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Mr J Lynch  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Lynch

### **Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: English**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 30 November 2010 to look at work in English.

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 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four part-lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is outstanding.

### **Achievement in English**

Achievement in English is outstanding.

- Pupils join the school with knowledge, understanding and skills which are broadly in line with those found nationally. Pupils' attainment by the end of Year 6 is consistently high. In 2010, provisional results indicate that all pupils achieved Level 4 and nearly two thirds achieved Level 5, which is well above the average nationally.
- Performance in reading is stronger than in writing but is no greater than the gap nationally. The variation between reading and writing is more marked at the end of Year 2.
- Pupils make outstanding progress from their starting points. Boys make particularly impressive progress as do pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

- In lessons, pupils make very good progress. They enjoy English and show excellent attitudes to learning. They make the most of opportunities to discuss their work and are eager to share their ideas. For example, all the pupils in one class volunteered to report back after talking in pairs about the emotions of a character. In all classes, pupils settle to work promptly, understand what to do and often support their own learning by using their targets or criteria for success to improve their work. Older pupils make relevant and helpful comments about the work of others.

### **Quality of teaching in English**

The quality of teaching in English is outstanding.

- Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to plan lessons with very clear objectives and challenging criteria for success. They set high expectations for pupils, emphasising key skills linked to pupils' individual targets. Pupils respond very positively to the challenge and produce high-quality work.
- Teachers engage pupils' interest through a very good range of activities which includes exciting reading of texts, drama techniques and regular discussion. For example, pupils were encouraged to imagine themselves listening to a storyteller around a camp fire before retelling an incident from 'Beowulf'.
- Teachers use questions very effectively to extend pupils' thinking and to challenge them to explain and justify their ideas. Marking is detailed and offers useful suggestions to pupils on how to improve their work. Older pupils regularly comment on each other's work, using specific criteria, and say that this helps them to see how to improve their own work.
- In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the teaching of phonics is precise and linked very effectively into writing tasks so that children successfully apply their understanding in building words and sentences.

### **Quality of the curriculum in English**

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- The curriculum covers a full range of texts and genres, including poetry, non-fiction and drama. Whole texts are used effectively to engage pupils' interest and to stimulate a range of writing. Pupils use speaking and listening skills regularly to enhance their learning and enjoy drama activities such as 'freeze framing' aspects of a story to help plan a narrative.
- Increasingly, pupils are challenged to apply their literacy skills in other subjects or topics but this is not yet regular enough to test their ability to select correct approaches and adjust their skills to fit a particular purpose. There are very effective connections in creative work, such as linking art with writing poetry.

- There are good opportunities for enrichment in English through the writing club, competitions and theatre trips. Pupils say that they enjoy English, especially the opportunities to write creatively. However, they do not use computers in English regularly, for example to review different media or modern forms of communication.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in English**

Leadership and management in English are outstanding.

- You have a very clear vision for English founded on promoting pupils' enjoyment and setting very high expectations. There is a very accurate understanding of strengths in the subject and areas for further development. Priorities for improvement are clear and well focused.
- Teachers work well together and share a commitment to high standards. They benefit from very effective training and exchange good practice.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress regularly and review their targets. You track teaching and provision rigorously. There is no complacency in the school and staff set constantly challenging targets.
- The school has maintained high achievement over several years and has made improvements in areas such as the Early Years Foundation Stage. There is very good capacity to improve further.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- developing more opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills through topics and other subjects.

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

**Martin Cragg**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**