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Mr D Briggs
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Dear Mr Briggs

Ofsted survey inspection programme – art and design

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 25 September 2008 to look at work in art and design.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on how effectively connections to the work of other artists, craftworkers and designers promote the pupils' creativity.

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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and short observations of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of art and design was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are outstanding.

- Standards of attainment are well above average in most respects and compare very well with those attained by pupils in similar schools. Pupils make good progress in most elements and exemplary progress in their painting and 3-dimensional work.
- In the Foundation Stage pupils make rapid progress. Extensive opportunities are provided for pupils to freely and imaginatively explore which they take with increasing confidence.
- The quality of pupils' self assessment and evaluation of their own work and each others' both orally and in writing is exemplary. They know how to improve and develop their work. However, analysis of

assessment information is not always used in curriculum planning to personalise the provision for individual pupils in lessons.

- Pupils gain knowledge and skills at a good rate throughout the school. Their appreciation and knowledge of the work of past and present artists, designers and craftspeople across the world is good. They can identify visual and tactile qualities in their work and can cite examples of when it has influenced their own art work.
- The pupils have excellent attitudes towards the subject because they are inspired by the powerful visual dimension evident in the learning environment. Pupils' comments about the subject were effusive saying that 'there is always something new to look at'. They appreciate the good quality of the resources they work with.
- High quality teaching contributes to pupils' enthusiasm for the subject as well as their extensive involvement in collaborative work for exhibitions and projects that focus on creativity in learning.
- The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' excellent spiritual development. In a whole school assembly pupils observed digital images of beautiful natural forms, responding spontaneously with rapturous awe and wonder.
- Pupils' creativity develops as effectively as their skills because teachers encourage them to have a go, take risks and pursue their own ideas.

Quality of teaching and learning of art and design

Teaching and learning are outstanding.

- Teaching is at least good in all respects and exemplary in some.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge that lends confidence to their teaching styles. They use their individual interests and talents effectively in curriculum planning and this adds to the diversity of learning experiences provided for pupils.
- In the Foundation Stage the adults provide just the right balance between timely guidance for example, to demonstrate a particular skill and standing back to let children's imagination and creativity flow. Provision inside and outdoors is of excellent quality.
- Evaluation of units of work and the achievement of pupils is regular and systematic.
- Teaching assistants are well directed to support learning.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding.

- The breadth of the curriculum is exemplary enabling pupils to make excellent progress and achieve well.
- The subject is delivered in blocks of time appropriate to the needs of different activities enabling pupils to develop their ideas over time as they revisit and perfect their work. Good planning ensures that knowledge and skills are taught systematically.
- Good links are made with other subjects especially in English, science, history, and geography.
- Arts Week is thoroughly enjoyed by pupils and captures their interest and imagination as well as opening up opportunities for them to make

a valuable contribution to the community. The launch of the school's new mission statement 'Imagination encircles the world' provided the starting point for an extensive art project. Pupils created a high quality permanent mosaic working alongside a living artist.

- Every opportunity to use the artistic talents of staff, parents and members of the local community is capitalised upon to extend pupils' experiences in art, craft and design activities.
- Pupils have access to high quality resources including good quality sketchbooks and a range of media.
- A strong link with a local African artist has broadened pupils' understanding of African and Indian arts and crafts and contributes to their good cultural development.
- Pupils benefit from educational day and residential trips such as the art spiritual retreat where they draw on location and have extended time to pursue their own ideas and immerse themselves in creative activities.
- Clubs and pupils' access to art activities throughout the day such as the 'big draw' in the playground or the exceptional outdoor gallery with its 'hands on area' encourage pupils to involve themselves in creative activity on a daily basis.
- The needs and interests of different pupils are well met through the curriculum. Those with special gifts and talents as well as vulnerable pupils benefit from additional attention as required.

Leadership and management of art and design

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- You and the subject leader have a strong commitment to and passion for the subject that is instantly recognised through the strong visual dimension that pervades the whole school interior and outdoor spaces.
- Top quality exhibitions of pupils' art, craft and design work give the subject a high profile in the school and the local community. Pupils are rightly proud of their achievements. During the 2008 Warwickshire Arts Week they exhibited their 'Clifton's Hope for Planet Earth' work in the Clock Towers Precinct in Rugby. Written comments from the public on the 'fantastic display' with 'an incredible variety of work' endorse the level of their appreciation.
- The subject leader monitors the quality of teaching and learning and knows where strengths and weaknesses lie. Appropriate training is provided for staff in response to further develop teachers' subject knowledge and skills.
- All staff benefit from the subject leader's excellent specialist knowledge which she uses advantageously to guide and advise colleagues.
- Resources are well organised and wide ranging. Annotated collections of pupils' work are used effectively as a source of inspiration for staff and pupils.
- Strong links have been developed with local secondary schools and organisations to provide additional workshops, artists to work with the pupils and loan collections to support teaching and learning.
- Pupils' progress is tracked over time and reported to parents.

Subject issue: how effectively do connections to the work of other artists, craftworkers and designers promotes pupils' own creativity?

This is good.

- There are ample opportunities provided in the curriculum for pupils to appreciate the work of other artists, designers and craftspeople and to analyse the visual and tactile qualities of their work.
- A diverse range of permanent works by adult and child artists are exhibited in the school's interior and the outdoor gallery. These provide inspiration and encourage pupils to dare to be different.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- further promote pupils' creativity by using assessment information to inform future curriculum planning and personalise learning for pupils in lessons.

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

As I explained in my 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

Linda Killman
Her Majesty's Inspector