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Mrs C Curry  
Headteacher  
Kirk Fenton Parochial CofE VC Primary School  
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LS24 9RF

Dear Mrs Curry

### **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 1 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is inadequate.

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

Achievement in D&T is inadequate.

- Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment in D&T which are typical for their age. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children develop basic skills and are able to choose materials and select tools. Across Key Stage 1, attainment is generally in line with expectations for pupils of this age and they make satisfactory progress. However, pupils' progress slows during Key Stage 2 and their attainment by Year 6 is well below the expected levels for their age.
- Attainment across the school is variable because of the inadequate curriculum and the lack of planning to ensure that pupils are able to make adequate progress. For example, pupils' recorded D&T work, such as plans and evaluations of products, is limited and does not demonstrate

progression in their knowledge, understanding or skills as they move through the school.

- Pupils' attitudes to D&T are positive and they talk enthusiastically about the things they have made. However, some pupils are sometimes confused about what D&T is. Older pupils state that they have not undertaken enough D&T in the last two years but they are keen to work with a wide range of materials, including wood and food, and they would also like to undertake more work with mechanisms and electronics.

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

The quality of teaching in D&T is satisfactory.

- The quality of teaching is improving. In both lessons seen, pupils made good progress. For example, in one lesson pupils were challenged to work together to devise a way to lift or move a heavy object. They worked very enthusiastically and began to learn about levers and pulleys. However, the impact of teaching on pupils' progress over time is not yet sustained, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Questioning is used well in lessons. Opportunities for pupils to talk about their work enable teachers to check their understanding, before moving on, and also contribute to the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills.
- Relationships are positive and pupils are motivated to produce their own models and pieces of work. Teachers are generally confident in their knowledge of the practical skills that they are trying to develop. Less well developed are their knowledge of the programmes of study and their understanding of what typifies each attainment level, particularly in the designing and evaluating stages of the process.

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

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

- Pupils do not receive their statutory entitlement to the National Curriculum in D&T. D&T is planned across the school; within Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory but in Key Stage 2 the provision is inadequate.
- Until 2012, successive leaders failed to plan for any improvement in D&T. This, coupled with significant changes in staffing, and a lack of rigor in translating outdated curriculum plans into real lessons, means that there has been no systematic delivery of the National Curriculum programmes of study for D&T in Key Stage 2.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have good opportunities to develop skills to support D&T. A suitable range of resources is 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.

- In Key Stage 1 the curriculum is well planned over the two years. Activities, often linked to other subjects, provide pupils with opportunities to work with an appropriate range of materials.

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

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

- In the short time since you have taken over the responsibility for leading D&T, you have made an accurate evaluation of what the strengths and weaknesses are in the subject and produced a sound plan for development. The evaluation of teaching in D&T is accurate and identifies clear areas for teachers to improve their practice.
- Plans are now in place to develop a coherent strategy to assess levels of attainment in D&T. Annual pupil reports mention D&T and allocate a grade for attainment and effort but do not provide parents and carers with information about their child's progress, strengths and areas for improvement.

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

- raising pupil's achievement by:
  - ensuring that the curriculum, particularly in Key Stage 2, is systematically planned and taught so that all pupils receive their statutory entitlement to D&T
  - improving teachers' subject knowledge so that they are clear about the D&T programmes of study and the expectations of progression in designing, making and evaluating skills
  - improving the assessment and monitoring of pupils' attainment in D&T along with the reporting to parents and carers of progress, strengths and weaknesses.

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**