

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



25 November 2010

Mr W Daunt
Headteacher
De La Salle School
Mill Brow
Eccleston
St Helens
WA10 4QH

Dear Mr Daunt

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 9 and 10 November 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 students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of 17 part-lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is satisfactory.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship are satisfactory.

- Students have good knowledge of human rights issues, the environment and the range of faiths in the United Kingdom. Some have satisfactory understanding of issues such as the criminal justice system, government and parliament, the economy, the role of publicly funded and voluntary organisations, the European Union and global institutions. For others, their understanding of these issues is limited.
- Students are generally interested in citizenship topics and welcome lessons where they are encouraged to debate and discuss current affairs.

- Students participate very well in an extensive range of citizenship related school and community based activities. Many hold responsibilities within the school as, for example, prefects, student listeners, reading buddies and school council representatives; some students initiate and lead on projects, such as the bereavement group. These activities contribute very well to students' personal development and enjoyment and make a strong contribution to community cohesion.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is inadequate.

- In the lessons that are satisfactory or better, teachers' subject knowledge is secure and students make progress that is broadly in line with their capabilities. However, in too many lessons planning does not match the requirements of the national curriculum, the level of challenge is too low and the learning is insubstantial.
- Students have few opportunities to undertake sustained pieces of work in citizenship and expectations of the standards of written work are lower than in other subjects.
- Teachers are unaware of how well students are achieving in citizenship across the key stages or what needs to be done to help them progress. Work is assessed rarely and marking does not make clear to students what they need to do to improve.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is satisfactory.

- There is a core of learning activities, although some key concepts are delivered more substantially than others. Rights and responsibilities are covered well across the curriculum but less attention is given to other areas, such as local government or the legal system.
- Some modules offered have only tenuous links to the National Curriculum programme and not all teachers understand the difference between citizenship and personal, social health and economic education.
- Some contributions from other subjects support the citizenship curriculum very well. For example, in a mathematics lesson students explored the use and misuse of statistics in the media by analysing the presentation of charts on government expenditure. However, not all subjects understand fully the citizenship requirements and none assess students' progress to citizenship assessment criteria.

The leadership and management of citizenship are inadequate.

- Self-evaluation and action planning have not been sufficiently systematic or thorough to affect improvements in outcomes.

- The monitoring of teaching and learning in citizenship does not effectively inform opportunities for subject-specific professional development. As a result, some staff lack the necessary confidence and expertise to deliver the subject effectively.
- Target-setting in citizenship is not used effectively to raise expectations and improve outcomes.
- The recently appointed subject leader is sufficiently well informed about current requirements and initiatives in citizenship. With the support of senior leaders in the school, there is satisfactory capacity to improve.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring the curriculum is coherent and comprehensive across both key stages
- improving the quality of teaching and learning through appropriate monitoring and evaluation
- ensuring students' progress in citizenship is assessed thoroughly and effectively reported on
- improving subject leadership and staff training.

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