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Mrs H Clayton  
Headteacher  
Grassington Church of England  
Voluntary Controlled Primary School  
Acre Lane  
Grassington  
BD23 5LB

Dear Mrs Clayton

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 14 June 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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of one lesson.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Pupils' attainment is in line with expectations. Almost all pupils make satisfactory progress in designing and making. They acquire good technical skills and work with increasing accuracy and confidence in using materials, including food ingredients, tools and equipment. They know how increasingly complex mechanisms work in the models they make but their skills in solving problems to meet users' needs and their knowledge of control are limited.
- D&T contributes very well to pupils' enjoyment and personal development. They work safely and cooperatively together. Pupils know the reasons for hygiene and safety rules. They are able to discuss their work and identify improvements such as in the function of puppets, water mills and

lighthouses. Older pupils say they are becoming more independent and see D&T as useful for future jobs and life skills.

### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is good.

- Teachers' planning is structured well around learning objectives and pupils are clear about what is expected of them in lessons. Class teachers know which pupils are achieving the objectives and where they struggle. Support is focused well and to good effect to enable pupils to overcome difficulties. While more able pupils are given more to do, particularly when writing about their work, this is not always challenging them sufficiently.
- Focused questioning by staff is used to good effect to encourage pupils to think about materials and fastenings and to make choices about how they might be used. An emphasis on making accurately was demonstrated well in the Key Stage 1 class as pupils used templates to make their puppets large enough to fit their hands and fingers. Pupils at Key Stage 2 benefit from the use of specialists who enable them to investigate the application of pulleys and mechanisms and create large-scale working models.

### Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The curriculum meets requirements. Opportunities for pupils to develop food preparation skills contribute well to the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 curriculum. Good links to other subjects aid pupils' understanding of construction, electric circuits and where food comes from.
- The use of visitors, specialists and participation in the D&T activities organised through the local cluster of schools contribute effectively to widening pupils awareness of how designing and making is applied in different contexts. This work makes a strong contribution to pupils' enjoyment. Although pupils have an opportunity to experience programming and control, the school is aware that this is not sufficient within the curriculum to develop and extend pupils' knowledge. The curriculum provides few opportunities for pupils to meet users' needs in the products they design and make.

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

Leadership and management in D&T are good.

- The school uses its resources well to join with other small schools to enrich the quality of provision and to ensure experts make an effective contribution to pupils' learning in D&T. Health and safety are secure. Risk assessments are in place and staff and pupils apply them.
- Assessment in D&T is well established and enables staff to gain an accurate view of attainment across the school. The school is taking steps

to further refine assessment and a sharper view of pupils' individual progress is emerging.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring control technology is securely embedded in the curriculum and a stronger focus on users' needs is built into all projects
- improving teaching to ensure higher attaining pupils are fully challenged in all D&T lessons.

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