



# DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

PARENTAL ADVICE FOR TALENTED PUPILS



## Overall Design and Technology work

- \* Encourage your son to build up a diary/dictionary of terms and words used in Design and Technology each week. These key words will be used regularly in this subject area.
- \* Explore the journal called DATA. [www.data.org.uk](http://www.data.org.uk). This is aimed at design technology teachers but sometimes has information that parents/carers can use with their children (activities, websites).
- \* Try not to stifle your son's curiosity, encourage it. Obviously there has to be limits on experimentation i.e. your child destroying your home! But recognise that innovators usually break normal boundaries.
- \* Bring up in conversation and try to discuss ethical issues involved in technology in everyday life. These topics could be focused on environmental costs, food additives, waste materials and recycling.
- \* When your son is designing, stress that the first solution they think of is not always the best and they may have to experiment to come up with the perfect one. Help your child research and look at examples of products/themes etc and use them for ideas.
- \* Take your son to design related exhibitions. The Design Museum is excellent for contemporary work and for people to see the work of professional designers. This can allow children to appreciate good design and to see the leading work in society. Other museums helpful in relation to Design and Technology include the V&A and Science museum.
- \* Encourage your child to be a discriminating and thoughtful consumer - becoming informed of products that are natural/manmade, who the users are, costs, recycling issues etc.
- \* Encourage your son to communicate with companies so they can potentially become involved with a real project that will motivate them, expand their knowledge and provide them with 'real' experiences.
- \* Make sure your son is aware and clued up on health and safety issues, including the dangers of using equipment in the workshop or kitchen etc.
- \* Encourage your son to look at newspapers/reports/TV programmes for contemporary issues about designers, materials, technology, inventions etc. Ask your son to make comments on the suitability of the designs, the materials that have been used and the products themselves.

## Workshop / Studio based work

- \* Talk about and explore the products around your home with your son. Identify why materials were chosen for products, and why they are good or not as the case may be. This will help develop your son's analytical skills.

- \* Encourage your child to help around the house with DIY. Introduce to pupils different materials, their uses and properties. Pass on your knowledge and skills!
- \* Encourage individuals to carry out activities and explore the website [www.technologystudent.com](http://www.technologystudent.com). Work online includes that at KS3 and KS4 level, with important issues/information/tasks that would be of great value at GCSE in attaining the highest levels.
- \* Have a box of materials at home e.g. glue, scissors, card, paper, string, tape etc so your son can experiment with modelling and their manipulation of 3D shapes.
- \* Create tasks or problems based upon the environment surrounding the family for your son to try and solve in more ways than one. Redesign the school car park for maximum benefit. Imagine that a bridge is required to span a local stream or river. Find a more efficient way to store possessions in your son's bedroom.
- \* When your child is drawing, direct them into improving their colouring, drawing and labelling skills. Encourage these skills and the practice of sketching; these are core skills that will only improve with practice.
- \* Install Techsoft 2D Design package if you have a home computer and encourage use. This is the main package we use in "Computer Aided Design – CAD" and a skill that can be advanced with practice. This is free to order and install online for school children.
- \* Photo manipulation can be both fun and challenging and can act as a valuable tool for creativity. The design packages we use in Design Technology are Serif Photoplus and Serif Page Plus. You can purchase these through school. You could encourage the use of these packages at home to promote creative designs on the computer, and to enhance your child's key skills to enable innovative results.

### Catering:

- \* Encourage your son to prepare and make dishes of food at home. They will become familiar with ingredients and learn about smells, taste and shape.
- \* Involve your son in the buying of groceries. If they choose their own food in supermarkets by considering price, ingredients, brand etc it will enable them to become more aware of the foods/brands around.
- \* Suggest your son reads the labels of groceries before they buy, use or eat foods. They should become familiar with what they are actually eating, what the benefits are and the symbols shown.
- \* Encourage your son to watch the popular food programmes on television and read contemporary books to inspire and give them ideas.
- \* Encourage your son to try different foods that are unusual to them, to notice the taste, texture and colour. Visits to markets, China town and specialist shops could be of great value in doing this.

