

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



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Mr J Hassell  
Headteacher  
Glyne Gap School  
School Place  
Hastings Road  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
East Sussex  
TN40 2PU

Dear Mr Hassell

Ofsted aspect survey: good practice in creative learning

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 24 September 2008 to look at work in creative learning.

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: discussions with you and some of your staff, lesson observations, and scrutiny of relevant documentation. The visit was set in the context of the school's definition of creative learning modified to reflect the many, and complex, needs of the pupils.

Features of good practice observed

- Creative learning makes a significant impact on the achievement and personal development of pupils at the school. Despite some of the barriers to learning and motivation faced by all pupils, they have positive attitudes to learning.
- The quality of relationships is outstanding; pupils learn in an environment where independence and collaboration are fostered strongly. Pupils are encouraged to learn from their mistakes.
- The curriculum has been modified to meet the needs of individuals, to be stimulating, motivating and to foster the skills that pupils will need in the future; it makes excellent use of resources beyond the classroom. Expert use is made of technological devices and adapted materials to enable

pupils to participate fully in lessons and to access the breadth of the curriculum.

- Professional development for staff focuses closely on the 'craft' of teaching and the school is a centre for training others; many teaching assistants undertake professional development that enables them to make a valuable contribution to the life of the school and to the wider learning of the pupils.
- A rigorous approach to monitoring the quality of provision is focused on learning and on the small steps that pupils gain.
- Assessment is meticulous and includes assessment of 'personal autonomy' as a proxy for creative learning. The zigzag books are a delightful record of each pupil's learning journey captured through photographs and sharp, incisive annotations by teachers.
- Teachers have an exceptional knowledge and understanding of each pupil's needs so can tailor activities very precisely and set realistic but challenging goals. Planning shows the many ways in which teachers plan specifically to foster the characteristics of creativity in learning. Practical activities, in particular, are well conceived to motivate pupils, to make them think, to give them choice, and to provide different ways of communicating what they understand; the focus on 'thinking' is paramount in lessons.
- The strong leadership of senior staff and the commitment of all staff to a shared vision are the foundation of the school's success in meeting its own definition of creative learning. Creativity in learning underpins the aims and ethos of the school and is its *raison d'être*. This is truly a learning community where staff are highly reflective practitioners who are passionate about ensuring that learning will change the lives of the pupils.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the features of creative learning in the school.

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

Jane Wotherspoon  
Her Majesty's Inspector