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Mr J C Weaver  
Headteacher  
Carlton-le-Willows School and Technology College  
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Dear Mr Weaver

### **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 2 and 3 March 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 and students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; observation of a tutorial session and six lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is outstanding.

### **Achievement in citizenship**

Achievement in citizenship is good with outstanding features.

- Overall, students' knowledge and understanding of the subject's key concepts are very secure across the full breadth of topics. Impressively, by Key Stage 4, political literacy is good – the result of secure knowledge built progressively from Key Stage 3. Attainment at GCSE in Key Stage 4 is consistently above the national average for grades A\* to C. Although there was a dip in 2010 in the number of students gaining the very highest grades, overall, all ability groups are currently achieving well.
- Students value citizenship learning, believing it to be important for their future lives. They demonstrate the ability to reflect on and evaluate a range of issues and relate their learning to their own lives with confidence.

- Good opportunities are provided for students to write in depth on a variety of citizenship themes. Some of this work is of excellent quality, suitably exploring contrasting views on issues and drawing well-informed conclusions, demonstrating good understanding.
- Opportunities for students to take responsible action are extensive with large numbers involved. There are many examples of thoughtful and strong leadership; these make valuable contributions to the cohesive nature of the school. The roles range from acting as house and sports captains and peer mediators to positions on the school council and with the eco action group. Sixth-form students make strong contributions in organising fundraising events for a variety of causes. Consequently, students' personal development through active participation is outstanding.

### **Quality of teaching in citizenship**

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Citizenship learning is characterised by well-planned and structured lessons built around relevant subject content. Teachers use a variety of approaches and resources effectively to stimulate students' thinking. Much enthusiasm is evident from the small teaching team.
- Teachers deal with potentially sensitive issues well, creating an open, supportive climate in lessons that promotes good dialogue and encourages reflection on issues. Occasionally, opportunities for students to discuss their own ideas in pairs or small groups are limited in the haste to move the lesson on swiftly. Some opportunities are missed to stretch more able students at Key Stage 3 by posing suitably challenging questions.
- Assessment procedures are developing well. These are varied and well-structured, and include useful peer- and self-assessment with an appropriate focus on process as well as content. Generally, written work is marked well; however, occasionally the quality of teachers' comments varies.

### **Quality of the curriculum in citizenship**

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is good with some outstanding features.

- The time available for discrete provision at Key Stage 3 is well planned around content that builds depth and progression to Key Stage 4. This is reviewed and revised regularly in response to national and global issues and changing circumstances.
- The subject programmes are well balanced with equal attention paid to key concepts and key processes.
- Aspects of citizenship are suitably enhanced both through the wider curriculum and a number of curriculum initiatives. For example, the theme days and business enterprise days cover much relevant material in terms of exploring the issues of sustainability, identity and cultural diversity.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship**

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- Strong support is evident for citizenship at a senior level. The status of the subject has been improved and secured, indicating clear commitment in terms of the allocation of curriculum time and resources.
- A range of recently introduced initiatives and developments at a whole-school level effectively reinforces the status and importance of citizenship and responsible action. In particular, the system of vertical tutoring is a key contributor to the promotion of cohesion across the school in supporting positive relationships, together with promoting a sense of identity and belonging. 'Discipline with dignity' reinforces personal choice to students and taking responsibility for their own decisions. The school's 'Big Respect' rewards and awards schemes recognise positive contributions as well as academic excellence. The student research group has a significant role in contributing to school policies on teaching and learning. Students appreciate that their contributions are acknowledged and valued.
- Excellent support is provided for potentially disadvantaged students. For example, the mentoring scheme for minority ethnic students to explore issues around their identity and heritage is excellent inclusion practice, and contributes strongly to students' well-being.
- The subject leader is highly skilled, energetic and committed. She has established strong programmes of study, supports colleagues admirably and leads by example. Teachers are appreciative of the quality of resources and the good support provided. Monitoring and evaluation procedures are robust, accurate and in line with those for the whole curriculum.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- promoting greater consistency at Key Stage 3 by:
  - ensuring that teachers' specialist knowledge is developed
  - ensuring that lesson activities are suitably stretching, particularly for the most able students
  - sharing best practice across the subject team.

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**