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Mr I Worthington
Headteacher
Castle View Primary School
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Dear Mr Worthington

Ofsted 2010–11 best practice study: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visits on 6 July and 16 November 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 subject leaders, teachers and groups of pupils; scrutiny of departmental documentation; a discussion with the Chair of Governors and a visiting actor; and observation of four lessons.

Features of good practice

- Achievement in English is outstanding. Attainment is above average at the end of Key Stage 2. This represents excellent progress from below-average starting points on entry to the school.
- Pupils are extremely well-motivated by teaching and the curriculum in English. They enjoy their lessons and take a great deal of interest in both reading and writing.
- The school has created a distinctive and effective approach to English. Some of the key elements include a very well-developed approach to writing and a substantial emphasis on speaking and listening, including an imaginative project involving a local actor.
- Reading standards are very high and most pupils achieved Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2 in last year's unvalidated results. Pupils enjoy the

whole-class texts that teachers read to them and are keen to use ideas from their reading in their own written texts. Older pupils enjoy providing support for younger pupils in paired reading sessions.

- Writing is particularly well taught through the workshop approach. This enables pupils to make very good progress. Key elements include: regular opportunities for pupils to produce extended writing; good support through high-quality 'working walls' in all classrooms; and very effective teaching through careful planning, good teacher modelling and an emphasis on editing work. As a result, pupils feel confident about writing as reflected in the large number of pupils who enjoy writing for themselves at home.
- The annual programme of work with a local actor is very successful in helping to develop pupils' confidence and their oral abilities. Pupils enjoy these sessions very much. They are integrated well into the curriculum and teachers learn a great deal from them about the use of drama strategies in their own classroom work.
- There is a very strong consistency to work across the school in English. This reflects a focus on teachers sharing good practice and learning from each other. The peer coaching approach is innovative and highly effective.

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