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Mrs J Hall
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hall

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 21 November 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

Provision for D&T is very good overall with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

The standard of D&T capability is above average overall and in food and textiles it is well above average.

- Pupils make highly confident progress throughout the school. Achievement compared with their prior attainment is at least good across the full range of material areas. It is outstanding in food and textiles.
- The challenging tasks and lessons help the pupils to develop high levels of perseverance, determination and making skills.

- Designing is creative and pupils are encouraged to think innovatively. This is clear among pupils of all ages, for example pupils in Year 6 whose range of designs for puppets based on mythical beasts was most impressive.
- Pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment are palpable. They clearly see much value in learning to develop their D&T capability.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

Teaching and learning in D&T are good throughout the school and are in some respects outstanding.

- Teaching benefits from the high levels of subject expertise among those responsible for managing D&T throughout the curriculum. Attendance at in-service training courses has been valuable in helping the staff to achieve this level of skill.
- Pupils of different abilities are well taught. All are challenged appropriately by the work set and the high expectations of staff support the high standards of D&T capability which are attained.
- Staff have the confidence and class control to give pupils the freedom they need to develop their ideas creatively. This is an important reason for the pupils' high standards of designing.
- Lessons are very well planned and resourced for a wide range of practical activities.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed.
- The supervision of pupils is excellent, helping the school to promote high levels of health and safety.
- Assessment is good. The subject coordinator has a very clear insight into how well pupils are making progress throughout the school.

Quality of curriculum

Provision for D&T is very good throughout the school. It is excellent in food and textiles and in the special weeks set aside for D&T activities.

- The scheme of work gives a very good basis for the progressive and thorough coverage of D&T throughout the age range. It has been developed beyond the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's national scheme of work. The school has the sensible intention of developing teaching units further to support its intention to improve the curriculum overall.
- The main units of work are very well supplemented by the week-long activity programmes for D&T. These give pupils a variety of rich and absorbing experiences which contribute admirably to the development of their D&T capability.
- Very well planned creative and practical provision in the Foundation Stage gives pupils a solid platform from which to make good progress in D&T in Key Stages 1 and 2.

Leadership and management of D&T

The Leadership and management of D&T are very good.

- D&T has been given very good management attention in recent years and this has helped secure its firm place within the curriculum.
- The school has been highly effective in using the concrete and intrinsically interesting activities of D&T to strengthen learning in English and mathematics.
- The subject is very well coordinated throughout the school by the subject leader, well assisted by the collegiate atmosphere within the school and the cooperative class teachers and assistants.
- The subject is well monitored. Managers have an accurate picture of its current effectiveness and clear plans for future development.
- Resources are safely used and stored. They are not as extensive for resistant materials, systems and control, or computer aided designing (CAD) as they are for the rest of D&T. The school has taken further steps to develop its CAD position in association with other local schools and a university.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing further the provision for three areas of resistant materials, systems and control and CAD to bring it up to the excellent levels reached in food and textiles
- auditing the technical skills of staff and providing opportunities for them to develop their capability to teach these three areas to the high quality seen in food and textiles
- carrying out a search of published teaching materials for D&T to support the school drive to develop its curriculum.

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

Peter Toft HMI
Ofsted Subject Adviser for D&T