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Mr K Myatt
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Myatt

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 24 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 seven lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Achievement in D&T is good.

- Pupils make good progress in D&T throughout their time in school. By the time they leave Year 6 the attainment of the large majority of pupils is in line with national expectations. Assessment information shows that each year a growing proportion of pupils exceeds national expectations as the quality of teaching and the curriculum improves.
- Pupils demonstrate good or outstanding behaviour in D&T lessons. They are at their best when they work independently or in groups planning and designing their products. They have a good understanding of the importance of design and appreciate that regular evaluation is an important part of the process.

- Work is of a high standard. For example, the pyramids that were being constructed by the Year 5 and 6 pupils.

Quality of teaching in D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- All teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and are effective in using assessment information to plan work that meets the needs of most pupils when they work independently or in groups. Detailed records of pupils' progress are kept. These are checked against national expectations regularly to ensure that they make good progress. Pupils regularly take part in self-assessment and their scrapbooks are a very good record of their work in D&T.
- Lessons are exciting and interesting. Teachers ensure that all pupils engage productively in their work. Information and communication technology (ICT) is incorporated effectively in all D&T projects. As a result, pupils demonstrate well-developed computer skills.
- In a few lessons, teachers do not use assessment information well enough to ensure that at the start of the lesson the instructions or introductions are relevant to all groups of pupils. When this happens, pupils spend too long listening to the teachers giving them information that is not necessarily relevant to the activity they will be taking part in.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- School leaders have successfully developed the curriculum to establish meaningful links between subjects. For example, in D&T lessons observed there were close links to science, history, English, mathematics and ICT. This creates a good range of opportunities for pupils to be creative. It motivates them to carry out independent research as they pursue their interests.
- The curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to develop skills and knowledge across the full range of materials as appropriate to their age.
- Regular visits and themed activities, such as the enterprise competition, are instrumental to pupils' enjoyment of D&T. Pupils whose circumstances may make them vulnerable really look forward to the lunchtime craft club where they develop making skills. They are very well nurtured in this safe and secure environment.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

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

- Senior leaders demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of D&T. There is good subject expertise and they have been effective in

improving the provision and the outcomes for pupils in the last three years.

- Regular checks on lessons and pupils' work result in a process of continuous refinement to teaching and learning. An effective feature is the review of projects that teachers are expected to carry out so that curriculum improvement is continuous.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that teachers use assessment information more effectively to make sure that when they talk to pupils at the start of the lesson the information is relevant to all groups.

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

Tim Bristow
Her Majesty's Inspector