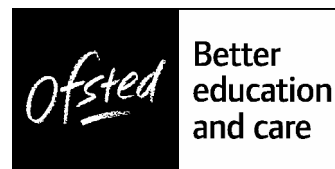


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Dr Janet Davies  
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Dear Dr Davies

Ofsted survey inspection programme – art, craft and design

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 7 February 2007 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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term. The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of art, craft and design was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- In the Reception class, attainment is average overall but good in some areas, for example colour mixing and control of drawing tools. Children respond enthusiastically to both observational and imaginative stimuli.
- Between Years 1 and 6 pupils continue to enjoy the subject. They make satisfactory progress, developing a reasonable understanding of the visual elements, such as pattern and tone, and focused knowledge of artists and designers. Pupils' sketchbooks show careful recording of project stages but indicate a relative weakness in evaluating their own work and defining ways to improve it.

## Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Teachers have sound subject knowledge overall. The planning of individual lessons is satisfactory although learning objectives are not always sharply focused enough to ensure key points are taught well.
- In lessons, teachers manage resources and pupils effectively so that tasks are completed. On occasions, the pace of learning, and pupils' own assessment of their progress, is inhibited because the purpose of tasks and features of successful work, are not explained clearly.
- Pupils receive regular and useful feedback and guidance from teachers about their progress. Their achievement over time is tracked and National Curriculum levels awarded, although the school rightly plans to improve the accuracy of this process through more moderation.

## Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is planned around nationally available materials but these are tailored to meet school needs. The subject is linked usefully to other areas to support learning, for example to science in Year 6.
- Pupils' learning is well structured over the long term so they encounter an appropriate range of materials and processes, as well as having the opportunity to work in two and three dimensions on different scales.
- The curriculum covers appropriate genres, such as still life, but would benefit from making more links with contemporary artists and designers to show how these genres are interpreted now.
- The opportunities for pupils to explore their own ideas, or respond individually to starting points, are too limited overall.

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- Leadership of the subject has recently transferred; good steps have been taken to ensure continuity and that the subject continues to be valued as a key element of pupils' learning.
- Monitoring and evaluation is satisfactory in identifying strengths and areas for improvement. It involves a well established annual scrutiny of work and planning alongside analysis of data on standards, although too little attention is paid to data concerning pupils' achievement, as opposed to the standards reached.
- Subject development plans show a reasonable, but not comprehensive, summary of areas identified for improvement. However, it is not always clear what action will be taken to address weaknesses or how the impact of actions taken will be measured.

Subject issue – the contribution of the subject to pupils' creative development

Pupils' creative development is satisfactory.

- Pupils explore materials and processes confidently within the parameters set by projects. Work shows divergence and ingenuity on this level. Teachers encourage pupils to be inventive and take risks.
- The curriculum supports the development of satisfactory skills, knowledge and understanding but offers pupils limited opportunities to apply these creatively in addressing themes of personal interest.
- The staff and pupils value creativity but have not defined it; this limits their capacity to plan for it or know if it is being developed.

Inclusion

All groups of pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with learning difficulties are suitably supported, including by teaching assistants. More able pupils are identified in art lessons and offered some more challenging tasks, but would benefit from a wider range of additional activities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving learning by ensuring teachers clarify the key qualities of successful work so that pupils can better assess their own progress
- developing pupils' independence by increasing opportunities to create work of personal interest to them
- clarifying the school's definition of creativity within the subject so it can be fostered and efforts to support it can be evaluated
- improving subject development planning by referring to a wider range of monitoring information, including data on achievement, and identifying clearer actions, the impact of which can be measured.

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

A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Long  
Her Majesty's Inspector