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Mrs S Osborn  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Osborn

### **Ofsted 2011–12 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 12 October 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 good.

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

Achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Attainment across the school is securely average, in line with age-related expectations, and a very large majority of pupils make satisfactory progress overall.
- By the time pupils reach Year 6, their attainment is broadly average. All groups of pupils, including the small proportion that is learning English as an additional language, are fully included and make similar progress to their peers.
- Across the school pupils confidently make decisions about their designs and their model-making skills are good. They are able to draw and label diagrams of the models that they are planning to make and can identify the materials that they will use. However, on a lesson-by-lesson basis,

choice is sometimes limited and pupils are not always expected to work with accuracy or precision. This in turn sometimes limits pupils' ability to demonstrate higher levels of attainment.

- Pupils' attitudes to D&T are very positive. They state that they like making models and using food. Pupils develop an understanding of safe working practices, particularly when using tools, and there are many examples of pupils helping one another and working cooperatively.

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

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- Very good relationships and clear expectations of pupils' behaviour ensure that the learning environment is positive and conducive to learning. Consequently pupils' behaviour is very good and they enjoy their D&T lessons.
- Teachers' planning is good. Learning intentions are clear and always shared with pupils. Activities are planned with pupils' different needs in mind so that some pupils receive extra help from classroom assistants. Teachers' questioning is generally used well to check on understanding or to extend learning by making links to other subjects. Teachers' explanations are good and they offer precise guidance to pupils. For example, in a Year 3 lesson pupils were told precisely how to thread needles and how to complete a simple running stitch.
- Teachers are clear about the process of designing, making and evaluating products. However, they do not always provide pupils with opportunities to demonstrate the highest levels of attainment.

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

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

- The curriculum is broad and balanced, based on national guidance but well modified to make meaningful links between subjects. For example, sandals are studied as part of a topic related to the ancient Greeks.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop and practice D&T skills are good. Pupils are provided with opportunities to investigate and evaluate real products, such as bread and footwear.
- The curriculum is enriched very effectively using visits and visitors. For example, one class designed prototypes for recycling and non-recycling bins and another had their can crusher manufactured by a local company.
- After-school clubs and links with the community are strong. Pupils talk very positively about the work of the primary engineer project and the 'Men at WORK' project, designed to foster links between home and school, by working with pupils on D&T challenges. The local Women's Institute run an after-school knitting club and a *Come Dine With Me* event has been praised by the local primary care trust for encouraging healthy eating and food preparation skills.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T is good.

- You and the subject leader have a clear understanding of D&T that reflects the unique nature of the subject. Staff understand that central to D&T is the need to make products that meet human needs.
- The subject leader has established good systems to monitor curriculum provision. The topics taught and materials and techniques used are clearly recorded. She has reviewed teachers' planning and has established a large portfolio of work, mostly in the form of photographs, to monitor standards over time. Monitoring has led to continual improvement of the curriculum, including the many good links with outside agencies and community groups.
- Although the subject leader has a good overview of D&T and the range of outcomes from each unit of work, limited work has taken place to monitor pupils' attainment or progress. However, recent improvements to introduce a skills recording sheet to accompany each D&T unit is a step towards tackling this issue.

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

- providing pupils with more opportunities to demonstrate higher levels of attainment in D&T, for example by raising pupils' and teachers' expectations of greater accuracy in their designing and making.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

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