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27 January 2012

Mrs M Jarrett  
Headteacher  
Betty Layward Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Jarrett

**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 10 January 2012 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 satisfactory

Achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in their D&T skills overtime so that when they leave in Year 6 their attainment is broadly in line with expectations. However, mainly due to some previous difficulties with staffing, there are gaps in some pupils' experiences and consequently their skills in some areas are underdeveloped.
- As a result of their time in Nursery and Reception, pupils are able to make decisions about the models they would like to make, the materials they would like to use and select which methods they use for joining materials.
- Throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils are encouraged to design products after they have studied real artefacts, such as playgrounds and moving toys. Throughout the school, they are in the habit of producing labelled diagrams of the models that they are planning to make. However, the quality and detail of their plans do not progress as pupils move through the school. For example, they do not include any measurements or

proposed sequences of work. Consequently, this limits even the most able pupils in demonstrating their attainment at the expected and higher levels.

- Pupils' are positive about their lessons. They state that they like making models but are keen to have more time to finish them to a better standard. Behaviour in lessons is good with many examples of pupils helping one another and cooperating together. Pupils develop an understanding of safe working practices, particularly when using tools. From an early age, they take turns to be responsible for the safe working practices of their group.

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

The quality of teaching in D&T is satisfactory.

- The quality of teaching is improving and some is good. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, for example, about the nature of D&T, design briefs, products and the design process. However, their knowledge of the National Curriculum programmes of study and attainment targets and, in particular, the expectations of pupils as they move through the school are less clear.
- Teachers' planning for individual lessons and sequences of lessons are appropriately considered. However, opportunities are missed to plan activities that challenge the most able pupils. Contexts for designing and making are presented in meaningful and interesting ways, for example children in the Nursery were making model homes for the *Three Little Pigs*. Good use is made of interactive whiteboards to showcase pupils' work as it is developing. For example in a Year 6 class, video recordings of pupils evaluating their finished models were shared with the whole class.
- Teachers' instructions and explanations are clear and additional adults are deployed well. Teachers' use of questioning is sound. However, questions tend to have one particular answer. On a small number of occasions, particularly in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where classes are very small, staff interject before pupils have had time to think through their responses.

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

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

- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Recent improvements make meaningful links between subjects. This ensures that an appropriate range of materials are experienced. However, a relative weakness is the lack of planned opportunities for pupils to work with information and communication technology (ICT) and control technology in a progressive way.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes have good opportunities to develop D&T skills. Resources are provided so that children can select materials and tools during free choice activities. Children have good

opportunities to work indoors and outdoors, with access to a range of small and large construction kits.

- The curriculum is effectively enriched by a range of clubs including an over-subscribed Lego Club and a craft club.

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

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

- Improvements are evident. For example, the new arrangements for the leadership of D&T have brought greater clarity in staff's understanding of the nature of the subject. Staff understand that central to D&T is the need to make products that meet human needs and this is clearly understood by pupils. Recent improvements are providing a clearer overview of the school's work. A system for assessing standards and progress, focused on identified skills for each unit of work, has recently been introduced. However, this development has not yet allowed senior leaders to gain an accurate picture of attainment and progress across the school.
- The newly appointed subject leaders are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Although the subject leaders have received some training connected to their role, other staff have not yet had any training.

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

- ensuring that teachers challenge all pupils, including the most able, more effectively in their lessons by making better use of the information they receive
- ensuring better progression in the schemes of work so that pupils are able to understand how to develop the plans they make so that they more accurately reflect their knowledge and skills
- improving the use of control technology and ICT.

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

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