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Mrs A Carter  
Headteacher  
Duloe CofE VA Primary School  
The Green  
Duloe  
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PL14 4PW

Dear Mrs Carter

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Creative Learning

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 13 October 2008 to look at creative learning.

As outlined in our initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on the ways in which you develop creative learning and the impact this is having on achievement and standards and on pupils' personal development.

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 all members of staff and several pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of all the activities taking place on your Creative Day.

The overall effectiveness of your school's development of creative learning was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards and personal development

Account is taken of two distinctive features. Cohorts are often very small, this year fewer than ten pupils were in Year 6, and mobility levels are unusually high with some year groups having very high percentages of new arrivals. Nonetheless, evidence from your improved tracking and assessments both of individuals and year groups shows that standards are rising across all areas of learning. The priority of improving writing further, including for higher attaining pupils, is being focused on well. Many of the improvements being

seen coincide with the delivery of a more creative curriculum which is boosting self esteem, exciting the children and holding their interest. Improved attendance levels reflect children's enjoyment and your figures are above those of most schools in Cornwall. Achievement is now good overall, with children of all ages becoming confident communicators, not afraid to express their views. Although a four year-old, making sand castles, insisted "I'm not doing learning yet!" it is evident that pupils develop good learning habits from a young age. There is also good evidence that all children are developing many excellent personal qualities and skills. They are very open to new ideas and always keen to have a go and make the most of all you provide.

### Quality of teaching and learning in relation to the survey

Positive outcomes for all pupils are very closely matched to effective teaching. Full account is taken of National Curriculum requirements when teachers plan and deliver an interesting range of lessons and activities but teachers are teaching not only what is prescribed but also what is needed. An innovative approach to teaching and learning, in a series of themed Creative Days held in six-week blocks every term, enables everyone to work alongside children of different ages in dance, design and technology, textiles, art, music and computer sessions. For many this is the highlight of the week.

However, this valuable and very creative work is linked closely to what goes on the rest of the week and tasks are fully differentiated to match all needs. Imaginative thinking behind these opportunities ensures that teaching is well paced and pupils are fully supported but also challenged as they help each other or work independently. Feedback, in the form of questions at the time or in work seen in books, is always encouraging and well directed to make the child think of different possibilities in the learning process. Excellent discussion, prior to testing in the wind the kites they had made, enabled even the youngest to envisage what might happen and why. Pupils relish studying topics new to them. Importantly, time is built into many lessons for children to reflect and evaluate and so as they grow older pupils are fully aware of the value of making mistakes along the way.

### Quality of the curriculum

Creativity is central to your philosophy and vision for the children at your school. Many changes to routines, the environment and resources and to the way thinking and problem solving skills are developed underpin what is now an outstanding creative curriculum. Creative Partnerships have helped establish this curriculum which is so much enjoyed, including off site when work is planned with other schools in your cluster, on joint projects. The ideas of the children are fundamental in many of these changes and so they have made a big impact on individuals' sense of self worth and confidence. The attention given to consulting and monitoring and then adapting the curriculum still further is excellent and the plans for extending the use of the outdoor grounds for more learning for all age groups are typical of this. Many quite unexpected and valuable things have come out of the introduction of

“Creative Days.” Enrichment activities are really valued and play a significant part in promoting personal development too.

### Leadership and management

As a small rural school with until recently only two full time teachers, leadership and management has had to be creative and imaginative in delivering what you so clearly are all committed to. Staff development has for several years had an excellent focus on promoting creativity and the school has benefited from many partnerships in your quest to boost personal development and learning as well as standards and achievement. Planning at all levels reflects many objectives related to creative learning. Self-evaluation is accurate and helps everyone understand the priorities which lie ahead. Subject leaders have a firm handle on the part they play in monitoring creativity. Now, however, national recognition as a “School of Creativity” brings with it exciting and new challenges for the future as you consider further your important role within the community.

### Equality and diversity

The school is a fully inclusive and cohesive community in that everyone is valued equally and all pupils make similar progress over time. Pupils who join the school in the middle of a year speak with clarity about the impact of being a part of such a happy community where they are given equal and fair treatment.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- planning to maximise the opportunities gained from being awarded “School of Creativity” status to ensure continued improvement in achievements for all learners.

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

As explained in our previous letter, 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

Charlotte Roberson  
Additional Inspector