

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



22 March 2011

Ms L M Marshal  
Principal  
Pilton Community College  
Chaddiford Lane  
Barnstaple  
EX31 1RB

Dear Ms Marshal

### **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 9 and 10 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; and observation of 12 lessons, a Fair Trade event organised by students from Years 10 and 11 and two assemblies.

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

### **Achievement in citizenship**

Achievement in citizenship is good with some outstanding features.

- Students have a good understanding of most key concepts within the curriculum. They are particularly strong on rights and responsibilities, identity and diversity and features of democratic government. Students gain good knowledge and understanding of how governments in different countries work through the school's modern foreign language specialist status and the International School Award. The school has extensive links with a number of countries which students visit regularly through the well-established exchange programme. These include France, Germany, Uganda and India. Students also learn about other countries, their culture and language, for example Taiwanese culture and Mandarin Chinese.

- Students are very skilled at researching, discussing and debating topical issues and events. They listen actively, form opinions and express their own and others' views with enthusiasm and confidence. When given opportunities for extended research and writing, they respond with work of an excellent quality, exploring causes, effects and consequences for individuals, society and the potential for personal or collective actions to bring about change. For example, in a Year 9 history lesson, a group of students undertook independent extensive research on propaganda and morale and how leaders around the world have persuaded their people to behave. They also cited propaganda by the media and the way this can potentially manipulate thinking, for example, during the Holocaust. They also reflect on current international affairs and the impact on people of different countries.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They have respectful and supportive relationships which promote full and frank discussion of sometimes controversial issues. Students demonstrate excellent ability to reflect on and evaluate a wide range of issues at local, national and global levels. They have excellent opportunities to be active citizens across the school and beyond. A very large number of students eagerly take up responsibilities to lead and work with others to raise funds, support the school through a range of roles, including as members of the school council, prefects, and as head girl and boy.

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

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Most of the teaching observed was good, illustrating a number of strengths. Some of these include: very good relationship with students resulting in a positive learning climate; good use of modern technologies and other resources to stimulate learning; effective classroom organisation and management strategies; high expectations of all students' work, contribution in lessons and behaviour around the school.
- In the best lessons, teachers use a wide range of stimulating activities which prompts good levels of engagement. In particular, new technologies are used to introduce subject material through a variety of carefully chosen photographs. Effective use of resources promotes students' interest and stimulates lively discussions. For example, in a well-planned series of geography lessons, students discussed and debated as to why Newham was selected to host the world Olympics and its impact on the local people. Occasionally, when teaching is less effective, the citizenship dimension is less prominent in the lesson, the subject material is not always made explicit to students' own contexts; consequently, opportunities to explore their own views are less well developed.
- Teachers provide a good level of ongoing feedback in lessons which encourages students and prompts their engagement in discussions. However, formal assessment in terms of citizenship learning is underdeveloped.

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

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is good.

- Citizenship provision is delivered mainly through Personal Development Curriculum (PDC), English, modern foreign languages, religious education, history and geography. This cross-curricular provision extends to the tutorial sessions and five collapsed timetable days during the year. Other opportunities are created by students themselves. For example, two students from Years 10 and 11 organised an exceptionally well-attended event through local sponsorships on fairtrade during the lunch hour. Such events provide valuable contributions to students' learning.
- The school's specialist language status and its International Award make excellent contributions to global citizenship. For example 'Identities and diversity: living together' enables students to explore different cultures represented in Britain. However, currently, the overall picture of provision is not mapped and analysed in sufficient detail. Provision, overall, may be stronger than it first appears; however, this has not been clearly identified. The school is aware of this and is already planning a curriculum review.
- Discrete provision is stronger at Key Stage 3 than at Key Stage 4. Nevertheless, students' exploration of local issues and links forged with the wider community provide a range of good learning experiences within and beyond the school.

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

Leadership and management in citizenship are good with some outstanding features.

- At a whole-school level, there are some very strong elements. You have a clear underpinning vision and support for the subject to which your senior leadership team subscribes. This is summed up by your belief that the school should enable students to be resilient, resourceful and reflective, and help them develop the capacity to make good and relevant choices and have the confidence to act on these. This is so that they can fully embrace their roles as active citizens in our dynamic, diverse society.
- You and the senior leadership team are clearly committed to providing a discrete provision for the subject and further strengthening students' learning at both Key Stages 3 and 4. Students' involvement in a range of activities in lessons and particularly out of lessons strongly supports active citizenship.
- The subject leaders have a clear vision and are determined in ensuring that citizenship curriculum is at the heart of students' lives. Both demonstrate energy and commitment. They understand well the strengths and areas for further improvement and with your guidance, have clear plans for the future development of the subject, including developing a short course in citizenship. Despite some significant strengths, there are some weaker elements. For example, the mapping of all aspects of curriculum provision against the citizenship key concepts and processes

and monitoring and evaluation procedures in citizenship are areas for development. Overall, however, the capacity for further improvement is excellent.

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

- mapping all aspects of your curriculum provision against the subject's key concepts and processes
- strengthening monitoring and evaluation procedures in citizenship.

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

**Rashida Sharif**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**