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Mrs R Goddard  
Headteacher  
St Paul's C of E Combined School  
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Dear Mrs Goddard

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: design and technology (D&T)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 9 November 2009 to look at work in 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 included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Achievement is good.

- Well-planned and imaginative activities in the Nursery and Reception classes enable children to develop their understanding of the world around them. They use simple tools, such as scissors, carefully in making products with a clear purpose. This provides a good foundation for D&T work.

- Progress is good across the school in a wide range of D&T-related skills and many achieve above the expected levels by the end of Year 6. Scrutiny of pupils' work confirms that good standards in D&T are firmly established in the school. A wide range of well-planned activities provide good opportunities for pupils to apply their D&T skills carefully to produce products of quality, such as the repeated patterns printed on t-shirts by pupils in Year 3 and the construction of moving toys, using cam mechanisms, in Year 5.
- Provision for pupils' personal and social development is outstanding. They are thoroughly engaged in what they do in D&T and are very proud of the products that they make. They learn how to use tools safely and are developing a strong awareness of how to keep healthy, for example by making a fruit salad in Year 1 and a healthy sandwich in Year 3. Older pupils demonstrate very well-developed personal and social skills when working in small groups, for example in undertaking investigations as part of their research before making a slipper. They speak with considerable confidence when explaining their ideas to others.

#### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is good.

- All teaching is at least good with some outstanding practice evident for the oldest pupils. Lessons are planned well and resources are organised well and used very effectively to ensure good use is made of time to advance learning. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use questions well to determine pupils' understanding and to challenge their thinking even further.
- The procedures for the assessment of pupils' progress in D&T are excellent. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to record this information in readiness for further analysis.
- The quality of support and guidance for pupils in D&T is excellent. This is especially so in the Early Years Foundation Stage, where staff actively encourage children to experiment with different materials and techniques to improve their skills. Support staff provide very good guidance to older pupils, for example when making fruit salads in the food technology area.

#### Quality of the curriculum in D&T

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- An exciting and varied curriculum provides good opportunities for the progressive development of D&T skills in many areas. Teachers link D&T very effectively with other aspects of the curriculum.
- Half-termly units of work provide a good balance to the overall curriculum. The incorporation of ICT in D&T is satisfactory. Older pupils develop good skills in the creation of animated videos but have less experience in using ICT to control and to manipulate motorised models.

- Visits, 'Imagination Workshops' on Fridays, cookery club and involvement in a partnership to develop creativity contribute effectively to the enrichment of pupils' learning. The variety and high quality of this work contribute significantly to pupils' enjoyment and understanding of the relevance of D&T.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management of the subject are good.

- The subject is led well. A clear vision for the place of D&T within the curriculum and for its further development is shared fully by the subject coordinator and school leadership. Monitoring and self-evaluation are good and fully support school improvement. The efficient gathering of data related to pupils' progress provides a good platform for the further analysis of patterns in achievement.

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

- The school demonstrates a very clear vision for the development of D&T. The subject is planned well and plays a very strong part in contributing to pupils' creative development.
- The involvement of parents is very good.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that older pupils are provided with more opportunities to develop their understanding of control technology and learn how to manipulate and control motorised models.

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

Philip Mann  
Her Majesty's Inspector