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Mr D Priestley  
Headteacher  
Greenfield School Community and Arts College  
Greenfield Way  
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Dear Mr Priestley

Ofsted subject survey: identifying good practice in art and design

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 7 November 2007 to look at the impact of the gallery on pupils' learning and achievement.

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 made included: interviews with you; the head of Visual Arts; the Community Arts Coordinator; senior and middle managers with responsibility for the Arts specialism and liaison with museums, libraries and archives; the Creativity Steering Group; and observations of workshops led by visiting artists in both the Art and Design department and the gallery itself. I also observed after school sessions for pupils and CPD for staff.

Features of good practice observed:

- It is evident that the school takes pride in its specialist status and takes its responsibilities for leading developments locally and nationally very seriously. The entrepreneurial work of the school clearly exemplifies that vision; including cutting edge involvement with the Crafts and Arts Councils and with Creative Partnerships.
- The evidence presented during my visit showed this is also demonstrated by: the excellent Community Arts provision; work of the gallery; outreach programmes and networking with regional and national partners and Arts agencies; and in particular by the work within the Creative Partnerships

project on 'Creative skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century economy' and its links with local industry and business.

- Partnership working is, therefore, evidently a real strength.
- The senior management of the school has put in place very effective arrangements to manage both local and national partnerships related to its specialist role; including the senior and middle management networks to coordinate developments and liaison with outside partners.
- The Community Arts Centre and access to a gallery, dance and music studios, and performance facilities on site are key resources for the school's specialist work and are used and managed very well.
- Two key factors in this very effective management are the Community Arts Coordinator and her direct employment by the school, and the Creativity Strategy Group (CSG); both enabling more effective liaison, planning and use of resources and projects for the benefit of the school and its pupils.
- The curriculum provided by the school as part of its specialist status is outstanding. The breadth of opportunity provided by in-house Arts and gallery facilities are very effectively used; including additional art workshops, after school and extra-curricular opportunities; and by the key emphasis on enhanced and fast tracked access to examination courses in the Visual Arts as part of the innovative practice required by specialist status.
- It is clear from the evidence of artists' led workshops seen during my visit that key aspects of creative development (for example, pupils confidence to explore and experiment with media and processes; to imagine and re-imagine; and to take risks and think openly) are being well developed by both the Art and Design curriculum and the gallery experiences.
- It is apparent that the work on creativity is beginning to develop more integrated work between Visual and Performing Arts. The Creativity Steering Group and other staff are beginning to see the impact of the school's cross-cutting work on creative skills.
- Standards in Art and Design are high. Examination results are well above local and national averages. Achievement is very high. This is the result of the high expectations and associated fast tracking of pupils from year 9 onwards, resulting in good performance by the end of Year 11, including outstanding A levels results for pupils of this age. The development of pupils' creative abilities was also clearly evident in the work seen.
- The additional work by very hard working and dedicated Art and design staff are clearly crucial to this success and levels of achievement.

### Areas for development

Whilst my visit did not identify any specific weaknesses that require improvement, we did discuss in some detail a number of possibilities for further development as part of your cutting edge work as a specialist school. This included the following aspects of your work.

- Taking greater advantage of the opportunities provided by the CSG for a greater focus on evaluating and assessing creativity and creative development, and the impact of the school's work on pupils' personal development (linked ECM outcomes); and developing action research into cross curricular work and impact of gallery and Arts facilities.
- Greater focus on opportunities for reciprocal learning across the Visual and Performing Arts to intensify and embed experiences and ideas, and to utilise the power of the alternate art forms to express ideas and emotions.
- Given the resources in the school and its access to gallery based education, and as part of the Art and Design department's aspirations to enhance its provision further, the school might possibly consider a more Critical Studies based course for fast-tracked Year 9/Year 10 pupils?
- We also discussed the issue of the current constraints on display in the Art and Design department.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the work of the school.

I also hope that, as we discussed, if the possibility does arise for the school to undertake a visit to the Baltic Gallery in the spring term 2008, I might have the opportunity to join your staff and pupils.

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

Yours sincerely

Terry Holland  
Her Majesty's Inspector