

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



23 February 2011

Mrs K Allen
Headteacher
Westende Junior School
Seaford Road
Wokingham
Berkshire
RG40 2EJ

Dear Mrs Allen

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 10 February 2011 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 six lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is outstanding.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is outstanding.

- Attainment is well above average at the end of Key Stage 2 because all pupils make rapid progress from average levels at the start of Year 3. These high standards of work are fully exemplified by Year 6 pupils' extremely well made powered vehicles and skilfully modified clothes. Scrutiny of pupils' planning, photographs of their work and completed evaluations confirm that all pupils are able to make products of high quality using a wide range of materials within D&T related activities.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities demonstrate great enthusiasm for D&T because they see the relevance of the subject to their own lives and future economic well-being. Pupils state that they find the work challenging and fun. This was amply demonstrated by pupils in Year 5 during a lesson to investigate the best aerodynamic

configuration of fins for a water-propelled rocket. They used resources with precision to construct different prototypes, carefully fixing the different components together in readiness for testing their performance.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching of D&T is outstanding.

- All teaching is at least good with much of it outstanding. Lesson planning is comprehensive, clearly identifying the intended learning and success criteria required to support effective assessment. This ensures that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed progressively across the school. Subject knowledge is secure and all teachers use interactive whiteboards expertly to illustrate key teaching points with animated films and presentations. Good reference is made to subject-specific vocabulary, and questions are used effectively to check pupils' previous learning and to challenge their thinking even further. Many pupils respond very well. However, not all teachers target these questions to the specific needs of different individuals. Therefore, some pupils miss an opportunity to make a suitable response because often other pupils are more keen to do so.
- Learning in lessons is brisk but interspersed with good opportunities for pupils to consolidate new concepts. This is done through carefully planned practical activities in pairs and small groups. For instance, pupils in Year 3 lessons gained a greater understanding about the specific criteria to be considered when designing a toy by talking through their ideas with a classmate. Furthermore, links with numeracy were very effectively reinforced in these lessons by the teachers encouraging pupils to use either a Venn or Carroll diagram to consider these criteria on toy design in more detail. Such activities fully support the work of more able and experienced pupils. Well-briefed support staff actively enable pupils with special educational needs and/or those needing extra help to complete such tasks.
- Impressive D&T planning folders completed by each pupil facilitate teachers' thorough assessment of pupils' achievements and support their literacy development. The work in these folders is marked carefully to provide excellent guidance on what pupils need to do next to improve.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The curriculum is outstanding because it fully meets the needs of pupils and satisfies their interests. Staff actively engage pupils in making choices about what they wish to learn. For instance, for each termly theme, such as 'Commotion in the Ocean' they are encouraged to look at the resources available and think about possible 'learning pathways' by creating their own 'mind maps'. Pupils are highly motivated towards D&T because of this. Staff skilfully capture this enthusiasm for learning through structured planning to integrate the National Curriculum programmes of study for D&T with other subjects in a highly creative way.

- Good links with a local secondary school provide excellent opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to work at higher levels in control technology. An extensive range of extra-curricular clubs provides further levels of enrichment and engage with other members of the local community within the D&T curriculum.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are outstanding.

- You and the creative curriculum coordinator, supported by a team of teachers for the 'expressive and creative arts', have instilled a clear sense of vision for D&T. As a result, D&T sits within a totally creative curriculum that is supported by some highly effective assessment procedures to track and monitor pupils' learning. Pupils and parent/carers are very positive about these changes to the curriculum. Self-evaluation is accurate and based on regular monitoring of teachers' planning and pupils' work to monitor provision effectively and its impact on standards. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning within D&T lessons is at an early stage of development. This restricts the school's ability to identify areas for further improvement to achieve even higher levels of effectiveness.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- adopting a more focused approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning to raise pupils' outcomes even further.

I hope that 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 published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Philip Mann
Her Majesty's Inspector