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Ms Z Hussain
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Hussain

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 16 June 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 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work and observation of five lessons.

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

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement in citizenship is good with outstanding elements.

- Pupils display good understanding of many of the key aspects of citizenship. In particular, they have a strong understanding of fairness and justice and demonstrate respect for each other. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities to each other and the wider community. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of rights and responsibilities, how to care for each other and their environment. They are aware of issues around sustainability through their work on recycling of clothes for a range of charities both in the UK and abroad and their work through the active Eco committee.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the democratic process and the responsibilities of representation. The process of electing members to the school's council is rigorous. Once elected, pupils are expected to give

regular feedback to their class about the outcomes of any discussions and decisions being made on their behalf. The school council, on behalf of the school, successfully secured their own allotment from the local authority. They also organise whole-school events, such as the regular inter-faith day involving a large number of local people and others from across the UK. This, and other work by the pupils, is featured in the DVD produced recently by the local authority entitled 'Faith makes a Difference' for use in other schools.

- Pupils readily assume responsibility, make decisions and organise their own activities. Every pupil in the school has a responsibility either for their class or the school. These include being litter and table monitors, peer-supporters and organising their gardening activities. The use of the pupils' voice is highly effective. For example, pupils successfully campaigned to retain the use of their playground by asking the teachers to park their cars on the road outside while the school's extensive building programme is being completed.
- Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of diversity and cultural awareness. Good opportunities are provided for links with culturally diverse communities within the UK through the regular multi-faith conference and visits to local places of worship. Pupils have a growing awareness of being global citizens through well-established links with other countries through the International Schools Award.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Teachers create a positive and encouraging climate for learning throughout the school. The thematic approach to delivering citizenship provides a useful framework for pupils to reflect on issues and contribute their ideas through, for example, the schools '6 C's' approach. This includes community, commitment, choice, contemplation, compassion and creativity. Consequently, pupils are happy and confident in expressing their views and listening to those of others.
- Lessons are planned effectively and learning objectives for citizenship are clearly identified. Teachers are confident in encouraging discussions and debates. They use a range of approaches, including whole-class discussions, pair and group work to ensure that all pupils contribute. Pupils are provided with good opportunities for developing teamworking and cooperative activities, including critical friends where they assess each others' work. The use of verbal feedback to pupils in lessons is effective, as is the feedback to parents. Parents regularly receive feedback through report cards on how well their child is doing in citizenship.
- Pupils' communication skills are well developed throughout the school; they are encouraged to discuss their ideas, find solutions to issues and work through any difficulties that might arise. This develops appropriate critical thinking skills and supports good learning. Pupils are confident, readily exploring their ideas in groups and challenging each others' views with sensitivity and respect.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

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

- Citizenship units are planned effectively within the curriculum as part of the school's successful approach to a personal, social, health and citizenship programme. Planning takes account of the need to build depth and progression as pupils move through the school.
- The contribution made to community cohesion is outstanding. Very good use is made of extensive links with community groups and a range of organisations; some of these are used most effectively for learning purposes. For example, the local business enterprise enriches pupils' understanding of how business works and the role that they can play as local citizens. Within the school, pupils play an active role in contributing to the school's new building programme by successfully negotiating increased provision for information community technology resources and the layout of classrooms to maximise the learning environment.
- The curriculum covers most aspects of citizenship; however, there are limited opportunities for pupils to develop a wider perspective across some strands; for example, the role of the media in forming and informing their views and being able to respond to controversial issues.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is good with outstanding features.

- You and your key staff have a clear vision for the part that citizenship plays in the life of the school and beyond. There is clarity about the significance and value of citizenship and importantly, of pupils participating and taking responsible actions both within the school and outside. In addition to the formal curriculum, there is clear commitment to ensure that the ethos and atmosphere of the school support the principles of active citizenship by ensuring that every pupil has a role to play in the life of the school.
- In the temporary absence of the subject leader, there is evidence to suggest that subject leadership is strong and developing. The very good support from you and your leadership team is fostering an atmosphere in which citizenship continues to flourish.
- The school has correctly identified the need to develop those aspects of the curriculum that are currently covered in less detail; for example, the role of media in influencing our views and opinions and further training for teachers to enable them to teach controversial issues with confidence.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing the curriculum to include consideration of how the media influences our views and opinions
- training for staff on the teaching of controversial issues 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