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Mrs A Sanderson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Sanderson

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 20 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 seven lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Pupils' experience of modelling is very mixed on entry to the school. As they move through the Early Years Foundation Stage, most children develop independence and learn basic skills, for example to cut and fold paper to make mini-beasts that reflect their ideas. This provides a strong foundation on which they develop designing and making capability.
- Pupils learn to work in teams and develop problem solving skills and independence. Pupils in some Key Stage 2 classes contribute to identifying design criteria and are beginning to use ingredients innovatively, for example to make cola-flavoured carrots. However, pupils' technical skills, knowledge of mechanisms and work with electronic components, for

example when making alarms, are underdeveloped. The school is aware of this and is developing the curriculum to tackle this.

- Pupils make good progress in lessons, particularly in Year 6, to reach standards in line with expectations for their age. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at early stages of learning English demonstrate increasing accuracy when making. They understand the purpose of the products they make and are developing awareness of users' needs and how they will meet them.
- D&T contributes significantly to pupils' enjoyment and confidence as learners. Their behaviour and attitudes to learning are good and they apply health and safety rules well.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching of D&T is good.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is at least good and outstanding practice is emerging in teaching and learning. Lessons are planned well to build effectively upon pupils' prior knowledge. Pupils are enthusiastic and quick to recall the purpose of the product and the users' needs. A wide range of learning methods, detailed planning, effective use of resources and clearly timed tasks characterise the very best lessons. Teaching assistants and specialist support are used effectively. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. For example, Year 5 and Year 2 pupils quickly moved forward in modelling their ideas ahead of the rest of the class.
- Pupils know what is expected of them in all lessons. Assessment is developing and excellent practice in recording pupils' progress is evident in Year 6, although this is insufficiently embedded across the school.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- Older pupils are developing an understanding of good design and an awareness of new technologies. They use information and communication technology appropriately to support their investigation and research. Pupils are successfully developing their awareness of consumer testing and how products work. D&T activities are planned to contribute effectively to pupils' development of literacy skills.
- Cross-curricular projects are thoughtfully planned to provide opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge of structures and to learn how to create unusual flavours when making Roman foods.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are outstanding.

- As the D&T coordinator, you have drawn upon your specialist knowledge to very good effect. D&T has moved forward progressively under your

careful stewardship. Areas for development have been tackled and actions are resulting in pupils making rapid progress, particularly in Key Stage 2. D&T guidance and support materials are used effectively to support teaching.

- Monitoring and evaluation practices are thorough and self-evaluation is accurate. This has increased consistency in teachers' planning, although the outstanding practice emerging in teaching, learning and assessment has yet to be shared to raise standards even further. Staff give health and safety rules high priority and pupils apply the rules effectively.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- recording pupils' attainment and progress from their starting points more comprehensively
- sharing the outstanding practice in teaching and assessment for learning more comprehensively across the school.

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