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15 October 2009

Mrs C Haddock  
Acting Headteacher  
White Mere Community Primary School  
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NE10 8BA

Dear Mrs Haddock

Ofsted survey inspection programme – design and technology

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 6 October 2009 to look at work in design and technology (D&T).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on how the school promotes awareness and relevance of D&T to pupils and their parents, and the extent to which their views contribute to the school's evaluation of 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 included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is good.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is good.

- Children make a good start to learning practical and creative skills in the Reception class. Achievement is good and pupils learn through an appropriate range of activities, for example making a coat for a toy rabbit and building a den.
- Pupils make good progress in all aspects of designing and making as they move through the school and a significant proportion reach standards that

are above expectations. Skills are applied well using specific contexts for D&T activities, such as designing and making musical instruments in Year 5. This results in all different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, being able to produce creative products.

- Pupils' personal development is good. Attitudes to learning are characterised by sustained concentration when engaged in practical tasks and a strong determination to succeed. Pupils thoroughly enjoy D&T work, and particularly like developing their design ideas.

#### Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching is good.

- Lessons are planned well to meet the needs and D&T capabilities of all the different groups of pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and good use is made of appropriate resources to support pupils' learning. All staff work closely and effectively as a team to move learning forward and individual help for pupils is a strong feature. High-quality questioning by teachers and support staff ensures pupils of all abilities are challenged to think and work creatively when designing.
- Assessment information is used effectively to plan the next steps for learning and to evaluate pupils' D&T capability. The school is aware more can be done to monitor individual progress in D&T more rigorously.

#### Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The curriculum meets children's needs and interest well and is organised using national units of work together with other projects identified by the school. It is planned well with other subjects across the curriculum, for example, successfully integrating scientific knowledge of sound when designing musical instruments.
- Pupils' enjoyment of learning and the promotion of creativity are demonstrated well when they are engaged in practical work. The D&T curriculum is enhanced by after-school activities such as the 'wrap around care' and cooking clubs.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good.

- Pupils are achieving more in D&T as a result of significant recent improvement in the quality of leadership and management at all levels. Subject performance is evaluated accurately by the school and areas for development identified well.
- Recent changes in the way D&T is delivered are improving standards of work for all groups of pupils. D&T is continuing to move forward and all

leaders are working together to make sure change continues to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.

The extent to which the school promotes awareness and relevance of D&T to pupils and parents

Pupils say they find the subject relevant and interesting. The school shares its vision and examples of D&T work with parents using subject and class portfolios. Parents' views on shaping the D&T curriculum are represented through the parent governor.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- monitoring individual progress in D&T more rigorously.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock  
Her Majesty's Inspector