

## Moving forward with design technology at Shenley Court School, Birmingham

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Shenley Court School is situated in the southern part of the city, 4 miles away from the large car manufacturers 'Rover' which is based in Longbridge.

The school was built in the early 1960s and at present houses over 1500 pupils aged 11 to 18 years drawn, at present, from a genuine comprehensive catchment area.

### ■ Pupil environment

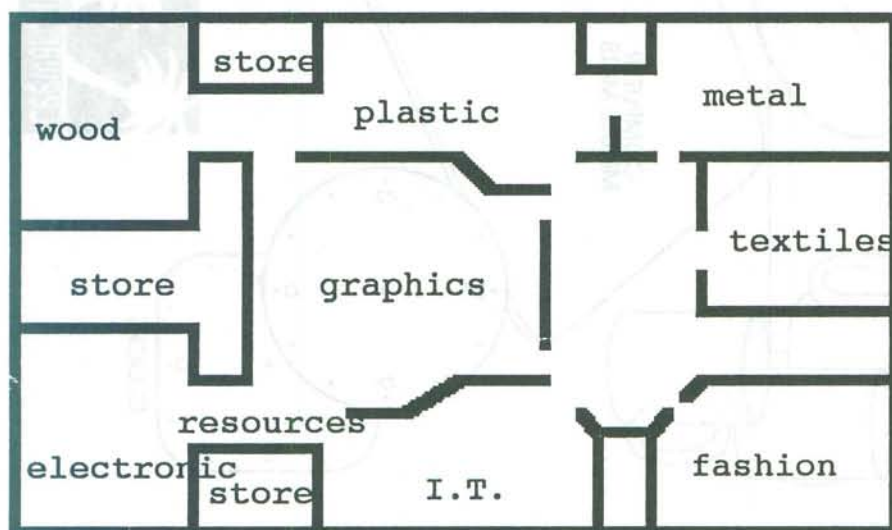
The 'Craft Block' remained structurally unaltered until 1989 when new needs brought about radical change. The C.D.T. department had strong working relationships with 'Rover' as early as 1986 when training officers endorsed an internal certificated course aimed at pupils following Design and Realisation courses. It became clear that the traditional workshop layout did not satisfy the departments needs and as a result a joint venture 'Partnership' began.

Following many months of combined effort the department was transformed into an open learning design technology centre and named 'The Rover Technology Centre' in recognition of the support Rover has given the School.

The Rover Technology Centre offers a wide range of facilities to pupils:

- a 2- and 3-dimensional resource base,
- a design and graphics area,
- an IT base,
- a fashion and textiles area,
- an electronics workshop,
- 3 manufacturing areas (wood, plastics and metal),
- a reception and display area,
- a 6th form base (still under development).

Figure 1



In addition to the Technology Centre pupils have access to a number of other Design Technology areas:

- 3 food technology areas,
- a Business Studies suite,
- art facilities which include ceramics and photography.

### ■ Curriculum Structure

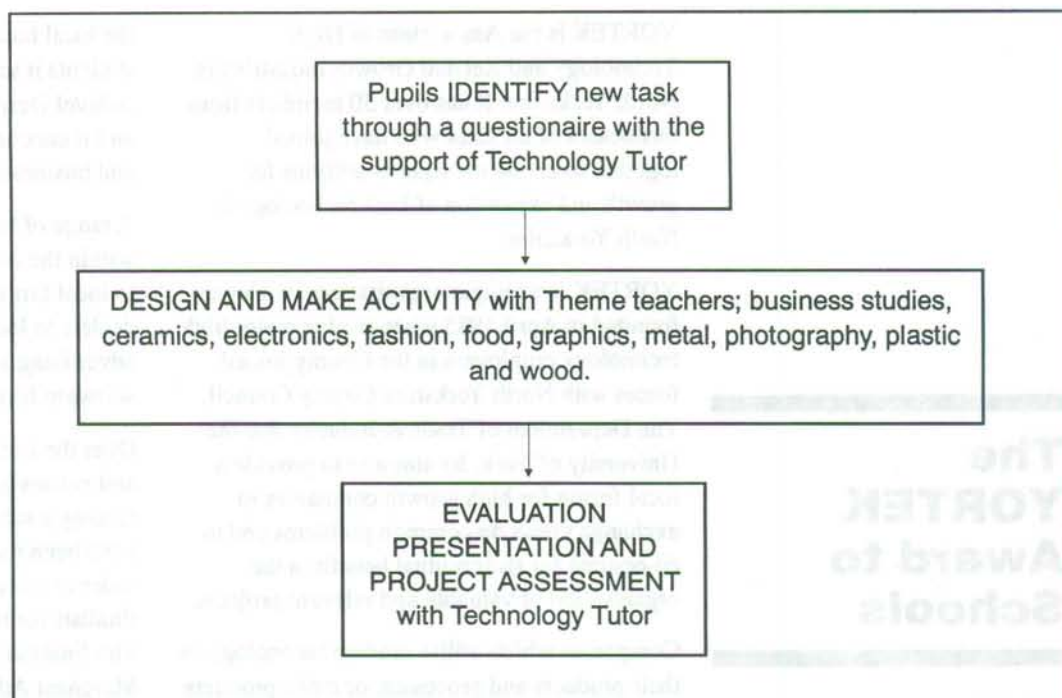
The introduction of National Curriculum 'Technology' brought the need for major reorganisation of the departmental curriculum structure which would take into account the new demands. My greatest areas of concern focused around providing both a broad and balanced curriculum whilst being able to monitor and accurately assess pupils' progress, despite there being 900 Key Stage 3 pupils at Shenley Court School. At the heart of the curriculum structure is a thematic approach. Year 7 pupils experience 5 themes of 16 hours each. Year 8 pupils experience 4 themes of 20 hours each and Year 9 pupils 3 themes of 28 hours each. Where possible themes are selected so as to coincide with topics covered in other areas of the curriculum, in order to support D&T research. The theme structure is as shown in Fig. 2.

