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Ms D Harland
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Harland

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: design and technology (D&T)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 2 May 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 three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Achievement in D&T is good.

- Attainment when pupils start at the school is well below average. Progress is good and attainment is average in Year 6. All groups of pupils, including those with disabilities and special educational needs, are included in design and make tasks and make equally good progress.
- Pupils develop a good range of D&T skills and understand how to creatively apply them when involved in activities such as designing and making puppets, moving models of vehicles, healthy snacks, different types of bread, money containers and torches. Pupils' technical knowledge is good, for example using terms such as pneumatic cylinders and pressure when designing moving toys in Year 3. They thoroughly enjoy taking responsibility for their own design ideas which are creative and original.

Quality of teaching in D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- Teachers' expertise and good subject knowledge ensures that pupils make good progress from year to year. Classes and work are well managed to ensure that all pupils make best use of the time available. Individual support is a strong feature when pupils are engaged in practical work.
- Assessment procedures evaluate capability in the subject, progress is monitored, and action is taken when underperformance is identified. The school knows the next step to making the teaching even more effective is to tailor work more closely to individual needs.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- Stimulating contexts ensure that pupils' needs and interests are well met. The broad and balanced curriculum is regularly reviewed and plans to introduce new and more creatively challenging activities are being implemented.
- The school highly values the subject's opportunities to develop and apply literacy and numeracy through practical work. Links with other subjects such as art and science are strong and the curriculum is enriched by using visiting experts such as engineers from British Aerospace.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

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

- School evaluation of subject performance is accurate and the purpose is well understood. The planning, organisation and monitoring of D&T are good and a shared vision helps to steer developments. There is the capacity to maintain and improve provision because leaders routinely intervene and take action when required.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- tailoring work more closely to individual needs and abilities
- continuing with plans to extend the creative aspects of the curriculum.

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

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector