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28 October 2010

Mrs P Campbell
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Campbell

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 11 and 12 October 2010 to look at work in citizenship.

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 learners; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observations of eight lessons, assembly and form time.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is outstanding.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship are outstanding.

- Students have very good knowledge and understanding of the key concepts of citizenship across both key stages. They can reflect on and discuss a wide range of citizenship issues at a local, national and global level. Their political understanding is good; they understand how public finances are allocated and the differences between local and national government.
- Students' skills of critical enquiry, advocacy, participation and responsible action are exceptionally well developed. They apply these skills to consider a wide range of topical, controversial and real-life issues. They enjoy their learning, have a very strong voice in the school and are confident that they will be listened to and taken seriously. The school has numerous

examples of high quality, student initiated projects which affect change in the school and the wider community.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, are committed and enthusiastic. They deal well with controversial and sensitive issues and use a variety of approaches and strategies to involve students in learning actively about citizenship. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used imaginatively to bring current issues to the classroom. Discussion and debate are key features of learning and students are encouraged to express opinions and listen to others.
- Teachers play a very effective part in encouraging students to reflect on how they can make a difference through participation and responsible action. Students of all abilities engage with enthusiasm in school and beyond.
- Teachers know how well their students are doing and use questioning effectively to ascertain levels of understanding, but do not always set targets nor make it clear what students need to do to make further progress.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is outstanding.

- The curriculum is responsive to local, national and global issues and is constantly reviewed and revised to keep it relevant. Issues, such as human rights, globalisation and sustainability, are covered in considerable depth and linked to much of the active citizenship work.
- The curriculum builds continuity and progression in students' learning because there is scope for revisiting key topics within and between key stages to build deeper understanding. It is very well-matched to students' needs. For example, those on the alternative curriculum programme take award-bearing courses in citizenship and also engage in a range of active citizenship projects.
- The quality of curriculum enrichment, out-of-school learning, visits and use of external agencies is outstanding. Subjects such as English, science, history, geography, art, information and communication technology and religious education tackle a range of citizenship issues and support the curriculum very effectively.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- Leaders and managers are very ambitious for the role of citizenship in the school. There is a vision for citizenship at the heart of whole-school

improvement planning with clear links to the wider school ethos, the global dimension and community cohesion.

- The department is very well resourced in terms of materials, time and allocation of staff responsibility. The subject leader has specialist expertise and an informed vision for citizenship. He inspires confidence and commitment from staff and students, is able to motivate others and champions citizenship work across the school. There is a strong record of innovation, review and self-evaluation, informed by best practice.
- The school makes clear links between its citizenship education and the duty to promote community cohesion. Many individuals and groups in the community come into contact with the school and its students through the wide range of outreach work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- embedding an assessment system that enables students to understand in detail how well they are doing and uses target-setting to help them to improve.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop citizenship 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

Janet Palmer
Her Majesty's Inspector