### ■ Pupil experience

When a pupil arrived at Shenley Court School he/she is assigned a Technology Tutor who is responsible for monitoring and recording the pupils progress through key stage 3. During this first theme pupils will be introduced to the department's Design and Technology Workbook (which is common to each area of the subject thus giving a broader appreciation of the design and make process). After experiencing their first theme with their technology tutor each pupil will complete a questionnaire which helps the pupil identify a new area of work for the next theme. Completely new groups are then formed and each pupil will go to a Theme Teacher and experience a different area of Technology. Due to the open layout of much of the Technology Department's facilities pupils have the freedom to temporarily visit other areas and teachers to complete certain aspects of their work. At the end of the second theme, all pupils report back to their Technology Tutors for presentation and project assessment, and take with them their workbook, (designing), evidence of project work, (making), a self evaluation sheet and a



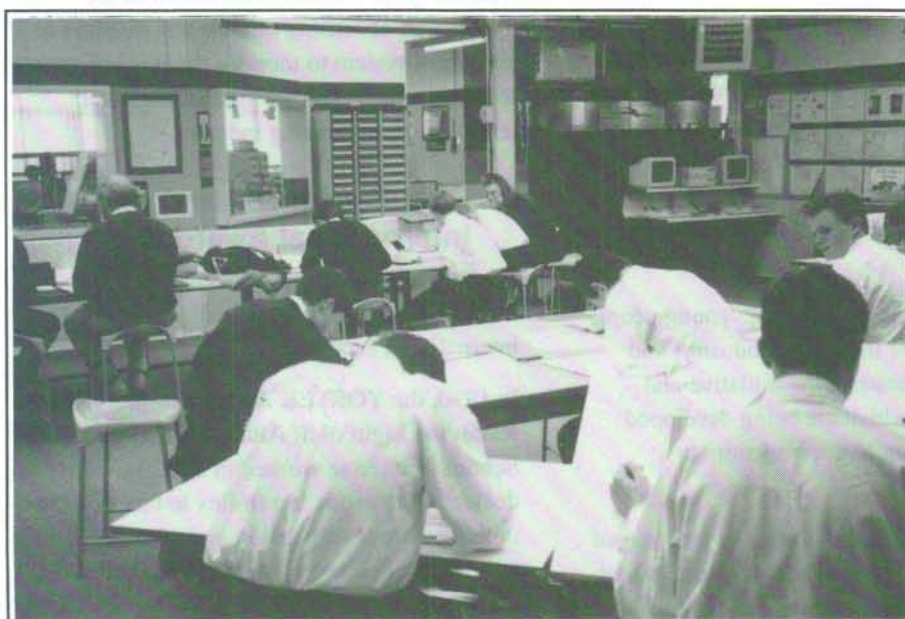
Figure 2



grade of performance given by their Theme Teacher. Each pupil will then take turns in presenting their work to their Technology Tutor and group peers. This enables the Tutor to complete the assessment and the pupils to share some of the experiences of the presenter.

Pupils will then complete another questionnaire, and with the support of their tutor identify a new task.

In order to ensure that pupils receive a balanced education and do not select the same medium repeatedly all pupils' experiences and movements are monitored using a computer database. This also logs performance and attendance.



## ■ A Case history

THEME — Medieval Times

TIME — 20 Hours running parallel with History Departments delivery of Medieval Times

INTRODUCTION — A combined Technology/History educational visit to Chepshow Castle.

### PUPIL ACTIVITIES/OUTCOMES

Art/Design — calligraphy menus and invitations for banquet, ceramic tableware and table decorations eg. Papier maché boars head.

Food — preparation for a medieval banquet, a medieval banquet.

Graphics — a model castle, model medieval village, card armour and heraldic crests.

Metal — Jewellery using medieval times for design sources.

Textiles — Flags and banners using heraldic crests and symbols, costume for medieval banquet.

Wood — working model of medieval war machinery eg. trebuchets, battering rams and mangonels.