

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 March 2011

Mrs M Elston
Headteacher
Hempnall Primary School
The Street
Hempnall
Norfolk
NR15 2AD

Dear Mrs Elston

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 8 March 2011 to look at work in English.

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 parts of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is satisfactory.

Achievement in English

Achievement in English is satisfactory and improving.

- Results from national tests in 2009 indicate that the attainment of Year 6 pupils was broadly average. Teachers' assessments for Year 6 pupils in 2010 show improvement and attainment was above average, especially in reading. The attainment of Year 2 pupils also improved in 2010.
- In 2009, Year 6 pupils made satisfactory progress from their starting points. The school's assessment information indicates that Year 6 pupils in 2010 made at least satisfactory progress and that some made good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities made good progress.
- In the lessons observed, pupils made at least satisfactory and often good progress. They showed enthusiasm for their work and settled quickly to

tasks. When given the opportunity, they used their initiative well and reflected carefully on what they had learnt. They responded well to writing tasks across the school.

Quality of teaching in English

The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory with good features.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly with clear objectives. In the best lessons, they match work carefully to the differing ability of pupils and use teaching assistants well to lead groups.
- Teachers use a wide range of activities and resources to engage pupils' interest, including effective use of modern technology. In the best lessons, they ask a range of questions to secure pupils' understanding and ensure that most participate. However, this is not yet consistent across all classes.
- Teachers use detailed checklists to help pupils to organise and check their work. In the best lessons, pupils are confident in using them to improve their writing and to assess their own work and that of their peers.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, including detailed analysis of assessment pieces. They comment relevantly in relation to the objectives of the work and give pupils guidance on what they should improve. However, this guidance is not always clearly linked to those parts of pupils' work where it should be applied.

Quality of the curriculum in English

The quality of the curriculum in English is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is suitably broad and covers reading, writing, speaking and listening equally. It presents a sound range of forms of writing and genres. Pupils enjoy gathering information themselves before writing, such as after a trip to a wind turbine or in the eco-school project.
- Teachers provide increasing opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills as part of other subjects or topics but they do not routinely use specific targets or learning from English in these tasks.
- Pupils report that they sometimes use computers to aid their work in English. In two of the lessons seen, small groups used computers to practise alphabetical skills or to compose writing. However, pupils also report that they have few opportunities to work in groups or to use drama in their learning.
- The good range of enrichment activities includes regular trips, visiting writers, competitions and a film club.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in English

Leadership and management in English are satisfactory and improving.

- The school has a clear policy for English with relevant objectives. Senior staff have set well-focused priorities for improvement to develop pupils' writing and teachers' use of assessment.
- Senior staff monitor pupils' progress carefully and use this information to identify those who require additional support in their learning. The school is in the process of changing to an electronic system for recording assessments and analysing progress to improve the capacity for identifying areas of weakness for individuals or groups of pupils.
- Senior staff have an accurate understanding of the quality of teaching, based on regular lesson observations. Teachers review pupils' work across the age groups together with staff from a partner school to ensure the accuracy of assessments.
- The school's work to create greater consistency in teaching and assessment has been successful. Several recent initiatives are beginning to take effect and are raising achievement.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- further improving the quality of assessment by:
 - ensuring that pupils are clear exactly where and how the targets set for them may be applied in their work
 - successfully implementing the system for monitoring pupils' progress to ensure that key areas for improvement are readily identified
- improving the curriculum by:
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to learn through activities such as group work and drama
 - ensuring that pupils recognise and use skills and knowledge learnt in English when they write in other subjects.

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

Martin Cragg
Her Majesty's Inspector