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27 May 2011

Mrs L Andrews  
Headteacher  
Much Wenlock Primary School  
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Much Wenlock  
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Dear Mrs Andrews

### **Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: English**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 17 May 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 pupils and with you in your roles as headteacher and literacy coordinator; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is satisfactory.

#### **Achievement in English**

Achievement in English is satisfactory.

- Pupils enter the school with standards that are broadly in line with expectations for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and make satisfactory progress throughout the school to attain standards in English that are broadly average.
- Standards in reading and speaking and listening are higher than in writing. Girls attain higher standards than boys. School data indicate that current achievement is rising. This was confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and show interest in their work. They respond particularly well when given responsibility for their own learning.

## **Quality of teaching in English**

The quality of teaching in English is satisfactory.

- The quality of teaching is improving and has a number of strengths. Teachers know the pupils well and have a good knowledge of their individual strengths and areas for development.
- Information and communication technology is used well in lessons by teachers and pupils. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils used laptop computers linked to digital cameras to make news reports for evaluation by the rest of the class. They were engrossed in their learning, critical of their own work and made good progress throughout the lesson.
- Lesson plans are detailed and show clearly how work will be adapted for groups of pupils. Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to learning for individuals and groups.
- Work is marked regularly and usually gives pupils clear advice on what they need to do to improve their work. However, this is not consistent across all year groups. In discussion, pupils talked well about the strengths and areas for development in their work.
- In some lessons, teachers spend too long explaining the work to be done so that the pupils lose interest and the pace of the lesson slows. Occasionally, too much time is spent on single tasks with too little variety and limited pupil involvement in the work.

## **Quality of the curriculum in English**

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- Recent developments to the curriculum have ensured that there are good opportunities for speaking and listening which are integrated well into other work so that they support reading and writing effectively.
- Provision for improving reading throughout the school is good. Pupils report that they do not enjoy writing as much as other areas of the curriculum, saying that they do not always see the purpose of the set tasks and sometimes feel constrained by the amount of instruction and the lack of choice in topics for writing. However, pupils in Year 6 were very enthusiastic about the input that they had had into decisions about the content of their recent topic in English.
- The curriculum has good links with other subjects. The Forest Schools project also makes a good contribution to the curriculum, providing pupils with a range of contexts in which to develop their skills in English. A good range of trips and visits to the school by writers enriches the curriculum well.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in English is good.

- You have developed sound systems for monitoring and evaluation and have an accurate view of strengths and areas for development in English.
- Planning for improvement is rigorous. Current achievement shows improvement and this is gathering pace.
- Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and have responded well to the new systems for monitoring pupils' progress. You have established clear expectations and introduced effective initiatives such as changes to the curriculum.
- Teamwork is good between teachers, who also work very effectively with teaching assistants throughout the school.

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

- improving the quality of writing throughout the school, particularly for boys, by:
  - ensuring that pupils are required to write at length and for a variety of purposes and audiences
  - providing pupils with more choice in deciding the topics and format for their writing
  - challenging pupils to improve their own writing skills by providing them with topics that motivate them as well as providing them with guidance for set tasks.

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

**Andrew Harrett**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**