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25 October 2010

Mr D Deane
Headteacher
St Thomas of Canterbury Primary School
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Higher Broughton
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Dear Mr Deane

Ofsted 2010–11 best practice study: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 13 October 2010 to look at work in English.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about best practice in English. The publication will include case studies about individual providers. If your school is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment before publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: meetings with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of documentation, and observation of three lessons.

Features of good practice

- Effective senior leadership that is strongly focused on high-quality teaching and outcomes for pupils, sets high expectations, and encourages teachers to think for themselves and share good practice.
- Very good subject leadership, characterised by good collaborative work, enthusiasm and high levels of subject knowledge.
- A very good start in literacy for pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage with considerable emphasis on developing pupils' speech and language.
- An effective phonics programme that is well staffed, flexible in meeting pupils' needs, and taught in active ways that engage and motivate pupils.
- Very good strategies for encouraging pupils to read for enjoyment, including the developing use of the well-resourced library, close monitoring of pupils' home reading, and placing good-quality texts and authors at the centre of the curriculum in English.

- A range of effective strategies that motivates boys, leading to better than average progress.
- An innovative and well-planned curriculum, with English at the centre, that links subjects well, engages pupils, and enables them to apply their literacy skills in a range of other contexts.
- Evidence of lively and effective teaching.

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

Philip Jarrett
Her Majesty's Inspector