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22 February 2007

Ms J Harris
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Harris

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Design and Technology

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 5 February 2007 to look at work in Design and Technology (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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils work and observation of lessons.

Overall Judgement

The overall effectiveness of D&T was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

- The school knows achievement and standards in D&T are improving and your view of how well the subject is doing is secure.
- Pupils are achieving well and good standards of work, for example in food technology, were seen during the visit. No differences in the performance of boys and girls were found.
- Achievement is good across a suitable range of materials and progress has improved with more effective curriculum arrangements.

Quality of teaching and learning of D&T

- Good teaching is making sure pupils are able to understand and apply the skills and knowledge they need to design and make products.
- The quality of teaching has been maintained against a background of not being able to recruit specialist staff. Teachers with design experience are effectively deployed and work hard to expand their own subject knowledge and skills.
- Assessment systems are working effectively and the recording of progress using digital technology is a particularly strong feature.
- Pupils know how well they are doing and D&T teachers meet with high school specialists to moderate their judgements. The school knows the next stage is to analyse and use the assessment data to help plan and refine learning.

Quality of curriculum

- D&T activities have been reorganised and pupils make better progress as a result.
- Projects and tasks build on learning more effectively from year to year and the key aspects of the subject, including the use of computers to help design and make products, are covered.

Leadership and management of Design and Technology

- The subject is very well led and managed with all D&T teachers making a strong contribution.
- The school's management capacity to ensure the subject moves forward is good.

Inclusion

Boys and girls are not stereotyped in material areas and do equally well. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully involved in the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- Using data to intervene and improve individual performance.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop D&T in the school. A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector