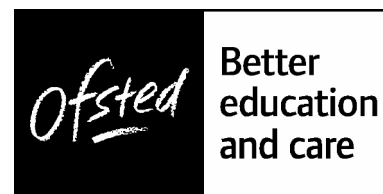


Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



19 March 2007

Ms S Willson
Headteacher
Ashton Gate Primary School
Ashton Gate Road
Bristol
BS3 1SZ

Dear Ms Willson

Ofsted survey inspection programme – design and technology

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 1 March to look at work in design and technology.

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 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of design and technology was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and Standards

- Pupils' achievement and standards in the subject are satisfactory overall and in some Key Stage 1 classes they are good.
- Pupils demonstrate sound knowledge and understanding of the subject and use tools, equipment, materials and components effectively to make satisfactory products. Pupils' capabilities in working with resistant materials, food and textiles are of equal strength. However, their knowledge and understanding of systems and control and the use

of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the subject, especially computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing, are underdeveloped.

- Pupils enjoy design and technology and their personal development and well-being are promoted effectively in design and technology lessons. They show a positive attitude towards the subject and their behaviour is good.

Quality of teaching and learning

- The quality of teaching and learning in design and technology is satisfactory.
- The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons was satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and good in Key Stage 1.
- Lessons were planned thoroughly and teachers had clear learning objectives which were shared fully with pupils. Pupils were set a good range of tasks. Teachers' explanations and instructions were clear. Questioning was used well to check pupils' understanding and to help them evaluate their work. Pupils made good progress in Key Stage 1 and achieved good standards; in Key stage 2 progress and standards were satisfactory.
- However, teachers missed opportunities to develop the pupils' design and technology capability through the provision of more subject-specific guidance on construction techniques, the properties of materials and the scientific processes involved in technological activities, particularly in Key Stage 2.
- Assessment procedures in design and technology are satisfactory. Pupils are provided with adequate formative feedback on their developing knowledge and skills during each unit of work. In Key Stage 2 the use of progress sheets gives pupils a helpful indication of their progress in the different aspects of the subject.
- However, pupils are not given sufficient indication of the standards they are attaining at the end of each unit, year or key stage. The school does not use sufficient exemplar materials to guide teachers' judgements and to ensure consistency in summative assessment.

Quality of the curriculum

- The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.
- The design and technology curriculum is generally well organised and suitably based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme of work. Its implementation is supported by the use of wisely chosen planning and teaching resources. Sufficient time is allocated for studying design and technology.
- Pupils experience a suitable range of activities that meet most of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Resistant materials, food

technology and textiles are covered generally well, though pupils undertake little work in systems and control or computer aided design and manufacture. The way the curriculum is planned and delivered provides continuity and progression in pupils' learning. However, there is a limited range of subject enrichment activities to extend pupils' capabilities.

Leadership and Management

- Leadership and management in design and technology are satisfactory with good features.
- The subject leader has a secure understanding of the nature and purpose of design and technology and has made an effective contribution to its development in the school over the last two years. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory. Staff confidence in teaching the subject has been improved through the support they have received from the subject leader. You also support the subject well and ensure that it now thrives.
- Suitable evaluation of design and technology provision is undertaken through scrutiny of pupils' work and annual reviews and improvement planning. Self-evaluation is accurate. The school improvement plan has identified some key areas for development and suitable action to address them. However, the overall level of monitoring and moderation of design and provision is limited.

Inclusion

- There are few differences in the achievement and standards of boys and girls. All pupils achieve satisfactorily in the subject. The school is inclusive in giving all pupils full access to the D&T curriculum. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well though opportunities for stretching the most able pupils are more limited.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of systems and control and the use of ICT in the subject, especially computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing
- improving teachers' subject knowledge to enable them to provide more subject specific guidance to pupils on construction techniques, the properties of materials and technological processes
- developing summative assessment procedures to provide pupils with full information about the standards they are attaining in respect to National Curriculum levels of attainment
- offering a wider range of subject enrichment activities

- extending the level of monitoring and moderation of design and provision.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop design and technology in the school.

A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Nick Green
Her Majesty's Inspector