

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



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Mrs P Farey
Headteacher
Roos Church of England Primary School
Main Street
Roos
Hull
East Yorkshire
HU12 0HB

Dear Mrs Farey

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 May to look at work in 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 four lessons.

Design and Technology

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good overall.

- Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. They develop early skills in handling materials and in using them safely in the Reception class. Pupils make steady progress during Key Stage 1 and the majority reach the standards expected for their age. For example, they acquire specialist vocabulary to describe shape, texture and taste when sorting and classifying fruit and vegetables.

- By the end of Key Stage 2 most pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. They make good progress in building successfully on earlier practical skills and develop new knowledge of mechanisms, systems and control.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They know and understand basic healthy eating concepts and adopt good hygiene practice when handling food. Pupils enjoy and develop good collaborative skills. They enthusiastically develop ideas and designs to make a range of products. In doing so they make very good use of discussions and other pupils' views and confidently develop strong enquiry and evaluation skills.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

The subject is enthusiastically taught and the quality of teaching and learning overall is good.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. It is well developed through continuing personal development, teachers' thorough research and planning and excellent use of products and ingredients to support their teaching.
- Planning is based securely on units of work from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's national scheme. Some teachers review and annotate their plans after each lesson with pointers for development but this very sound approach is not consistent throughout the school.
- Good use of staff and pairing pupils to tackle activities together ensures pupils with learning difficulties are well supported and learn effectively.
- Teachers are developing confidence and accuracy in assessing pupils work. Class teachers know pupils' strengths and weaknesses and the level they are working at but, unlike assessment in the core subjects, they do not convey this clearly enough to pupils.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- A wide range of projects and units of work including food, systems and control are well planned. Together with the additional opportunities provided through competitions and cross curricular opportunities they ensure a secure foundation to develop pupils D&T capability.
- Good use of adults other than teachers and a strong emphasis on developing pupils' awareness of other cultures, particularly through food tasting activities, add to pupils' enjoyment of D&T.
- The school's access to sources of advice and guidance via the local authority and nearby specialist technology college help to maintain a curriculum that meets the needs of learners and excites them.

Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of D&T are good.

- You lead and manage the subject well in the absence of the D&T co-ordinator. Plans to improve teaching and learning are sound and are based upon clear self-evaluation.
- D&T has a firm place in the curriculum and supports pupils learning and achievement across the school.

How well is progression demonstrated?

- Work in Year 1 builds adequately upon practical skills pupils learn in the Foundation Stage.
- Clear expectations of what pupils should know, understand and do in each key stage is firmly spelt out in the school's D&T policy.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve
- ensure teachers consistently evaluate lessons and use the information to improve pupils' 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

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector