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Mrs M Metcalfe
Headteacher
Christ The King RC Primary School
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Thornaby
Stockton-on-Tees
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Dear Mrs Metcalfe,

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

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Pupils make good progress in D&T, many from lower starting points than normally expected. Achievement is good across a range of practical activities and attainment is in line with expectations for age and ability. Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage learn practical and creative skills through tasks such as making cakes, using construction kits, and designing collages. Capability to design and make is well developed as they move through the school. All groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similarly good progress.
- Pupils achieve well through a suitable range of D&T activities, such as analysing and designing their own photograph frames and constructing models of robots. They value the subject and say they enjoy taking responsibility for their own design ideas. Pupils use technical knowledge,

such as hinges and split pins, freely and confidently when discussing their project work. The school is aware that more use of systems and control equipment could help to raise achievement further. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to research and present design information.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is good.

- Plans to deliver D&T are detailed and practical work is managed well. An appropriate range of resources is used well when pupils are designing and making. Good individual support helps pupils learn more about the subject and ensures a good pace to lessons. D&T teaching is consistently good across the year groups and challenges pupils to create original designs. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and the school recognises it can be developed further. Assessment practice is rigorous and a new monitoring system identifies individual progress in D&T.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The curriculum is planned carefully to provide stimulating contexts for D&T work such as castles, space, and pirates. A good range of materials are used to meet pupils' needs and interests. A strong feature of the curriculum is the promotion of creativity to develop design thinking.
- Opportunities for pupils to work alongside adults enrich their knowledge and skills, for example in Year 5 working with food in a new specialist facility and with a visiting sculptor. Programmes are enhanced by good coordination with other subjects, such as art and science.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- The shared vision by all staff and established practice helps to move the subject forward. D&T is valued and its purpose understood. Good planning, organisation and management are evident at all levels.
- The school evaluates the quality and effectiveness of D&T work accurately and capacity to maintain and develop provision is good. A strong team ethos supports learning in D&T and staff work closely together to translate the nature of D&T education into practice.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- extending teachers' and pupils' understanding of systems and control.

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

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector