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Mr I Mackenzie
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Mackenzie

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 12 October 2006 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 two lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

The school rightly evaluates achievement in the subject to be good.

- Standards are above average and D&T capability at the end of Key Stage 2 is well developed. Pupils know how to successfully evaluate food products, for example they use a wide range of vocabulary to describe taste and texture. They are equally successful applying systems to control moving models or using textiles to design and make products.
- Design and technology is making a very good contribution to the personal development and well being of pupils. Attitudes towards the subject are positive and they are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles at a young age.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

- Teaching is good and pupils' quickly learn to analyse problems and research for themselves.
- They successfully apply critical approaches when designing and making.
- Subject knowledge is good and is well developed by a good range of professional development activities.
- Assessment procedures are working well.
- Individual pupil performance is assessed against national curriculum levels and pupils know how well they are doing. The school rightly acknowledges the next stage is to use the data to inform planning and has made this a priority for development.

Quality of curriculum

- D&T is well planned to fit national guidance units into topic work.
- This ensures the D&T curriculum is well covered and appropriately resourced, particularly for years five and six in systems and control.
- As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy D&T and perceive it as highly relevant. They gain a good knowledge of the subject and D&T capability is well developed by the time they leave the school.

Leadership and management of D&T

- The school's leadership and management of D&T education are very good. Coursework is well managed with plentiful evidence kept using digital cameras to illustrate progress.
- Strengths and weaknesses in D&T are well known and the right action is being taken to move the subject forward.

Inclusion

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported in D&T and all pupils are involved in every aspect of the subject. Pupils in the foundation stage are included in D&T work. For example, they learn practical skills such as sewing a running stitch safely at an early age.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- analysing assessment data and using it to further improve individual progress.

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