

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)



16 February 2012

Mr M Leeming  
Headteacher  
Crofton School  
Marks Road  
Stubbington  
Fareham  
PO14 2AT

Dear Mr Leeming

### **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 8 and 9 February 2012 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 students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of 10 lessons, including joint observations with the subject leader and members of the senior leadership team.

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 average attainment on entry students make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 3 so their overall attainment is in line with that expected by the end of Year 9. They apply themselves well in lessons and most enjoy the subject.
- In these first three years students develop good skills in handling materials including for drawing, painting and mixed-media. They make satisfactory progress in learning how to analyse work by other creative practitioners. Students seek to evaluate and refine their ideas but their success in doing so varies between classes due to inconsistent teaching. In some lessons they know what they are trying to achieve and develop their work

effectively, while in others they do not understand the features of high-quality work well enough to move their learning forward independently.

- In Key Stage 4, students make good progress on the GCSE course offered. The numbers opting are slightly above national averages among girls but in line with the average among boys. Students explore interesting ideas in response to project starting points and often explore these sensitively so that examination results are usually above average.
- GCSE students conduct effective visual research, drawing from observation and collecting reference material such as photographs. They typically analyse other creative practitioners' work well to support of their own practice. Occasionally they do not analyse what they see deeply enough, making pastiches of it, rather than using it to inform their own work.

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

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

- Teachers are passionate about the subject and have good specialist knowledge which they use well to plan projects, demonstrate technique and when working with individual students to discuss their ideas.
- Relationships between teachers and students are positive and behaviour is well managed so lessons have a good atmosphere for learning. Teachers offer extra sessions after school and in breaks, which students appreciate.
- Teachers structure lessons well, with a good balance between time for discussion and for practical tasks. They manage resources, including interactive whiteboards, effectively.
- In the lessons where initial and ongoing discussion clarifies the learning objectives and the features of high-quality work, progress is good. This is regularly seen in Key Stage 4 but is inconsistent in Key Stage 3, explaining students' slower progress. Notably, teachers' questioning does not always test or extend students' understanding of how to reach their targets.
- Students' progress over time is monitored carefully. Students like getting regular evidence about their overall progress. This good awareness of each student's attainment supports teaching well at Key Stage 4, where many lessons include detailed one-to-one work. However, the information is not exploited fully in adapting teaching in Key Stage 3, for example by ensuring that more able students attempt more challenging work.
- Sketchbooks are well established and valued by students. They appreciate teachers' regular marking and feedback but do not always respond to it sufficiently. Self- and peer-assessment are used regularly. There is some high-quality reflection, alongside some which is too superficial to be useful.

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

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

- Students receive good experience in a range of two-dimensional processes involving fine-art and design disciplines and explore visual language such as line, colour and tone. They have some opportunities to work three dimensionally, for example with clay, but too few opportunities overall to explore craft-based approaches to creativity.
- A Key Stage 3 enrichment course gives some students access to photography but digital technology as a creative medium is underrepresented in the curriculum overall.
- During Key Stage 3, there is satisfactory flexibility for students to explore their individual ideas in response to projects. This expands markedly in Key Stage 4 with students able to develop more diverse outcomes.
- Most students enjoy the project themes studied. Girls opt for the subject in good numbers at Key Stage 4. Some sensible steps have been taken to encourage the boys, such as using clay in Key Stage 3, but these have yet to raise the numbers of boys taking the subject at Key Stage 4.
- Satisfactory links are made with other curriculum areas, for example a Year 7 Mardi Gras project where students also work in music, drama and design technology. Students respond well to these. Opportunities are missed in lessons to develop students' skills in literacy and numeracy.
- Students are regularly introduced to work by other creative practitioners, including good representation of varied times, cultures and genres. While some gallery visits have taken place, students have little direct experience of work by creative practitioners, or of such people at work, to deepen their understanding of creative processes.

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

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

- Subject leadership is strongly committed to improving provision and has made a positive impact by sustaining good achievement at Key Stage 4, and in developing effective systems for monitoring students' progress.
- Priorities for subject development are accurate overall and include an emphasis on improving teaching. The success criteria indicated in plans are sharp and measurable in some cases, but are insufficiently clear in others to ensure that development work is clearly targeted.
- A good range of monitoring and subject evaluation activity includes work scrutiny, lesson observation and analysis of monitoring data about students' progress. However, these strategies are not always focused well enough on the specific aspects of provision requiring improvement. For example, lesson observations sometimes give too little weight to the progress made by teachers on previously set action points.

- Satisfactory steps are taken to make links with subject networks beyond the school. The subject leader hosts meetings for heads of art, craft and design departments in local secondary schools. Links with local galleries and museums are not exploited fully to enrich students' learning through visits.

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

- improving the consistency of teaching, particularly in Key Stage 3 so that in all lessons:
  - students fully understand the steps required to achieve high-quality work and hit their targets, and that teachers use questioning to check this fully
  - activities are adapted to meet students' varying needs
  - students are asked to respond to teachers' marking and supported in perceptive self-evaluation about how to develop their work
- broadening students' curriculum opportunities to include:
  - more experience of craft-based disciplines and the use of digital technology as a creative medium
  - direct experience of the work of creative practitioners and of such people at work, including by linking with local galleries and artists organisations
- increasing the impact of subject leadership by sharpening success criteria in strategic planning and the focus of monitoring activities so that initiatives to improve provision are well directed and their impact effectively checked.

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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Stephen Long**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**