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Mr M Kiely
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Kiely

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 19 and 20 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 and a tutor period.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is good.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship are good.

- Students demonstrated good skills in enquiring about citizenship issues at local, national and global levels in PSHE and in other subjects, including RE, geography, English and drama. For example, detailed individual projects on crime including recommendations for action were seen in both RE and geography.
- Students demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of key aspects of citizenship, especially of diversity in the UK and aspects of human rights and law. Overall, knowledge and understanding are uneven, reflecting curriculum provision.
- Participation and action feature in the curriculum, and students have good opportunities for advocacy and to campaign on issues of concern to them.

Many students are involved in holding posts of responsibility as representatives, for 'student voice' activities, including deciding on and raising support for charities and outreach work. Notable projects include the 'listening campaigns' on local issues and the student initiated Niger Appeal.

- All students spoken to and observed in lessons demonstrated enjoyment of citizenship, especially the discussion and exploration of topical issues, such as their exploration of values and prejudice in the 'This is England' project in drama. They particularly commented on the challenge of issues where different viewpoints come to bear, citing for example, their involvement in peer-assessment of presentations related to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Teaching observed in eight lessons, in a range of subjects linked to citizenship, was good or outstanding.
- Features of these lessons included good subject knowledge, well-planned activities that engaged students in consideration of citizenship issues, excellent relationships that allowed risk-taking, good selective questioning and well-chosen activities that moved at good pace.
- A good range of resources is used, including effective use of interactive whiteboards for both teaching and learning.
- Within this very positive picture, the effectiveness of lessons was occasionally diminished by the selection of less engaging materials, use of worksheets, or insufficient follow-up questioning.
- Students' work is assessed, sometimes with subject levels and targets, but not against citizenship criteria. Work seen was generally marked well with helpful comments.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is good.

- The citizenship curriculum is complex, comprising core units in PSHE and through other subjects across the curriculum. Additionally, all subject links to citizenship have been mapped against the citizenship programme of study.
- Although these have been mapped into a curricular framework for each of Key Stages 3 and 4, the overall pattern that emerges is uneven and there is no central curriculum document that displays citizenship planning, linked to learning objectives and assessment criteria.
- The subject curriculum is augmented successfully with specific projects such as 'peace and justice week' when the normal timetable is suspended, an election to accompany the national election, the 'Planet Earth' recycling

event, and a sustained programme of topical news sessions in the tutorial programme.

- Additionally, students are involved in a wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities that encourages participation and action including charity work, debating, recycling and overseas links and visits. Post-16 students are affiliated to 'West London Citizens'.
- The curriculum is also supported by the school's day-to-day systems, for example the promotion of restorative justice.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are good.

- The school has a strong vision for citizenship that is entirely in keeping with the school's ethos, aims and values, although this is not articulated as well as it could be. Senior leaders have taken this forward so that citizenship activity permeates the school.
- The school has promoted citizenship across the curriculum so that every department has given thought to its potential, albeit some of these need further guidance to maximise their contribution.
- Students' voice activities are highly valued; students appreciate this, know that their voice is heard and that they have good opportunities for action.
- Middle leaders, particularly in PSHE and RE have taken a lead in developing the citizenship curriculum. As yet, however, there has not been a curriculum leader with specialism or training to consolidate this work and take it forward.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- consolidating the curriculum through the development of a citizenship scheme of work
- developing the assessment and reporting of citizenship
- considering how subject leadership can be strengthened.

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

Scott Harrison
Additional Inspector