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Dr K Simmonds  
Headteacher  
Danum School Technology College  
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Dear Dr Simmonds

**Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit with Bob Hamp HMI on 27 and 28 September 2010 to look at work in ICT.

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 students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of eight lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory.

**Achievement in ICT**

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

- Students enter the school with levels of attainment in ICT which are below national average. By the end of Year 11, students reach levels of attainment which are below national average. Given students' starting points, this indicates satisfactory progress. In the sixth form, the small number of students who study ICT make satisfactory progress. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported with specialist equipment and by teaching assistants. They make the same progress as their peers.

- Students have a good level of knowledge about how to use new technologies safely. This knowledge is developed through ICT lessons, PSHE lessons and assemblies. The e-safety policies and procedures are comprehensive.

### **Quality of teaching in ICT**

Teaching of ICT is satisfactory.

- Teaching, using ICT, is strong across the school. This is because teachers and teaching assistants are competent users of ICT. It is integrated well into lessons enabling the teacher to control the pace of the lesson ensuring that students make at least good progress. ICT is used well to support learning and motivate and engage the students.
- However, in many ICT lessons, the students are all asked to complete the same work. This work is too hard for some students and they are unable to complete it. For others, it lacks challenge and they finish it quickly.
- The newly refined assessment system in Key Stage 4 enables staff and students to track progress. As assessment system is not embedded fully throughout all year groups, some students are not aware of what they need to do to improve their work and this limits their progress.

### **Quality of the curriculum in ICT**

The ICT curriculum is satisfactory.

- The curriculum has been reviewed recently. All students at Key Stage 4 now study ICT for at least one lesson each week. Although the curriculum enables the students to receive their statutory entitlement to the ICT National Curriculum, it is not balanced. Some students, depending on the options they take, have much broader ICT experience than others.
- At Key Stage 3, students follow a skills-based course in Year 7 which is then developed through projects in Years 8 and 9.
- In the sixth form, the curriculum is enhanced through the provision of additional courses as part of the consortium. It is appropriate and meets the needs and interest of the small number of students studying ICT in the sixth form.

### **Leadership and management of ICT**

The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory.

- The leadership and management of ICT are supported strongly by the senior leadership team. Although the strengths and weaknesses of ICT are known, departmental planning to remove the weaknesses is poor and does not always link specifically to improving students' outcomes.

- Staff training is good and appreciated by staff. In terms of e-safety, all staff are supported well to ensure that they keep themselves safe when using new technologies and are able to support the students to keep themselves safe too.

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

- focusing the leadership and management of ICT, at all levels, on improving outcomes for students
- enabling all the students to make good progress in ICT by:
  - improving the curriculum to make it more balanced and enable students to have a broader range of ICT experiences
  - developing teaching to ensure that students are asked to complete work which is appropriately challenging
  - embedding the assessment system so that all students know what they have to do to improve their work and are able to act on that advice.

I hope that these observations are helpful in developing ICT provision in the school.

As 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

**Tanya Harber Stuart**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**