

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mr M Hayes
Headteacher
Grove House Primary School
Myers Lane
Bradford
West Yorkshire
BD2 4ED

Dear Mr Hayes

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 23 March 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 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.

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

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Most pupils start at the school with D&T capabilities similar to those normally found. The starting points are lower for a minority of pupils. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage learning practical and creative skills through tasks such as cooking buns and making models of their ideas based on stories. The good progress continues through the school for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- The school has a unit for the visually impaired and good individual support ensures the pupils engage as well as they can in all practical activities. For example, they design individual patterns for a photograph holder using specialist equipment. Pupils achieve well through a suitable range of D&T activities, such as designing and making money boxes in Year 4 and musical instruments in Year 5. They value the subject and talk with great pride about what they have created.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- Plans and delivery of D&T are well honed and a suitable range of appropriate resources is used. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and helps pupils to develop their ability to learn for themselves through D&T project work. Portfolios of D&T activities are kept and provide examples of progress and practice over time.
- D&T work is assessed using the school's systems and National Curriculum levels. Individual performance is recorded and checked against targets which are revised each year, for example 5% of pupils in Year 5 achieved Level 5 in 2009 and the target for 2010 is 10%. The school recognises a deeper analysis of the progress of the most able will identify if they are capable of achieving more at an earlier age.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- National Curriculum requirements are met using a combination of topic work, such as the Vikings, and national schemes of work. A strong feature is the use of external expertise, for example a visit to Keighley College to experience bricklaying when working on a stable structures project. Pupils' interests are met well using a good range of materials and components. The school is exploring the use of specialist equipment to help visually impaired pupils to engage in cooking and further develop their life skills. Extending the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to research and present design information is another area to explore.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- The vision for D&T is shared by leaders and managers at all levels and steers development well. School evaluation of the subject is accurate and the purpose understood. Good subject leadership and classroom management are ensuring standards continue to rise. Senior leaders are ensuring the subject continues to improve and move in the right direction. Governors support D&T, and it has a secure place in the life of the school.

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

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

- Communication is good. Pupils and parents receive regular information about what is happening, for example through curriculum newsletters. The subject is valued and its relevance recognised. The vision for D&T is shared informally at parents' evenings and through displays of work. Pupils look forward to their next D&T projects, as one Year 6 pupil said, 'The project is to design rockets that really work and I am very excited thinking about it'.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- evaluating pupils' progress in even more depth, particularly for the most capable
- extending the use of ICT to research and present design information.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school.

As I explained previously, 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