

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



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Mrs J Wells
Headteacher
Sinnington Community Primary School
Friars Hill
Sinnington
York
YO62 6SL

Dear Mrs Wells

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 11 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of D&T is satisfactory.

Achievement in D&T

Pupils' achievement in D&T is satisfactory.

- Most pupils achieve in line with expectations for their age, with particular strengths in their progressive acquisition of technical making skills. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities achieve well and develop their making skills. They are keen to try things out and contribute ideas in the teams they work in.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of sustainable design are at an early stage and developing. Although older pupils are aware of new technology and multi-functional products, this comes from their general awareness rather than specific learning in school.
- D&T contributes to pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils enjoy D&T and their behaviour in lessons is very good. They apply rules and

good hygiene practice when handling food and are aware of health and safety risks. Pupils are proud of the models they make. They recognise that they are gaining confidence in making, and enjoy practising cooking and model-making skills, that they learn in school, at home. They see D&T as relevant to future jobs, particularly planning skills, and value acquiring useful skills such as sewing on a button and being able to cook.

Quality of teaching of D&T

The quality of teaching in D&T is satisfactory.

- Teachers' management of lessons and organisation of resources are good. The range of questioning and insistence on pupils explaining their reasons for the answers they give are good features of the teaching. Planning is securely focused on stages of making. Pupils respond enthusiastically and take care, for example, to ensure accuracy of fit when making platforms for their Viking longboats. Teachers adequately explain the purpose of the lesson to pupils. However, the challenge and expectations to enable all pupils to make fast progress are less clear. Some older pupils are beginning to set their own expectations in terms of the amount of work they want to complete by the end of the lesson.
- Planning and assessment systems are developing, but currently do not enable the school to keep a close enough check on pupils' progress and learning. Pupils are unclear what is expected of successful designing and making.

Quality of the curriculum in D&T

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

- The curriculum is adequately matched to pupils' needs and meets requirements. The Early Years Foundation Stage provides useful opportunities to support pupils' development of practical skills. Cross-curricular projects, such as making Tudor houses, provide useful opportunities for pupils to develop accuracy in their technical skills and an awareness of functionality. Some of the recently developed cross-curricular projects provide few opportunities for pupils to exercise planning and decision-making skills.
- The curriculum provides few opportunities for pupils to take account of users' needs or to develop their awareness of current technological development. The school recognises the need for pupils to use information and communication technology (ICT) more widely when designing and making.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in D&T

Leadership and management in D&T are satisfactory.

- Leaders provide adequate support for D&T. This is demonstrated in the effective provision of resources, their accurate evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in D&T and the consistency with which teachers' record

assessments. Health and safety are appropriately prioritised and risk assessments for D&T tools, equipment and processes are securely in place.

- The D&T coordinator's specialist knowledge of technical skills is good and the effectiveness of his work in training and supporting staff in this respect is well demonstrated in pupils' outcomes. Some training needs exist in aspects of food technology and systems and control.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing planning and assessment systems to improve the quality of learning and to monitor pupils' progress more closely
- developing the curriculum to ensure pupils have further opportunities to take account of users' needs, develop awareness of current technological development when designing and making and to embed the use of ICT more securely
- ensuring teachers' specific training needs in food technology and the development of systems and control are met.

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