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Mrs L Finlay
Headteacher
St Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School
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Dear Mrs Finlay

Ofsted 2010-11 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 10 May 2010 to look at work in 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 six lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Most pupils achieve in line with, and some pupils achieve above, expectations for their age. Pupils' experiences in the Early Years Foundation Stage enable them to experiment with different materials and provide a useful platform to support their later learning in D&T. Pupils in most classes understand the function of the products they make and relate this well to the needs of those who will use them. They acquire practical skills at a steady rate. They know and apply health and safety rules very well and understand the purpose of such rules. Pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of pneumatics and give examples of common applications in the world around them. More able pupils recognise the differences in hydraulic systems. Those with special educational needs

and/or disabilities are well supported and make at least satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in lessons.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- Lessons are well managed. Teachers and teaching assistants use good quality resources effectively to engage pupils' enthusiasm from the outset. Teachers' specialist knowledge is used effectively in demonstrations to promote pupils' learning, accuracy and safety extremely well. Teachers' questioning in most lessons is successful and encourages pupils' thinking and reasoning skills.
- Assessment is developing and pupils are clear about what is expected of them in most lessons. However, teachers' planning does not sufficiently build on pupils' earlier progress to set progressively challenging work, particularly for more able pupils.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The D&T curriculum meets most pupils' needs and provides sufficient breadth to enable them to learn in depth about a range of applications of technology. However, care is needed to achieve a balance between focused practical tasks and designing and making activity that enables pupils to make informed decisions.
- Pupils' learning in D&T is enriched by planned curriculum links to science and through events such as science week. Many opportunities for collaborative work promote pupils' learning and they demonstrate a readiness to help each other.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- The subject is well led. Good health and safety practice, and D&T assessments, are consistently implemented by teachers. Developments in assessment mean the school is able to gain an overview of standards in D&T at any time, but pupils' progress is insufficiently checked to help inform teachers' planning.
- A clear view of strengths and weaknesses informs subject planning and thinking for the future. The school accurately identifies a need for support and professional development to improve D&T further. The school is moving forward in its development of an exciting curriculum but a shared vision for D&T is now required to take the next step.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing a shared vision for the continuing development of the D&T curriculum

- developing teachers' understanding of pupils' progress to inform lesson planning and, in particular, to provide greater challenge to more able pupils.

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 under the URN for your school. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Gina White
Her Majesty's Inspector