend extra club sessions but these are not planned well enough to allow all pupils easy access and the opportunity to develop their own work more fully.

Effectiveness of leadership and management of art, craft and design

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

- The two subject leaders are committed to moving the subject forward and work well as a team so that the subject is valued in the school.
- They adopt a good range of monitoring strategies, including work and planning scrutiny, and discussions with staff and pupils. The evidence collected gives subject leaders a good understanding of what needs improving. They have made a good impact in crucial areas, for example in building a system to monitor pupils' progress over time, broadening the Reception class curriculum and supporting colleagues in planning projects.
- Strategic development plans are regularly updated and include ambitious goals for achievement. However, there are too few opportunities for subject leaders to observe lessons so as to ensure the further improvements in teaching required to meet these aspirations.
- The subject leaders are keen to look outside the school for support and good use is being made by one of them of their higher degree programme. Some opportunities are missed to make the most of subject networks, especially of locally based creative practitioners, so as to broaden pupils' curriculum experiences.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving the impact of lesson monitoring so that all lessons:
 - involve confident teaching of skills and contextual reference to other creative practitioners' work
 - include activities matched closely to different pupils' needs and ensure pupils know how to move their work forward
- broadening the curriculum to include more comprehensive three-dimensional work, including in craft and design processes, more reference to contemporary practice and wider access to extra-curricular clubs.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop art, craft and design in the school.

As 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

Stephen Long
Her Majesty's Inspector