

13 May 2009

Mr A Earnshaw  
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Dear Mr Earnshaw

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 24 March 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: Observations in four lessons, discussions with a group of pupils, discussions with the subject coordinator and other teachers, a scrutiny of pupils work and the analysis of relevant school documents.

The overall effectiveness of D&T was judged to be satisfactory

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory.

- Children in the Reception class develop a good foundation in working creatively and independently with materials to make models. They explore different ways of joining and sticking and are successful. Children are motivated to draw, write and talk about their models.
- In Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils' progress is satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 the standards they reach are in line with expectations for their age. All pupils are aware of the need to design and evaluate their work in order to improve their products. However, they make slow progress in some lessons because insufficient opportunities are provided for them to demonstrate their design skills.
- D&T lessons make a good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. Behaviour is good; pupils demonstrate well developed

skills of cooperation and team work. They are enthusiastic about D&T and want to do more of it. Pupils have a developing awareness of their own safety and that of others and a growing appreciation of the wider community through the projects they were involved in.

### Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

The quality of teaching and learning overall is satisfactory.

- Pupils know the purpose of lessons. They are able to demonstrate a degree of independence and creativity within the boundaries of the projects.
- Where teaching and learning are good pupils have well planned experiences to ensure they are familiar with the properties and characteristics of the materials they are to work with. Pupils use these opportunities well to design their products so that they will be able to make them successfully. Not all teaching is like this. In lessons where the whole class carry out similar activities some pupils, particularly the more able, are not given tasks which sufficiently challenge them or enable them to exercise design decision making and make products to a high quality. This limits their progress.
- Teachers employ assessment procedures adequately. However, teachers' planning does not build sufficiently upon earlier lessons or assessments to ensure that over time pupils make good or better progress.

### Quality of the D&T curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The school has an innovative curriculum in which D&T is playing an increasingly important part. Pupils have opportunities to use a wide range of materials. Visits and visitors enrich the pupils' work in D&T lessons. Piloting of the recently adopted curriculum developed by the Cornwall Design and Making Centre has been successful, but this has yet to be fully implemented in all year groups.
- Pupils' understanding of the application of D&T is well developed through good quality and meaningful cross-curricular links. For example, pupils modelled Anderson shelters and understood their purpose during the Second World War. They use the knowledge of pneumatics they learn in science to construct moving parts in their models.

### Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of the subject are good.

- The schools' commitment to the development of D&T is well demonstrated in the investment in acquiring a new curriculum model and in training the subject coordinator.
- The subject coordinator demonstrates an excellent understanding of the subject and his clear vision for improving the provision is shared by all staff.
- The evaluation of pupils' work is accurate and the coordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of D&T. However, the school recognise that he needs more opportunities to check the lessons so that he can ensure new developments are implemented effectively across the school.

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

- The school successfully ensures that all pupils have equal access to activities and the good quality of teamwork demonstrates pupils respect for each other. D&T lessons are particularly successful in motivating young boys who are reluctant to write.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning so that pupils successfully master the skills involved in designing
- raising expectations of the quality of each pupils' work so that they are challenged to produce even better products
- enabling the subject coordinator to check the quality of teaching and learning.

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

Tim Bristow  
Her Majesty's Inspector