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Mrs C Johnson
Headteacher
St Margaret Clitherows RC Primary School
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South Bank
Middlesbrough
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Dear Mrs Johnson

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 7 October 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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' 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 start at the school with practical skills and ability to create which are below those expected for their age. They make good progress as a result of the teaching which challenges every pupil to develop their own ideas from an early age, for example in Year 1 when analysing, tasting and making a fruit salad. Pupils achieve well and attainment is in line with expectations for their age, and sometimes higher by the time they leave school.
- Different groups of pupils, such as boys, girls and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make equally good progress using a good range of contexts for their work. Pupils are absorbed and thoroughly

enjoy designing and making, for example models of African huts, vehicles and Anderson shelters.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is good with outstanding features.

- Teachers' subject knowledge ensures pupils successfully use materials to realise their ideas. The school is aware that teachers' and pupils' technical knowledge can be extended by using more rigid materials, such as wood, plastic, and control systems. Sustained high-quality questioning by staff is an outstanding feature of the teaching. Staff work well together to move learning forward and practical activities make best use of the available time. National Curriculum levels are used to assess how well pupils are doing and the information helps to plan future learning.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- Pupils value the well-managed and organised learning environment which provides ready access to resources. Activities are matched well to pupils' needs and interests and the school acknowledges the progressive use of more challenging tools and equipment is an area to develop. The curriculum is enriched by staff with their own particular skills, such as jewellery making and embroidery, who contribute to the work of the subject.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- D&T is led and managed well, and the purpose of the subject is understood. The strengths and areas to develop are known as a result of accurate information collected from monitoring activities. The development of pupils' D&T capability is significantly enhanced by the strong classroom leadership and management.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- using more progressively challenging tools and equipment as pupils move through the school
- increasing the use of rigid materials and control systems to extend subject knowledge.

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