

dot-art Schools: How it fits into Ofsted Recommendations

This resource explores **four themes** linked to achievement: the quality of teaching, the curriculum, and leadership and management in the subject. It uses commentary from the *Making a mark* Ofsted report to prompt self-evaluation and support improvement planning.

The themes are relevant to all educational settings and phases, and draw on other Ofsted reports which focused on providers that achieved, sustained or shared outstanding provision and outcomes.

1. Focusing on the individual

Report recommended that more learners should be given opportunities to reflect on and develop their roles as emerging artists, craftmakers and designers by working with younger students and pupils. **Opportunities for learners to present work to a wider audience through exhibitions also brought benefits to the individual**, including:

- deeper reflection on the meaning, purpose and impact of their own work when listening to others' reactions
- improved critical and comparative skills through seeing their work alongside the work of other learners or creative practitioners
- learning from ideas and experiences they had not encountered themselves
- increased self-esteem and the determination to respond competitively
- learning to maximise their time in an art gallery, through their involvement in organising and curating an exhibition
- increased understanding of career opportunities through exhibiting alongside creative practitioners or in commercial settings.

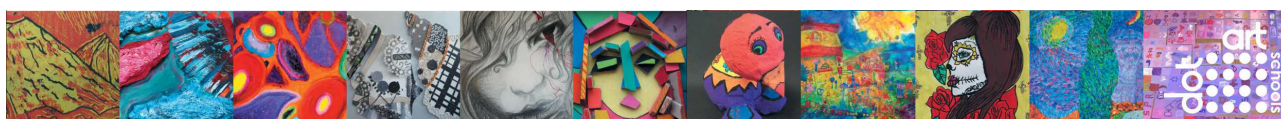
dot-art Schools provides an opportunity to build confidence and self-esteem in that students present their work to a wider audience, through online and physical exhibition space.

2. Ensuring that expectations are relevant and consistently high

Making a mark identified the 'subtle and strategic use of assessment, focused on individual pupils' progress in developing subject-specific skills, knowledge and understanding' as a feature of highly effective teaching.

Other features included:

- skilful use of visual and tactile resources that stimulated learners' curiosity early on and sustained their interest throughout
- high priority given to experimentation with ideas and media, supported by judicious and confident use of teacher demonstration



- opportunities for learners to make decisions about the scale of work, time taken on different tasks and when to move about or ask for guidance
- reviews of practical work, supported by inspiring examples by other learners or creative practitioners, showing how to revisit, refine or combine skills
- difficult concepts and language made easy to understand, linking with interests that clearly fascinated learners and creative practitioners alike.

dot-art Schools allows levelling between schools in the region, giving teachers inspiration and healthy competition. dot-art Schools can also provide an artist to host a workshop allowing for experimentation with materials and media.

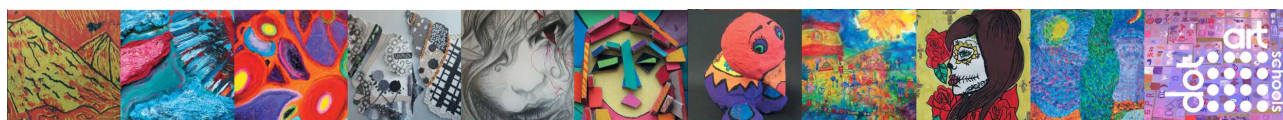
3. Creating the conditions for learners to flourish

In discussions with inspectors, learners regularly cited **visits to art galleries, work with creative practitioners and community-based projects as their most memorable experiences of the subject.**

The factors which contributed to effective enrichment strategies included:

- subject leaders who were imaginative and resourceful in identifying opportunities to conduct joint visits with other curricular subjects
- subject leaders who built and sustained a partnership with an art gallery, and devised opportunities for gallery educators to visit lessons in school or see the work that followed a visit
- communication with parents and carers that made them aware of exhibitions in local art galleries or creative practitioners that they could visit with their children, making clear their value
- a culture where teachers and students in secondary schools shared their talents as creative practitioners with primary schools
- **the use of an artist, attached to the school, to help learners understand how the work of a creative practitioner evolves and responds to the changing economic climate**
- strong support for all aspects of the subject from school leaders, including a commitment among senior managers to ensure that all learners received their cultural entitlement through enrichment activities.

Students will be encouraged to visit the exhibition that themselves or their peers are featured in. They will also have the option to work with a specifically trained creative practitioners.



4. Developing and sustaining external links.

Subject links, not necessarily with others working in education, enriched the quality of teaching. For example, the report found that **‘teachers who forged long-standing links with the creative and cultural sector used problem-solving approaches and managed collaborative activities particularly well’**. Highly effective subject teaching often drew on contemporary practice to contextualise the subject and show how different times and cultures continue to influence art, craft and design.

Creative practitioners contributed to raising achievement. In primary schools, ‘non-specialist teachers were effective in promoting good progress where their subject knowledge and skills were enhanced by a visiting artist, craftmaker or designer’.

In colleges, more teachers worked to their own specialist strengths, often informed by their continuing work as a creative practitioner that helped to sustain their links with art galleries or develop community-based projects. They had greater capacity for in-house subject training.

dot-art Schools is an easy way of developing and sustaining an external link. dot-art Schools is an annual programme that will develop and grow from year to year.

