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Mr S Clark  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Clark

### **Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: design and technology (D&T)**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 26 January 2011 to look at work in D&T.

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: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is satisfactory.

#### **Achievement in D&T**

Pupils' achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Attainment across the school is generally in line with age-related expectations and pupils' progress is satisfactory overall. There is, however, some evidence of stronger progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in upper Key Stage 2. All groups of pupils, including those with statements of special educational need, are fully included and attain and make progress that is similar to their peers.
- Pupils' skills of cutting, joining and finishing products develop appropriately as they move through the school. Although these skills are sometimes good they vary between classes, even within the same phase. Pupils are developing an understanding of the need for safe working practices, particularly when using tools. By the time they reached the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can plan designs. They are able to work with a variety of

materials and equipment. Pupils are able to critically evaluate their own work and that of others to suggest what has worked well and what could be improved.

- Pupils are proud of their work and believe that they are doing well because they have completed tasks and finished their models. They are unclear about what aspects of their D&T work, particularly their skills, knowledge and understanding, most needs to be improved.

### **Quality of teaching of D&T**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

- Teachers know that making models is a good way to motivate pupils and add interest to many of their topics, particularly those which are history based. Planning is generally fit for purpose and identifies the key learning intentions. The teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to good. When it is good, the nature of D&T is clearly understood and the correct emphasis is placed on designing a product with an end user in mind. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' understanding of real-life products before they are asked to design products themselves. On other occasions, some confusion exists about the differences between D&T and art and design. A lack of professional development has compounded this situation. Consequently, teachers' subject knowledge in this area is variable.

### **Quality of the curriculum in D&T**

The quality of the curriculum in D&T is satisfactory.

- Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage and a good range of resources help children to develop useful skills and experience to support D&T. However, some opportunities are missed to teach children how to improve their skills, such as cutting.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and covers an appropriate range of skills and materials. Consequently, pupils make the progress that they should. The work to develop a creative curriculum, where work is planned around a theme, means that opportunities for pupils to make models and apply their creative skills has been maximised. Pupils enjoy these opportunities. However, some confusion exists about the nature of D&T. For example, opportunities to taste food as part of a history topic do not necessarily develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in D&T. Opportunities for developing food preparation skills are many and pupils state that they enjoy making things like biscuits and cakes. However, the use of food as a medium for investigating, designing, making and evaluating products is underdeveloped.
- There are strengths in the way that the development of pupils' skills are planned and in the opportunities that pupils have to apply these skills in a creative context, for example in designing and making toys for younger pupils.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T**

Leadership and management in D&T are satisfactory.

- Senior leaders ensure that D&T has a central part of the developing creative curriculum. The subject leader has a clear view of her role. She has a useful picture of staff perception, skills and some areas for development. However, other strategies to gain a fuller picture of outcomes and provision in D&T are underdeveloped.
- Despite recent developments, senior leaders do not have a comprehensive view of attainment or progress in D&T across the school. The assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in D&T is underdeveloped. Annual reports to parents and the practice of reporting on D&T along with other foundation subjects as a 'general comment' means that information about D&T can be very brief and does not always report on D&T skills, knowledge and understanding.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- ensuring all staff understand the nature of D&T to enable them to better support the development of pupils' understanding and skills within lessons
- ensuring that the subject leader uses a wide range of mechanisms for judging and influencing the quality of provision and the outcomes for pupils in D&T
- improving the arrangement for assessing, monitoring and reporting on the attainment and progress of pupils.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Amraz Ali**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**