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Mrs L Hill
Headteacher
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Sir William Hill
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Dear Mrs Hill

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 4 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is outstanding.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is outstanding.

- The number of pupils in each cohort varies considerably from year to year. Attainment on entry to the school is generally in line with national averages for ICT.
- Pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage are supported well. They confidently use basic technologies. They enter Year 1 achieving the expected standards.
- School monitoring data confirm that progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is outstanding. By Year 6, pupils leave with standards in ICT that are well above national expectations, especially in control technology.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported in lessons by teachers and well-informed teaching assistants. As a result, they make the same outstanding progress as their peers.
- Pupils' behaviour when using ICT is outstanding. They are extremely well behaved, respect equipment and use it carefully. They are proud of their work, and that of their peers, and support each other very well in lessons.
- By Year 2, pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe when using new technologies. By Year 6, their knowledge of e-safety is excellent.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is good.

- The quality of teaching is good overall and often outstanding. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well when planning and delivering lessons.
- Lessons are put into 'real life' context so as to further engage pupils. An excellent example of this is a short film produced by Year 6 pupils, based on the local legend of 'Fair Flora'. The film involved producing a script, filming, using sound booms, interviewing an archivist and editing.
- Teachers and teaching assistants use questions effectively to develop pupils' understanding of the skills being learnt.
- Teachers make clear the learning objectives of the lesson, so that at the end of the lesson pupils can self-assess how well they have achieved. However, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve over time in ICT.
- Newly developed assessment and monitoring procedures are informing teachers and senior leaders more accurately of pupils' progress and attainment. However, there is not yet a common approach to assessment, although further development of assessment procedures is identified in the ICT development plan.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is outstanding.

- Depending on the size of each cohort, ICT is planned on a two- or three-year cycle. This ensures that pupils receive their statutory requirement for ICT without unnecessary repetition because of mixed-aged classes.
- Planning is thorough and ensures that excellent links are made between subjects. Pupils articulate well how ICT supports their learning in a wide range of subjects.
- Pupils enjoy using new technologies. This contributes very well to their learning and to their spiritual, personal, social and emotional development.
- Good links have been established with a local secondary school to support ICT through, for example, the film-making initiative.

- Pupils identified as gifted and talented have the opportunity to extend their knowledge and skills at the after-school ICT club.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is outstanding.

- Being a much smaller than average school, the ICT leader is also responsible for leading a number of other subjects. However, this has not lessened the focus on ICT, which has a high profile in the school, and is the main focus for development for this school year.
- Leadership and management of ICT are excellent and are having a significant impact on the development of the subject.
- A shared vision for the subject is shared with staff, governors, parents, carers and pupils.
- Good use is made of the school's website and the developing virtual learning environment (VLE) to enable teachers, pupils, parents, carers and governors to access information at home, as well as at school, to support pupils' learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- involving pupils in self- and peer-assessment so that they know how well they are progressing against their targets and how they can achieve the next level in their ICT work
- embedding and evaluating new assessment initiatives to support the monitoring of pupils' progress across all strands of the ICT curriculum.

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