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Mrs J Steeden
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Steeden

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 18 January 2011 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, pupils and two governors; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons and several other related activities.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is good with some outstanding features.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement in citizenship is good with some outstanding elements.

- Pupils are encouraged to behave thoughtfully, respect each other and demonstrate a good understanding of right and wrong. The school ethos and atmosphere reinforce this well; the subsequent impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour is impressive.
- Pupils are particularly knowledgeable about rights and responsibilities and fairness and justice. Their knowledge and understanding of the diversity of the UK are developed less well, although the school recognises this and has plans underway to strengthen this aspect of the curriculum, through a number of linking projects with other schools in the UK and abroad.

- Pupils demonstrate compassion and respond thoughtfully to a wide range of charity fundraising events. They value the school's approach in asking their views, appreciating that they have a voice in school matters.
- Good opportunities are provided for taking responsibility and these have a notable impact on pupils' confidence and self-esteem. In one lesson observed, a Year 6 boy contributed well to a lesson on caring for living creatures with younger pupils. Pupils appreciate the strong sense of community in the school; the older ones readily take responsibility, recognising they are role-models for younger pupils. They willingly support each other and speak proudly of their school as a 'large family'.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Lessons are conducted in a supportive and encouraging atmosphere with excellent relationships evident. Pupils are eager to learn, demonstrating much enjoyment in their learning. They respond well to the good level of challenge provided.
- Teachers are confident in encouraging pupils to reflect on issues and contribute their ideas. A range of approaches, including individual and group work, is used effectively to build excellent cooperation skills from the Early Years upwards. Consequently, by Year 6, pupils demonstrate excellent personal and social skills.
- Inclusion is a real strength of the school. Individual needs are met carefully. A number of pupils who have been less successful in other schools are achieving well. Careful attention is paid to supporting pupils with social or emotional needs so that they can build the self-esteem and confidence necessary to participate successfully in lessons. Teaching assistants are used effectively to ensure that age-appropriate activities are introduced.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is good.

- Many aspects of the subject are threaded successfully across the curriculum. This integrated approach helps pupils to make links in their learning and consolidates their understanding. This was illustrated well in a highly successful lesson observed. Pupils considered the issues of discrimination and justice surrounding the persecution of the Jews through their literacy work on fables, myths and legends. Pupils were able to draw on prior learning about segregation and racism and consider the relevant issues with sensitivity and insight.
- The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to discuss issues, express their ideas and form opinions. They do this respectfully with genuine interest in others' views.
- Recent curriculum activities are fostering pupils' knowledge and understanding of the environment and issues around the sustainability of

resources, although there is scope for further work here and an opportunity for pupils to organise and implement their own environmental campaign in school.

- Most aspects of the citizenship curriculum are given thoughtful attention. However, the role of voluntary organisations, charities and pressure groups in highlighting and drawing attention to issues and concerns in the world today is covered less well.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- The wider school ethos and atmosphere strongly support active and responsible citizenship and reinforce the importance of respect for others. A strong sense of team work is evident across the staff and governors; all ideas and contributions are valued with staff members encouraged to share their expertise, thus providing good role-models for pupils and supporting citizenship learning well.
- Resources to support the curriculum are good; displays are of an excellent quality and suitably reinforce pupils' learning.
- Citizenship learning makes a strong contribution to community cohesion, particularly within the immediate school community. Excellent support from parents and friends of the school for a range of school projects and events contributes strongly to 'the family feel' that the children describe.
- The leadership team is suitably self-critical and forward-thinking in terms of how provision might be developed and strengthened. A number of suitable plans are at a developmental stage.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- consolidating plans to develop school links in order to inform pupils' knowledge and understanding of the diversity of the UK
- developing further opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, for example, through a school council or an eco council.

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

Judith Matharu
Her Majesty's Inspector