

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



2 June 2010

Mrs K Coker
Headteacher
Robert Shaw Primary School
Southfield Road
Western Boulevard
Nottingham
NG8 3PL

Dear Mrs Coker

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, a governor and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is satisfactory.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Pupils in the Reception class are beginning to identify simple materials and learn how to use scissors and other tools. With guidance, they can join and fasten materials together. This provides a secure foundation to their D&T work.
- D&T contributes very well to supporting Key Stage 1 pupils who are beginning to acquire and develop language and speaking skills. Pupils are keen to talk about their models. They readily explain how they made them and the features they like or dislike. Pupils make satisfactory progress from their low starting points to reach standards below what is expected for their age by the end of Year 2.

- Key Stage 2 pupils respond with lots of workable ideas when given opportunities to solve problems. For example, Year 5 pupils discussed the different kinds of seating that might be needed in the school's outdoor classroom. Some pupils are developing original and unusual ideas, such as seats that move to follow the sun. They are able to explain the properties of materials in simple terms and are aware of how some products work. However, these aspects are not taught in sufficient depth and this hinders their development and progress in designing and making. Pupils' progress by the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly satisfactory, given their starting points, but the standards they reach are below expectations for their age.
- D&T contributes well to pupils' personal development and enjoyment. This is demonstrated in their good behaviour in lessons and eagerness to learn. Some pupils choose to make models and do some basic cooking at home. Pupils follow health and safety rules when using tools and equipment and older pupils adopt safe working practices.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is satisfactory.

- Teachers' management of lessons and resources is effective in securing pupils' interest and engagement. Pupils responded well and made swifter progress in lessons where there was a clear and challenging purpose to their investigations. For example, Year 1 pupils made musical instruments that could make a specific sound to represent a character in a play. Pupils' learning also developed securely where there was a clear focus on users of products and where their needs were identified prominently. Some lessons did not do this and pupils were unclear about who they were designing and making for. In these lessons, pupils had opportunities to refine practical modelling skills but made comparatively slower progress.
- Planning and assessment systems are at an early stage of development. In some lessons, objectives were too broad to demonstrate to pupils what was expected of successful designing and making. These objectives did not support teachers sufficiently in accurately assessing pupils' learning.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides useful opportunities to support pupils' early development of practical skills. Teachers revisit some activities to adequately support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Teachers plan food-based projects well and provide good opportunities for pupils to learn how ingredients combine and to use sensory language to describe different tastes. However, teachers have insufficient understanding of progression more widely in D&T to support their planning of lessons. Opportunities to enrich pupils' experiences, for example in the recent vocational day and food production activity, helped

pupils to develop awareness of the relevance of D&T to jobs and the development of enterprise skills.

- The curriculum provides few opportunities for pupils to take account of users and their needs. The school accurately identifies that opportunities to learn about and to use electronics and control are limited in the current Key Stage 2 scheme of work.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are satisfactory.

- You have an overview of standards and ensure D&T is adequately managed. This is demonstrated in the effective provision of resources and the consistency with which teachers securely prioritise and assess health and safety risks in their planning.
- The subject leader has established systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching, learning and the curriculum. As a result, the school has an accurate knowledge of strengths and is taking steps to tackle weaknesses in D&T. The school knows that consistent and accurate assessment of D&T is not secure. Staff training and support to develop teachers' understanding of assessment is planned.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- establishing accurate and consistent assessment practice
- ensuring teachers have a clear understanding of progression in D&T to support their planning of lessons
- making sure that the users of products are identified more prominently and their needs are made clear in projects.

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