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Mrs Fiske
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Fiske

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 10 October 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

- I agree with the school's evaluation that pupils are achieving well, making good progress from a low starting point and standards are satisfactory.
- There is a larger proportion of pupils with limited manipulative and creative skills than normally found. This does not stop them working hard on practical tasks and enjoying the subject. Indeed, all pupils were very positive about their work in D&T and behaved well at all times during the visit.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

- Good teaching and learning are making sure the pupils achieve well.
- Subject knowledge is improving with the use of national guidance and units of work. As a result, teachers are more confident in their ability to deliver D&T.
- Assessment practice evaluates D&T outcomes against the school's objectives. It does not routinely assess individual performance against national curriculum levels and pupils do not always know what they need to do to improve. The school recognises this is a high priority for improvement if the subject is to flourish and continue to develop.

Quality of curriculum

- Pupils see the work they do in D&T as relevant and activities are meeting the needs and interests of learners well.
- Recent changes to the curriculum have ensured D&T is more appropriately planned using the QCA D&T units as a guide.
- Progress from year to year is improving in the main aspects of the subject and the school recognises the need to closely monitor the teaching of systems and control.

Leadership and management of D&T

- The management capacity to ensure a curriculum in which D&T can thrive is good. The subject is effectively led and there is a strong drive to develop and improve provision in D&T.
- The school has a clear view on how well the subject is doing and self evaluation is accurate.

Inclusion

There is no difference in provision for the different groups of learners and all pupils are equally involved in the subject. Provision in D&T for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is very good. Support staff work closely and effectively with individual and small groups to make sure they learn as quickly as they can.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- sharpening practice by assessing pupil performance against national benchmarks
- Making sure pupils know what they need to do to improve in D&T.

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