

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



23 January 2009

Mr A Wickham
Headteacher
Weston Park Primary School
Hornsey
North London
N8 9WP

Dear Mr Wickham

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 23 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 with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards in D&T

Achievement and standards overall are good.

- Children make excellent progress in the Reception class. They work confidently and independently to make food products.
- Pupils make good progress in D&T as they move through the school and reach standards that are above the expectations for their age by the end of Year 6. Pupils develop good construction and research skills. They understand how to evaluate their designs and make individual and creative responses in a wide range of projects. In some year groups pupils cover work which is too similar to that studied earlier and their knowledge and skills do not develop as quickly.

- D&T is making an outstanding contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils are keen to learn, they follow health and safety rules and their behaviour is excellent.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

The quality of teaching and learning in D&T is good

- Teachers' class management is very good. Health and safety are well taught and pupils apply rules well when using tools and equipment. Most teachers have good knowledge of the units of work that they teach but their awareness of progression in the subject is less well developed.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported during lessons to participate in activities and make original products. However in some lessons pupils' poor cutting skills sometimes hinder the quality of their products.
- In the best lessons teachers structure learning exceptionally well, often by trialling and modelling the tasks they expect pupils to complete. For example, children's excellent progress in learning basic cooking skills is underpinned by effective use of text and visual instructions to guide children through the process of following recipes. In Year 3 pupils made excellent progress in applying their earlier research about the most popular fillings to the task of developing a 'best selling sandwich'.
- Plans to routinely check individual pupils' progress and assess their D&T capability are in development.

Quality of the D&T curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The D&T curriculum is broad and meets National Curriculum requirements. Teachers are adapting and modifying schemes of work in interesting ways. For example, pupils have opportunities to work with designers and architects and every pupil has an entitlement to cook. Pupils say D&T is relevant to careers and to life skills but they lack understanding of how some of the systems and processes that they learn about relate to the world around them.

Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of the subject are good.

- The nature and purpose of D&T are well understood by leaders at all levels. D&T is effectively led and well resourced. The subject leader makes a good contribution to advise and guide teachers but a lack of access to professional development courses impedes the further development of their technical skills.

- Self-evaluation is good and strengths and weaknesses link well to subject development plans. Informal methods of monitoring and evaluating have supported developments to date, but more systematic monitoring of the impact the curriculum has on pupils' learning and progress would usefully support the school towards developing outstanding practise.

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

- No stereotyping or gender differences in the performance of boys and girls were evident during the visit.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- reviewing the curriculum to ensure consistency in pupils' progress and learning across all year groups
- developing teachers' technical skills and their understanding of progression in D&T, and pupils' awareness of how D&T is applied in the world around them.

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

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector
Subject Adviser for Design and Technology