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18 October 2011

Mrs E Cooper
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Cooper

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 13 October 2011 to look at work in ICT.

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; a tour of the school with pupils; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is good.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is good.

- Pupils enter Year 3 with skills which are in line with national expectations. They make good progress and by Year 6 leave with standards that are above national expectations, especially in communication, presentation and data handling.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given good support by teachers and well-informed learning support assistants and make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour when using ICT is outstanding. Pupils respect equipment and support each other very well in lessons. In all lessons seen, pupils were very engaged with ICT and wanted to learn. Pupils show pride in their work and are eager to discuss and share their successes.

- By Year 6, pupils have an excellent knowledge of how to stay safe when using new technologies in school and at home.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is good.

- The quality of teaching is good overall and, at times, outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to good effect when planning and delivering lessons.
- Teachers and learning support assistants use questions effectively to support and develop pupils' understanding of the skills being learnt.
- Lessons are well planned and take account of the different ability groups in the class. However, more able pupils are not always challenged in lessons by giving them a starting point at a higher level to that of other groups within the class.
- A particular strength is the way in which pupils are involved in self- and peer-assessment. In an outstanding Year 3 lesson, self- and peer-assessment continually informed the teacher of the pupils' ICT and scientific understanding and resulted in the learning intentions being adjusted and added to, to further challenge all groups of pupils and move their learning forward at a very fast pace.
- By Year 6, pupils articulate well how assessment against the learning intentions and the success criteria for a lesson helps them to set personal targets for improvement in ICT.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is good.

- The curriculum ensures that all pupils receive their statutory requirement for ICT. There is a good emphasis on communication, presentation, data handling and control.
- Well-planned links are being made between ICT, literacy, numeracy, foundation subjects and French. Activities are put into context which makes learning meaningful, and very enjoyable, for pupils. An excellent example of this is the use of spreadsheets by Year 5 pupils to plan and cost, within a set budget, a takeaway meal for a group of friends.
- A range of opportunities is provided before, during and after school for pupils to use school facilities to further develop their skills, for research or for homework. Gifted and talented pupils produce the school's newspaper with the help of a local journalist.
- Day and residential visits support pupils' use of new technologies, such as digital cameras, digicams and voice recorders.
- In the suite and some classrooms, interactive whiteboards are not always at a height that is easily accessible for younger pupils. This restricts their opportunities to develop their skills in using the whiteboards and/or their opportunities to demonstrate and share their knowledge and skills.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is good.

- Senior leaders and managers have a good overview of the strengths and areas for development in ICT. Plans to develop the subject are based on effective self-review.
- Senior leaders have identified as a priority the need to review and embed assessment procedures, including Assessing Pupils' Progress material, to ensure greater accuracy of monitoring of the progress of all groups of pupils over time.
- The Connected Learning Community virtual learning environment is used well by staff, pupils, parents and carers, to support pupils' learning at school and at home.
- Good links have been made with the local secondary school, and their Advanced Skills Teacher for ICT, to support the development of the subject.
- Governors fully support the development and finance of ICT.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that assessment opportunities are used to support and challenge more able pupils in all lessons
- embedding and evaluating new assessment initiatives to support the accurate monitoring of pupils' progress across all strands of the ICT curriculum
- ensuring that all pupils are able to easily access the interactive whiteboards so as to develop and/or demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop ICT in the school.

As 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Green
Additional Inspector