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Mrs C Langson
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Langson

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 27 June 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 eight lessons or parts of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is good

Achievement in English

Achievement in English is good.

- Attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 2 is above the national average. In 2010, two thirds of pupils achieved Level 5 and almost all pupils achieved the expected level. Progress in reading and writing is good. The progress of boys, particularly in writing, is better than the progress of girls. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average. They are able to clearly articulate their thoughts and ideas, which provides them with a sound basis to build their literacy skills.
- At Key Stage 1, attainment in reading and writing has been significantly above the national average for four of the last five years. In 2010, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher levels was significantly above the national average in both reading and writing. However, the school's own data suggest that attainment in reading and writing for the current Year 2 pupils is lower than in recent years.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills in communication, language and literacy that are below those expected for their age. They make good progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy, especially in linking sounds and letters. By the time they transfer to Key Stage 1, pupils achieve expected levels in these areas although progress in writing remains the weaker area of learning.
- There are no underperforming groups and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress relative to their starting points.

Quality of teaching in English

The quality of teaching in English is good.

- The teaching observed ranged from satisfactory to good. No inadequate teaching was observed. In the best lessons, teachers provided good opportunities for pupils to share their ideas and actively engage in learning.
- Pupils enjoy English lessons, particularly writing, because teachers use effective strategies to stimulate thinking and engage pupils in a wide range of activities.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good and pupils' attitudes towards English and their behaviour in lessons are good. For example, pupils enjoyed devising a performance to engage an audience in the Year 5/6 classes. They worked very well together, showing mature attitudes to collaborative group work, producing creative presentations which were evaluated well by their classmates.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to move learning on in lessons, but this is not always consistently used to ensure that pupils of all abilities are challenged. There is good use of technology to support and enhance learning.
- Marking in books provides good guidance to pupils on how to improve their work, particularly at Key Stage 2 but this is inconsistent at Key Stage 1. The best examples include opportunities for pupils to feed back their thoughts to teachers.

Quality of the curriculum in English

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- Recent developments to improve the curriculum have ensured that a more interesting and relevant range of topics is covered to better meet pupils' needs and interests. 'Wow' days at the start of a topic or theme engage pupils, resulting in a very positive impact on outcomes in writing, particularly for boys. However, the school is aware that further opportunities to visit theatres and places of interest and the greater use of visiting authors and playwrights are required to enhance learning.
- The resources for reading are broad and under further development to ensure that all pupils have access to a wider range of fiction and non-

fiction reading materials and have more opportunities to read in school and at home. Pupils enjoy reading and are able to articulate reasons for their choices of author.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in English

The effectiveness of leadership and management in English is good.

- The English subject leader provides a strong sense of purpose and direction to the developments in English, using detailed analysis of data to plan for further improvements in reading, writing, speaking and listening. She has developed a wide range of support materials and guidance for teachers to enhance consistency of practice in teaching and assessment throughout the school.
- The newly created communication, language and literacy leadership team jointly monitors the quality of learning in lessons and pupils' outcomes. Discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of work are key features of this effective leadership, which is having a positive impact on improving the attainment and progress of pupils.
- Assessment procedures are providing vital information for teachers to enable them to know how well pupils are progressing. This enables leaders and managers to set challenging but achievable targets.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that teaching is consistently good or better in all lessons
- further enriching the curriculum by :
 - providing a rich and varied programme of visits and visitors to enhance learning
 - engaging pupils in wider opportunities for reading at home and at school.

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

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector