

13 July 2009

Mrs F Glaze
Headteacher
Derwent Primary School
St Marks Road
Derby
DE21 6AL

Dear Mrs Glaze

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 30 June 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 you, the subject leader for D&T, 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 satisfactory and improving.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory.

- Pupils' experiences in the Early Years Foundation Stage provide a firm base upon which to develop design and technology. Pupils make good progress in using scissors and develop basic construction skills.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils can make simple plans and identify materials and basic tools that they use. They are developing useful evaluating skills: they can say what they like about their work and are at very early stages in identifying what they could do differently.
- School data shows most pupils in Year 6 are working at Level 3 with a few beginning to achieve national expectations for their age. Pupils are able to work with increasing accuracy to measure and cut and they use a wider range of materials.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress from their starting points and reach standards broadly in line with average.

- D&T makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy investigating and making. They know about, and follow, safety rules when using scissors and they work collaboratively in lessons. They enjoy making food but few opportunities are planned for them to make healthy recipes. Older pupils confuse art and D&T and do not readily identify the difference between the two.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.

- Teachers' specialist knowledge is satisfactory and is developing with support. Lessons are well managed and teachers ensure pupils work safely. Where teaching is most effective teachers make tasks more challenging for more able pupils by introducing constraints, or criteria. Consequently pupils have to think more deeply and creatively about the task. Pupils are keen to make models that resemble their drawings and in Year 6 pupils are beginning to use information they have identified from their research to support their design ideas.
- Resources are used well to provide a range of choices enabling pupils to make design decisions to select and plan how they will use materials. However in some projects pupils do not have such rich opportunities: where this happens pupils tend to decorate rather than design the product they make.
- Assessment of pupils D&T capability is at very early stages throughout the school. Although the assessment system has recently been introduced teachers and pupils have quickly got to grips with it and some interesting developments are taking place. For example, pupils in Year 2 are beginning to use the next grade as their target.

Quality of the D&T curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

- The curriculum falls short of statutory requirements and pupils have few opportunities to learn about systems and control. The school know the deficiencies as a result of recent monitoring and have plans to fix them.
- Pupils have many opportunities to cook although they mostly make cakes or buns. Some projects are planned more rigorously than others but this unevenness means pupils miss out on developing knowledge and skills particularly in developing early cooking skills and nutrition.
- Pupils enjoy the contexts that the school has introduced as part of the cross curricular 'topics' they plan. However pupils do not fully understand some of their work and are unable to apply it to different contexts. For example pupils designed a logo for the local football team but do not understand why logos are commonplace or readily recognise other kinds of logos and trademarks.
- Trips and visits are beginning to contribute well towards research for some projects.

Leadership and management of D&T

Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory.

- The school know the strengths and weaknesses in the D&T curriculum and in pupils' work.
- Cross-curricular links are developing but teachers' lack of subject expertise holds back the development of rigorous technological links. Training is planned to tackle this issue and a useful link to another provider to support this step has been successfully established.
- The practice of assessment in the Early Years' Foundation Stage is providing a useful model to support D&T, although this is at early stages of development.

The extent to which the school promotes awareness and relevance of D&T to pupils and parents and carers

- The vision for D&T is based upon developing practical skills, co-operation and personal skills. Pupils are achieving in these areas but their progress in all aspects of the subject is currently constrained by limitations in the curriculum and teachers' subject knowledge.
- Pupils say they like D&T because they like making things and because of the variety of topics in cross curricular work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing teachers' knowledge and understanding of D&T to tackle gaps in the curriculum and improve the progress pupils make
- ensuring that the opportunities provided for pupils to cook and learn about food include a wider variety of foods and promote a balanced diet.

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 HMI
Subject Adviser, D&T