

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)



22 January 2009

Miss G Chalk  
Headteacher  
Rivington Primary School  
Tennis Street North  
St Helens  
Merseyside  
WA10 6LF

Dear Miss Chalk

### Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 14 January 2009 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 D&T work in lessons.

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

### Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in D&T are good.

- Many children start in the nursery and reception classes with below expected skills in design and technology. They make good progress in the foundation stage and quickly learn how to innovate, think creatively and use practical equipment such as scissors with care and some accuracy
- All groups of pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) make equally good progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. As a result, standards are above the expectations for their age by the end of Year 6. Pupils talk enthusiastically about their work in D&T and thoroughly enjoy designing and making their own models and products.

## Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Planning is detailed and rigorous. Teaching and learning are consistently good and better across the year groups. Classes are well managed to make sure all pupils, including those with learning difficulties achieve as well as they can. Individual support and help is a strong feature, particularly when pupils are engaged in practical work.
- Design and make activities are routinely recorded and used well to inform assessment practice. The use of data on individual pupil's performance to speed up progress is at an early stage of development.
- Teachers' subject knowledge makes sure pupils design and make models and use recycled materials very well. The use of more rigid materials such as wood and plastics and control systems is less secure and the school is looking at ways of strengthening this.

## Quality of the D&T curriculum

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

- Provision in all year groups is effectively planned and organised to meet the needs and interests of the pupils. A strong feature is the promotion of creativity which is central to all project work from an early age. This is helping the school to develop new approaches to the curriculum building on national units of work and links with other National Curriculum subjects.
- The D&T curriculum is enriched by using visiting specialists such as local artists and real contexts for design work. For example, a Year 6 class set up a company called 'Shoe Sharks' and pupils made presentations to the directors to find the best slipper design.

## Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of the subject are very good.

- D&T is effectively planned, organised and managed at all levels. The shared vision of leaders and managers at all levels helps to steer developments. The subject is moving forward as a result of the right intervention by senior managers and the subject leader.
- School evaluation of subject performance is accurate and effectively evidenced. The school knows the strengths and weaknesses in D&T very well and the purpose of D&T is clearly understood.

The extent to which inequality and stereotyping are tackled in D&T:

There are no gaps in performance between the different groups of pupils including boys, girls and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The

school is very effective in tackling inequality and stereotyping in design and technology.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- extending teachers' subject knowledge to help pupils use a wider range of materials, tools and components.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school.

As explained in the previous letter, 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