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Mrs S Dixie  
Headteacher  
Greenhill Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Dixie

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 pupils, 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 four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is outstanding.

- Pupils make excellent progress from very low starting points to be able to communicate their ideas, sketch and model using a range of materials. As pupils move through the school, they acquire and develop skills to plan and evaluate their own and each other's work. Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make excellent progress in D&T. School assessments are accurate and show an improving trend and most Year 6 pupils achieve the average standards expected for their age.

- Pupils make good progress in lessons and enjoy D&T hugely. Some pupils say they like it so much that they willingly do D&T activities at home. Pupils work safely. They follow good hygiene practice and understand why this is important. Pupils know about healthy foods and Year 6 pupils are developing awareness that some people need to follow special diets for health reasons.

#### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- Teachers create a calm, purposeful atmosphere in lessons. They make effective use of a range of teaching methods to engage pupils in learning. A superb feature in almost all lessons is the interactive use of information and communication technology (ICT), for example, to develop pupils' skills in designing packaging and to enable them to learn about designers and products. Teaching assistants provide effective focused support to pupils during lessons and this makes a significant difference to the way pupils settle to learn. Excellent support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Pupils' questioning and innovative thinking are expected to develop in D&T as they move through the school. Examples are demonstrated in some lessons, for example, some pupils are beginning to adapt recipes and develop unusual products such as carrot bread. However, further opportunities to develop these aspects need to be planned.

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

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

- A broad range of experiences provides relevant D&T activities and meets pupils' needs. A range of activities, based on stories and exploring materials in Nursery and Reception classes, provides a useful start to the development of children's basic making skills and enables them to make simple choices. Cross-curricular projects enhance pupils' D&T skills. However, further refinement of planning to enable pupils to progressively develop their problem-solving ability and a stronger emphasis on the creation of innovative design ideas and products could usefully enrich learning and challenge for all pupils.

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

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- The impact of leadership is reflected well in the very good resources, inclusion of pupils and confidence and competence of staff to teach D&T safely. Good analysis of data informs self-evaluation and the coordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in D&T. However, the well-defined vision and aims for D&T could usefully promote deeper evaluation of the impact that teaching and the curriculum have on pupils' learning.

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 and parents are well informed through weekly newsletters about what their children are studying in D&T. Parents' views and opinions are sought and inform pupils' work. Pupils are positive about the skills they learn in D&T and see the relevance of them to life and work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- using the D&T vision and aims more firmly to promote deeper evaluation of the impact D&T has on the quality of pupils' questioning and thinking
- reviewing the curriculum to ensure that pupils have more opportunities for problem-solving and to develop innovative design ideas and products.

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

Gina White  
Her Majesty's Inspector