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Ms D Clinton  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Clinton

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 28 November 2006 to look at work in Design and Technology (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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made 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 was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

- I agree with the school and faculty evaluation that achievement and standards are satisfactory and improving. Standards are good in Year 7 where new schemes of work are making a strong impact. Achievement and standards are rising at Key Stage 4 as a result of the improvements you have made. Predictions for 2007 indicate the trend will continue.
- Structures which allow students to make good progress from year to year are now well established and the development of D&T capability across the years is no longer an issue. D&T is making a good contribution to the personal development and well being of students encouraging them to learn independently at an early age.

## Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

- The department modestly judges teaching and learning to be satisfactory. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning seen during the visit was good. This is another indication the changes you have made are having the right impact.
- The introduction of new schemes of work is improving consistency of learning and the quality of lesson planning. They are sharply focussed on developing D&T capability over time.
- Assessment practice has improved although the data is not yet analysed effectively enough to make sure all students make the progress they should. Accommodation is poor in places and not well matched to student or subject needs.

## Subject leadership and management

- The last Ofsted report found achievement and standards fell short of the mark. Senior managers took decisive action, intervening to improve the performance of the subject.
- The impact of this, together with substantial change led and managed very effectively by the new faculty leader, is now being seen. The quality of provision has significantly improved and students are achieving more highly. I agree with your view that capacity to improve in D&T is good.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- raising achievement and standards to match the best performing subjects in the school
- using data more effectively to ensure all students do as well as they possibly can.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school.

A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock  
Her Majesty's Inspector