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Mr C Hassell  
Headteacher  
Reepham High School and College  
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Reepham  
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NR10 4JT

Dear Mr Hassell

### **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 students, during my visit with my colleague Trevor Riddiough HMI, on 23 and 24 September 2010 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 students and a governor; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of 10 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is outstanding.

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

Students' achievement in D&T is good.

- Students enter the school with a variety of prior experiences in D&T. The school ensures that all students have a good level of understanding so that by the end of Key Stage 3 all achieve in line with national expectations. Work in Key Stage 4 builds well on this so that all students make good progress and achieve better than the national average for D&T. Students undertaking A-level product design are developing securely as professional designers.

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

The quality of teaching is outstanding.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and several have relevant industrial experience. This is used well to engage students' interest in the work and to give them an understanding of designing and making in the real world. For example, in one lesson, inspirational teaching enabled students to engage in the real world of designers by considering how the mobile phone might look in the future.
- Assessment is thorough. It provides detailed feedback, challenges all students and supports them to make the next step in their progress.
- Appropriate interventions during lessons support students who struggle to overcome difficulties with their writing and numeracy. Although this is more effective in Years 10 and 11, students could be given more support to improve these aspects in Key Stage 3.
- Criteria are used effectively to identify success and enable students to monitor their own progress effectively. As a result, students become highly independent learners.

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

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

- Teachers' expertise in designing the course programmes helps students to perform well at Key Stage 4 and provides a secure platform to progress to further courses post-16.
- Resources and facilities to support the wide range of courses are excellent. Students gain valuable insight into industrial applications. Students enjoy highly memorable learning experiences: they make well-designed products that meet users' needs, and are of high professional quality.
- Cross-curricular links are developed well throughout D&T and they help to promote and consolidate learning. For example, students' understanding of product development and its links to social history are developed very well.

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

Leadership and management of D&T are outstanding.

- The subject leader's vision for D&T is highly aspirational and is shared by all in the department. Staff work as a team effectively and strive consistently to improve performance in all aspects of D&T.
- Tracking and monitoring processes are sharp and implemented rigorously. Consequently, nearly all students achieve their ambitious targets.

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

- ensuring that the good practice in supporting literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 4 is extended to students in Key Stage 3.

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

**Michelle Parker**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**