

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



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Mrs K Moore  
Headteacher  
Cherry Burton Church of England Primary School  
Cherry Burton  
Beverley  
East Yorkshire  
HU17 7RF

Dear Mrs Moore

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 1 July 2008 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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards in D&T are significantly well above average.

- Pupils enter Reception class with experience in using some materials and construction kits. They are beginning to work independently and some take great pride in finding out how things fasten together. Most pupils are beginning to use their drawings as a guide to help them to make basic design decisions such as following a patterned sequence of coloured beads to make a necklace.
- By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils make good progress. They make excellent progress in using textiles and demonstrate a very high level of accuracy in sewing and all pupils make creative individual responses to designing and making purses and coin holders. More able pupils plan their work confidently and in detail. Some are beginning to develop advanced drawing skills and they demonstrate a secure

understanding of the design process. Less able pupils also make good progress in describing the sequence of stages taken and in evaluating their work.

- Pupils continue to make good progress in learning how to use a wide range of skills and by the end of Key Stage 2 most can make detailed, annotated sketches and demonstrate an increasing ability to organise their work. They use their knowledge from earlier learning and other subjects such as science and mathematics to create successful working products.

## Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in D&T is good overall and outstanding in some lessons.

- Teachers' knowledge of the units they teach is thorough and good access to training and support enables them to confidently use tools and materials. Pupils are enthusiastic learners and teachers' expectations of pupils are high. Pupils are taught specific strategies to help organise their thinking.
- In the best lessons pupils respond well to rigorous questioning and explain the reasons for their decision-making. Year 2 pupils make good progress in learning how to measure, sew and review their work against criteria. Pupils enjoy D&T activities and particularly the challenge of learning new technical skills.
- Teachers use ICT and resources effectively in lessons to support explanations and to further develop pupils' knowledge of mechanisms and circuits. Teaching assistants and others know precisely what is expected of them and when to intervene to support pupils learning. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to record what they know very quickly through writing frames and different tasks that are well pitched to meet individual needs.
- Assessments of pupils D&T capability are routinely carried out and current tracking systems identify pupils who need further support and those that are doing well.

## Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- Pupil's interests and needs and the requirements and coverage of the programmes of study are well met. Pupils' literacy skills are well utilised in D&T; stories are used creatively as starting points to inspire designing and making activities.
- Enrichment activities are well established and provide additional time to develop and deepen pupils D&T experiences. Pupils enjoy applying their D&T skills to a range of community projects to improve the school. Extra curricular activities provide additional sewing opportunities and are popular with many pupils.

- Older pupils see the relevance of their D&T work and are keen to acquire more practical skills. They say: "Some of the things we do, inspire us to do even more things".
- Pupils enjoy cooking but opportunities to do so are limited in some year groups.

#### Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of D&T are excellent.

- You and your governors firmly support the development of D&T; self-evaluation is accurate and is used fully to underpin school planning. Care is taken to make sure that the subject is developed further. Continuing professional development needs are acted upon and network cluster meetings are helping the school to move practice on.
- The subject is well led. Monitoring and evaluation are firmly embedded and pupils' knowledge of health and safety is secure. Assessment and tracking procedures are developing and information is regularly scrutinised.

#### Subject Issue: progression from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2

Pupils make good progress particularly in developing their understanding of functionality and in applying problem solving skills.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- providing more opportunity for the higher achieving pupils to demonstrate what they know, can do and understand.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop design and technology in the school.

As I explained, a copy of this letter will be sent to your Local Authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Gina White  
Her Majesty's Inspector