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Mr T Rigg
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Rigg,

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 8 October 2009, to look at work in Design and Technology (D&T).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on how the school promotes awareness and relevance of D&T to pupils and their parents, and the extent to which their views contribute to the school's evaluation of 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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of five lessons.

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

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress, many from low starting points. Capability to design and make is steadily developed as they move through the school. Achievement is satisfactory across a range of practical activities and attainment is in line with their ability and expectations for

their age. Pupils create innovative and original designs, for example, in Year 2 working with a local artist to design and make shelters. All different groups of pupils achieve equally well, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The strong emphasis on learning through practical activities is a good feature.

- The school is aware of more use of rigid materials and hand tools, such as saws and drills is an area, to help raise achievement further. Pupils say they thoroughly enjoy practical work. Their personal development in D&T is good, for example, developing presentation skills when explaining their ideas to adults.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is satisfactory.

- D&T teaching challenges pupils to think creatively and commands their respect. Resources are chosen well for D&T projects and pupils are encouraged to develop their research skills when using them. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and the school is planning to strengthen this, for example, by introducing a wider range of tools and components, particularly at Key Stage 2. A good feature is the encouragement given to pupils to help them develop creative and innovative thinking.
- Pupils are provided with effective individual guidance and help. Design and make activities are regularly recorded and evidenced through portfolios of work. The school is planning to make checks on individual progress more frequent.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- Appropriate contexts and materials are used to capture the interest of pupils and meet their learning needs. Opportunities to use structures, mechanisms, and to cook are embedded well. D&T work with food is a good feature and pupils find it relevant. The focus on developing creativity is enhanced by visits, for example, a D&T teacher working for the local education business partnership.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are satisfactory.

- The school accurately evaluates subject performance and areas for improvement. There is a clear vision for D&T and the school acknowledges that systems to regularly monitor D&T teaching and learning are an area to develop. Senior managers are ensuring the capacity to improve D&T is

maintained. Staff work effectively as a team on D&T activities and achievement in the subject is rising.

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

- Pupils and parents are very supportive of D&T work. Parents are regularly involved, for example, supporting in lessons and taking part in workshops run each term, such as puppet making in the Reception/Year 1 class, which is attended exceptionally well. Pupils see D&T activities as relevant to their future as one said, 'It makes you feel like you are an adult.'

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- making checks on individual progress more frequent
- monitoring D&T teaching and learning across the year groups
- improving teachers' subject knowledge, particularly at Key Stage 2.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school. As I explained in my previous letter, 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

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector