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Mrs J Sara  
Gosforth Park First School  
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Dear Mrs Sara

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Thursday 24 May 2007 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 lessons.

Design and Technology

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in D&T are good.

- Pupils achieve well and make good progress from an average starting point. Standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. Achievement is good across a wide range of D&T activities which meet the needs of the National Curriculum well.
- Pupils' capability to generate creative ideas when designing and making is good. Research skills are developed effectively at an early

age and this is a strong feature of D&T work. Pupils use computers when designing products very well, for example when working on a Captain Cook project.

- Pupils talk with great interest and enthusiasm about their experiences in D&T. They thoroughly enjoy the challenges presented by the work and behaviour during practical work is exemplary.

### Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

The quality of teaching and learning in D&T is good.

- Consistently good quality teaching and learning was seen in the Foundation Stage and across the year groups. Lesson plans are detailed and thorough. Pupils are provided with good individual guidance during practical work which helps them learn more about the subject. The well devised projects and units of work are a strength of teaching and learning across the year groups.
- Resources are chosen well despite the limited storage space. This restricts the progressive use of more demanding tools and equipment in the later years.
- Good assessment procedures ensure D&T capability is evaluated. The school is considering reporting national curriculum levels gained in D&T more widely to pupils and parents.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good

- The QCA schemes for D&T form the core of the curriculum. They are carefully aligned with topic work and successfully adapted to ensure school schemes of work meet the needs and interests of all learners. Extended provision, for example the knitting club, supports the learning of D&T skills very well.
- Pupils successfully use materials, components and processes to design and make models and products. Reception pupils benefit from working on projects with children in Years 3 and 4. The older children act as mentors which is an exceptional feature to encourage more rapid progress.

### Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of D&T are good.

- Leaders and managers at all levels have a good understanding of the purpose of D&T and how to translate this into practice.
- The way the subject is consistently planned, organised, managed and evaluated is an exemplary feature of provision.

- The school's evaluation of work in D&T is accurate and well evidenced through high quality records and examples of pupils' work.

### Inclusion

Different groups of pupils achieve equally as well and all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully involved in the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- the use of more demanding tools and equipment year on year
- reporting about the standards attained in D&T more widely to pupils and parents.

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