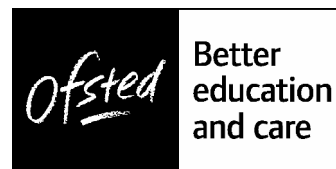


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Mrs Karen Brooks
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Dear Mrs Brooks

Ofsted Survey Inspection Programme – art, craft and design

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 28 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 contributing institutions, but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters are published on the Ofsted website every half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interview with you and the subject co-ordinator, discussions with groups of children, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's work and observation of lessons in Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 2.

Art, craft and design

The overall effectiveness of the subject was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall with good features.

- In the Foundation Stage pupils are able to express their imagination and observations through drawing, painting and printmaking on a variety of scale. In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils make good progress in their use of two-dimensional media; tonal work is a consistently good feature of their work. However, achievement is satisfactory overall because pupils show limited understanding about three-dimensional concepts or connections between their own work and that of other artists, craft makers or designers. Nevertheless, the

three-dimensional work achieved in art club is good. The interpretation of C20th art by Year 6 pupils is also effective.

- Pupils enjoy the subject. Their ability to listen carefully, respond to discussion thoughtfully by referring to examples and work co-operatively and carefully indicates good personal development. Some pupils expressed an interest in developing their skills further through directed homework. Sketchbooks are at an early stage of development across the school but pupils value the experiments and research stored in them. They also appreciate the displays of work around the school and use them for inspiration.

Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in art, craft and design are satisfactory overall.

- Teachers plan lessons effectively and prepare resources efficiently. All teachers introduce objectives to the pupils with clarity and enthusiasm. The best teaching challenges pupils by establishing how they could achieve excellence. Learning is accelerated where teachers give critical feedback to individual pupils about how to develop their skills either through classroom discussion or helpful comments attached to work. In these lessons the whole school focus on the effectiveness of assessment is evident.
- Where pupils are given opportunities to make choices the creative diversity of their work improves. However, this is an inconsistent feature because some teaching enables pupils to be too dependent upon templates. The most challenging learning reflects the most confident teaching. This is directly related to staff training which has focused on drawing skills and the creative use of digital media to good effect.

Quality of curriculum

The art, craft and design curriculum is satisfactory.

- Pupils are given an adequate range of opportunities to work in different media. Nevertheless, their depth of skills, knowledge and understanding is limited by too few planned opportunities to revisit previous experiences by developing work or by combining different media. Where progression is structured, for example through the regular opportunities for pupils to develop the tonal qualities of their work through mark making with drawing tools or colour mixing, the quality of their work is good.
- A wide range of themes is studied; different subjects provide a good context for several projects and pupils are introduced to art, craft and design created at different times and in different cultures. Work developed during 'art week' and with a visiting artist shows that pupils respond well to work on an ambitious scale and the opportunity to appreciate art and artists first hand. However few pupils have visited a public art gallery.

Leadership and management of art, craft and design

Leadership and management are satisfactory with good features.

- The subject co-ordinator has already made a positive impact in this recently acquired role. Clear understanding about the quality of provision has been developed through application for an 'Artsmark' award. A training session for staff focused on drawing has led to confident teaching, learning and good standards in this area. However, the need to monitor, evaluate and challenge quality and consistency across the full range of art, craft and design remains the next challenge.
- Subject policies and development planning provide an adequate basis for continuous improvement. Links with other schools in the 'Network Learning Community' provide good opportunities to moderate standards with other primary schools and with secondary school subject specialists in order to promote continuity and progression for individual pupils. Pupil tracking is currently focused on gifted and talented pupils in the subject. However, the subject co-ordinator is clearly focused on improving tracking for all pupils across different strands of the attainment target.

Inclusion

The subject makes satisfactory provision for different pupils. It is good where starting points as well as follow-up take full account of the range of ability in the subject. Working relationships between teachers and support staff are effective in supporting pupils with specific needs during lessons.

Subject issue: breadth, depth and creativity of provision and outcomes

Pupils are introduced to a broad range of media and art contexts. Depth is limited by too few opportunities to re-visit skills, knowledge and understanding. However, the 'art week' has demonstrated the value of sustained activity. There is evidence of pupils' creativity across the school but it is interspersed with prescriptive activities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- to develop the use of sketchbooks within the subject and across other subjects, linked to assessment of the different strands of the National Curriculum
- to promote progression by planning and providing opportunities for pupils to revisit and refine their subject skills, knowledge and understanding
- to increase opportunities for pupils to respond creatively to first hand experience of the work of living artists, craft makers and designers.

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

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Ian Middleton
Her Majesty's Inspector