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Mr M Beale  
Headteacher  
Holland Moor Primary School  
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Dear Mr Beale,

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 10 March 2010 to look at work in D&T.

As outlined in the 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 with outstanding features.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Many pupils have low and often very low starting points in D&T when they join the school in the Nursery and Reception classes. They make good progress and standards are average and above by the time they leave at the end of Year 6. D&T capability is developed well through projects, such as design and make a fairy tale house in Year 2 and balloon powered vehicles in Year 4. Achievement is good across a wide range of D&T activities which use pneumatic and mechanical systems,

for example to control models of moving faces. An outstanding feature is the strong emphasis on learning technical terms such as axles, chassis and bearings and, as a result, pupils make significant gains in their literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils thoroughly enjoy design and make tasks and speak with great pride about what they have produced.

#### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching of D&T is good.

- Pupils respect the teachers' good subject knowledge and learn how to make the products, that they design, work well. Practical activities make the best use of available time and a good range of appropriate resources is matched well to their design projects. Assessment practice and analysis of data indicating how well pupils are doing are good. The information is used effectively to plan the next steps in learning and the school is developing the already effective systems to check individual progress more frequently. National Curriculum levels are reported to parent and pupils every year. Pupils say they would like to be reminded of their levels when they start a new D&T project to help them improve even more quickly.

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

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

- A combination of national units of work and topic work, such as the Aztecs and design and make tasks, identified by the school meet the needs and interests of pupils well. They work on projects which help to develop their creative design skills, for example herb gardens and hedgehog houses. Opportunities to use food, mechanisms, wood and plastic materials are embedded effectively into the D&T curriculum. The school adopts a flexible approach to timetabling with a guaranteed time allocation used in different ways, including individual lessons and full D&T days, which works very well.

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

Leadership and management in D&T are good with outstanding features.

- D&T is highly valued and has a central place in the life of the school. The quality of teaching and learning is monitored routinely and capacity to improve the subject is constantly maintained. The school's own evaluation of D&T strengths and areas for development is rigorous and accurate. It is supported effectively by substantial records of individual design and make project work. An outstanding feature is the clear vision for D&T by senior leaders which is translated into practice in classrooms.

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 outstanding.

- Parents and carers are very supportive of D&T work. They receive information about what is happening through class curriculum newsletters every half term and through the school website. Plans and practice are well advanced to set pupils and parents design and make tasks on the school 'moodle'. They are completed at home and the products brought to school. Pupils are highly aware of the relevance of D&T and say they feel more like an adult because they know and understand how things work. As one pupil said 'I would like to know even more at an earlier age and have extra time to make what I have designed work even better'.
- Parents frequently work alongside their children on D&T activities in school, for example, during the visit, three fathers were working with their children designing and making clocks. The activities are extensive and also help to develop pupils and their families' practical cooking skills and awareness of healthy eating. Pupils are regularly consulted and their feedback is used to improve and develop D&T provision.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- reminding pupils of the level they are at when they start a new D&T project and their target when they have finished
- checking individual progress more frequently.

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