

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

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



11 January 2010

Mr N Clephan  
Headteacher  
Roundhay School Technology and Language College  
Gledhow Lane  
Leeds  
West Yorkshire  
LS8 1ND

Dear Mr Clephan

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 4 and 5 January 2010 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 students 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff, parents and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Students' achievement in D&T is good.

- A consistent and improving trend of significantly above average attainment is established in D&T. Students enter the school with attainment in line with the national average. They make satisfactory progress during Key Stage 3 and reach expectations for their age, but few boys reach the higher levels. Extensive out-of-hours support for all students contributes effectively to their success in Key Stage 4 and post-16 examinations, closes the gap between some ethnic groups, and enables students to

reach their targets and achieve slightly higher in D&T than they do in other subjects.

- Students make mostly good progress in lessons, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities who receive good support and guidance. D&T makes a good contribution to students' personal development. They enjoy and are proud of their work and are developing awareness of the moral and social responsibilities of designers and technologists. Students adopt safe and hygienic practices and, by the end of Year 9, are confident and able to make healthy meals.

#### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this effectively to develop resources and manage lessons and complex equipment safely. A wide range of teaching methods is adopted and engages students in learning.
- Teachers' use of their own work and examples from industry inspire students undertaking graphics and textiles courses. Seeing and discussing such examples deepen their understanding and help to demonstrate and raise expectations of professional quality.
- Students know the next steps to take in their work and a consistent system of assessment and feedback is established. However, presentation of work tends to be over emphasised in teachers' written comments.

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

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

- The curriculum is inclusive and meets requirements well. Students are very positive about the guidance and support they receive to move to college courses or university. Provision ensures all students are actively involved in cooking and local health initiatives also engage families. The challenge of designing and making for clients would usefully benefit students and provide further opportunities to contribute to the positive work underway in the local community.
- Schemes of work demonstrate a secure emphasis on sustainability and creativity and opportunities for students to use innovative materials are planned well. However, some projects in the Key Stage 3 curriculum are pitched too low and encourage repetition rather than challenge for every student.

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

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- Leadership ensures health and safety are covered well and monitored in the department. Staff apply professional development well to develop Key Stage 4 courses.

- A diverse range of activities characterises the work of the department. However, the impact of this work and the difference it makes to students' learning and achievement are not recorded well in the current self-evaluation or development plan. An exception to this is the recent well-considered plan for reviewing the implementation of the new assessment systems. Such strategic planning has led to a quick adoption and consistency of approach by staff.

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

Awareness and relevance of D&T to students and parents are good.

- Parents and students support and are aware of the vision for D&T. Parents value the professional quality of their children's work. Opportunities for families to participate in food activities are valued by parents: they say they provide good value for money and meet their needs.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- strengthening procedures to quickly and consistently evaluate the impact of actions and decisions on students' achievement
- ensuring the Key Stage 3 curriculum consistently challenges all students to promote their progress.

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