

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

26 July 2010

Mr S Tomlinson  
Headteacher  
Cookridge Primary School  
Tinshill Drive  
Leeds  
LS16 7DH

Dear Mr Tomlinson

### **Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey: identifying good practice in art, craft and design**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 12 July to look at work in art, craft and design, concentrating on how well pupils develop their confidence and creativity through drawing.

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 included a lesson observation, discussions with pupils and staff and scrutiny of pupils' work. The visit focused on the impact of a drawing project carried out earlier this year by Year 3 pupils in which they worked on 'reflective learning journals' in an enquiry project investigating the route taken by a stream from near the school into the city centre. The pupils' class teacher is the subject leader for art, craft and design and pupils have also worked with a creative practitioner.

#### **Features of good practice**

- The journals effectively promote an 'enquiry-based' approach to learning. The school adopts this more widely by enabling pupils to collate, reflect upon and refine all the material relating to a sustained project.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the purpose of the journals because they were introduced carefully to them at the start of the project, including by seeing examples of similar journals made by their teacher.
- Engaging experiences provide a strong stimulus for the work undertaken through the journals. Pupils visited local places of interest and met with relevant experts. This placed the learning in a real-world context, for example, when finding out why the stream is polluted. This was highly motivational for pupils, notably boys. It also helped develop their awareness of the local area and the community living and working in it.

- Pupils have been allowed a good measure of freedom in deciding how to use the journals. This too was motivational for both boys and girls and led to them being viewed as 'special' books, in the words of one pupil.
- Pupils learnt to use and compare a wide range of approaches to drawing more effectively through the journals. The emphasis on sustaining their engagement in imaginative drawing, such as making images to show how the water passed under the city, was strong. Some opportunities were missed to develop pupils' skills in recording direct experiences, such as through observational drawing.
- The journals were used effectively to expand pupils' understanding of different drawing conventions to represent the world around them. For example, they contain maps, planning drawings for model-making and sequences of ideas for use in stories.
- The journals provided a strong stimulus for discussion and developing ideas. Regular presentations by pupils, to the class in 'circles of reflection', and to other pupils, were aided by the large scale of the journals. These opportunities made a strong contribution to developing their speaking skills, including the growing number for whom English is an additional language. This also helped boost progress in writing.
- Social skills developed well through working together on the journals. Collaborative work was a regular feature of the project, for example when pupils suggested to each other how work could be improved.
- Exploring the use of the journals has given pupils a valuable insight into the use of such methods by creative practitioners. In particular, they have a good understanding that journals are places to try things out and make mistakes as well as solve problems. Pupils say they are 'places to think in'.
- Links between subjects were fostered well through working in the journals. Pupils found it natural, for example to record historical information alongside drawing and painting experiments. It also helped them to use drawing as a way of exploring concepts. For example, mapping the flow of water enabled them to think about potential sources of pollution.
- The teacher's strong subject knowledge was a key element in the project. She modelled different approaches skilfully and supported pupils through effective assessment of their progress in using drawing.
- Collaborative work between the creative practitioner and the teacher has been effective so that pupils understand the distinct roles of each.
- The approach taken in the project supported the teacher well as a creative practitioner because she worked with the pupils in deciding how it would develop. She welcomed this and so did the pupils who said they thought their teacher was as excited by their learning as they were.
- The project benefits from your support to develop 'teachers and pupils as researchers'. Plans are under way to extend the project into other year groups. Significant development of subject expertise among staff as a

whole will be required for this to be successful, notably in assessing pupils' progress and providing guidance for improvement where necessary.

- Effective links with local authority arts development partners have enabled the work to take place. In particular, in providing a point of contact with the creative practitioner and advice on how to manage the project.

### **Areas for development**

- Give pupils more opportunities to use the journals for recording direct evidence of their experiences.
- Ensure sufficient emphasis is given to developing staff subject knowledge in expanding the project across the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop art, craft and design in 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 under the URN for your school. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

**Stephen Long**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**