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Mrs S Loye  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Loye

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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons.

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

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Children make a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage to confidently develop skills to support them in making, using computers and controlling toys and robots. They learn to discuss and explain the things

they make and this contributes well to the development of their communication skills.

- In Key Stage 1 and 2, pupils continue to expand their knowledge and skills to develop a secure understanding of materials and their characteristics. They solve problems and are able to generate ideas well.
- Progress in lessons is good and pupils are learning at a rapid rate. Standards are in line with expectations for their age and, in each year group, a minority achieve more highly. Pupils' personal development is good. They hugely enjoy D&T, have good attitudes to learning and their behaviour in lessons is very good. Pupils are very aware of healthy diets and act safely.

### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is good.

- Teachers' subject knowledge and class management are good. Teaching assistants are well informed and are effective in supporting pupils' learning. Lessons are well-planned and detailed.
- Teaching is lively and interesting and staff make effective use of a wide range of teaching methods. Pupils learn well from each other because teachers plan opportunities for collaboration, discussion and feedback within the class. Pupils respond thoughtfully and maturely to questioning.
- Assessment methods are implemented consistently. The school is aware that more can be done to use assessment data to monitor individual progress and raise standards further. Throughout the school, pupils learn to critically evaluate their own D&T work and that of others, and this was demonstrated well in Year 2.

### Quality of the curriculum in D&T

The quality of the D&T curriculum is good

- The QCDA materials underpin good short- and medium-term schemes of work. They are adapted well to meet pupils' needs and are enriched with additional food based activities to support pupils' knowledge of nutrition and their development of basic food preparation skills. Pupils are acquiring a good understanding of the importance of function and they consistently design products to meet specific needs.
- Cross-curricular work is purposeful, planned well and makes good use of opportunities to promote pupils' cultural awareness. For example, Year 5 pupils are developing their awareness of slavery as a result of designing a mask for a fellow pupil to wear to match his costume in the local carnival.

- Older pupils say they are cautious in using tools, but they want to, and need to learn how to use wood and saws more frequently than they currently do.

#### Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- Senior managers fully support D&T and demonstrate their commitment to its development. The new subject leader is supported well and a clear vision for how D&T contributes to the wider aims of the school is emerging. Monitoring and evaluation practices are in place and while team structures have helped to support the implementation of assessment, senior managers are not complacent and recognise the need to monitor pupils' progress more systematically to raise achievement.
- The subject is accurately evaluated and plans are in place to promote its development. Staff are confident and share practice effectively to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The school effectively promotes awareness and relevance of D&T to students and parents

- Pupils are developing a good awareness of D&T. They see its relevance to future jobs and to making products they will need and use in the future. Some pupils use the skills and techniques they learn at school to refine ideas and to practise making at home. Parents are regularly informed about the activities pupils undertake in D&T.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- making effective use of D&T assessment data to systematically monitor pupils' progress to raise standards and further improve their achievement.

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

Gina White  
Her Majesty's Inspector