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Mrs T Caffrey
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Caffrey

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 19 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 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with practical and creative skills which are often much lower than normally found. They achieve well in the Reception class, for example when learning how to cut and join materials when making model boats. Pupils make good progress. The school recognises the pace of learning can be further improved by extending subject understanding to include more use of control systems and modern materials, such as the foam board used to make automata in Year 5. All groups of pupils make similar progress, including the above average number with English as an additional language.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching of D&T is good.

- Lessons are well planned and organised using original contexts for learning. Teachers' subject knowledge and use of specialist language provide an appropriate foundation for learning. The school is seeking to expand both aspects to help the pupils take the next steps in learning more rapidly. Resources are used and managed well during D&T activities, including work with food. A good feature is the help and support pupils receive and the good-quality questioning by teachers and support staff which challenge pupils to think like designers.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- D&T activities are coordinated effectively to meet pupils' needs and capture their interest. The focus on developing creativity in lessons is enhanced by other activities, such as the fitness club which encourages pupils to think about healthy eating as a result of the food products they have designed and made. The D&T curriculum is regularly reviewed to make sure it meets pupils' needs. For example, a project which involved planting seeds led to pupils identifying their own task to design and make a bird scarer.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- Staff share the vision for D&T and strong leadership is helping to make the right improvements. The school accurately evaluates the performance of the subject and the journey made to deliver D&T more effectively. It has identified the right areas for development, and in particular, the need to analyse pupils' attainment and progress more fully to inform learning. Staff are working closely as a team to make sure the subject continues to flourish.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- extending teachers' subject knowledge and understanding
- taking the next steps in D&T learning more rapidly by analysing information about individual performance in more depth.

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

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector