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Mrs S Hall
Headteacher
Statham Community Primary School
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Dear Mrs Hall

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: history

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 February 2011 to look at work in history.

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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history is outstanding.

Achievement in history

Achievement in history is outstanding.

- Attainment is high by the end of Key Stage 2 and most pupils make excellent progress in developing their historical skills and understanding. Pupils experience a wide range of stimulating activities both inside and outside the classroom, such as how young people experienced the Second World War by visiting the Stockport Anderson Shelter Museum. Their reflective thinking about the Tudors and the Romans is excellent and demonstrates how well the general school approach to developing reflective thinking works in practice.
- Teachers encourage pupils to think carefully about a wide range of sources before answering questions. The focus on enabling pupils to generate their own questions is fully developed in the very well-planned series of long topic research homework tasks. These are designed to enable all pupils to learn how to research very carefully, and how to

present their findings most appropriately for feedback to the whole class. Pupils said that they really enjoyed these tasks.

- Pupils' personal development is excellent in history. They said that history lessons 'make you use your imagination'. Pupils demonstrated their well-developed chronological skills by accurately sequencing pictures of houses from different periods and reasoning which gap in time between them was longest. They could reflect sensibly about how things had changed over time. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and pupils work extremely well together in small groups, being particularly keen to help each other and share their ideas.

Quality of teaching in history

The quality of teaching in history is outstanding.

- Teachers develop excellent relationships with pupils. Lessons are planned extremely well to ensure that the activities engage all pupils. Lessons are based on very precise learning objectives which are shared clearly with pupils.
- In lessons, excellent support is given to those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they make as good progress as the other pupils. Marking in pupils' books is of high quality and comments help them to see how to improve their work. Pupils said that they valued these observations by teachers.
- Teachers' tracking and recording of the progress of individual pupils in their development of historical skills has improved very well over the last year. There is a very clear format for indicating which skills need to be revisited and improved for individual pupils. However, the relatively new assessment and tracking process is not yet fully embedded in all year groups.
- The use of information and communication technology to develop pupils' understanding of topics and improve their presentations to the class is outstanding. The school's development of a virtual learning site has been used extremely well by history teachers and pupils are adept at accessing and using it for their work.

Quality of the curriculum in history

The quality of the curriculum in history is outstanding.

- The school has worked extremely well as part of a local networked learning community to develop high quality learning resources for its exciting thematic and topic focused 'Foxy curriculum'. The history curriculum has also clearly benefited from this process.
- History retains discrete time in each year group as 'Mr Fox the time traveller'. A rolling programme of history topics has been coordinated well and linked strongly to other topics being studied.
- There is an excellent focus on developing pupils' historical knowledge and understanding and these are tracked extremely well by teachers.

- The school organises a very wide range of visits to places of historical interest locally and pupils say that they enjoy these very much. Good use is made of the museums in nearby Stockport and also of the locality around Lymm. The school makes excellent use of the large number of visitors it invites to give talks and share experiences, including grandparents in the Early Years Foundation Stage. These supplement the history curriculum extremely well.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in history

Leadership and management in history are outstanding.

- The new coordinator has been supported very well by the previous one and both have ensured that history has been developed extremely well in the school. Both teachers have an excellent grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of history at the school. They are supported extremely well by other staff who share a genuine interest in history as a school subject. The subject is being monitored very well.
- Subject evaluation and development planning are excellent.
- The curriculum is planned extremely well indicating how topics build on each other across time. The mapping of the progression of skills is excellent.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the new assessment procedures are embedded thoroughly in all year groups.

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

Peter Limm
Her Majesty's Inspector