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Mrs A Hodgson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hodgson

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 15 June 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.

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

Achievement and standards

Standards are above average and pupil achievement in D&T is good.

- Pupils start in the nursery and foundation stage with average skills and capability in D&T. They work with precision and make good progress learning how to design and make models and artefacts.
- Standards are above average in Key Stages 1 and 2. The focus on learning by taking apart and analysing existing products to find out how they are designed and made is a particular strength. The activity motivates pupils to achieve well. The school has amended schemes of work and, as a result, they are more effective.
- Another feature of work in D&T is the way pupils have a good grasp of technical language when using tools and materials. Achievement is

equally good across all aspects of the subject using a wide range of materials and components.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

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

- Teacher's subject knowledge is consistently good. There is a strong emphasis on technical accuracy and developing well thought out models and prototypes.
- Lessons are well planned and delivered. Explanations and questions are challenging and skilfully presented. The pace of both teaching and learning is good and could be even more rapid if work was more finely differentiated.
- Recently improved assessment systems are working effectively and there is a good balance between formative assessment and summary marking. As a result, pupils have a clear picture of standards they have reached in D&T. The routine collection of evidence, for example using digital photographs to record design and make activities using food, is an integral part of assessment practice.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum in D&T is good.

- A broad and balanced curriculum helps the subject to thrive. Qualifications and Curriculum Authority units are successfully aligned with topic and project work to make sure aspects of designing and making are covered systematically.
- Schemes of work meet the needs and interests of all learners. There is a wide range of activities which hold pupils' interest very well.
- The coverage of key design skills such as routine evaluation when making is exceptionally thorough.

Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of D&T are good.

- The school accurately evaluates work in the subject and is taking the right actions to make further improvements.
- A strong team ethos and rigorous coordination are strong features which support learning and raise achievement in D&T.
- All staff have a good understanding of the nature and purpose of D&T education. This is the result of thorough monitoring through lesson observation, work sampling and photographic records.

Inclusion

All pupils including boys, girls and those with learning difficulties are equally involved in the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- incorporating more finely differentiated work to increase the already good pace of learning.

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