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Mr J Pout  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Pout

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 22 and 23 November 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 students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of seven lessons and a learning walk of 15 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is satisfactory.

### **Achievement in citizenship**

Achievement in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Students showed some interest in citizenship work and had varying degrees of knowledge about the subject. Sixth-form students' knowledge was stronger about how the economy works and rights and responsibilities. Students in Key Stages 3 and 4 had stronger knowledge of the European Union, immigration and diversity, whereas knowledge was noticeably less developed on issues such as how parliament works and the civil and criminal justice system.
- Some strong independent learning was seen promoting higher level critical thinking skills, however, much of the learning in this area remains too dependent upon the teacher.

- A real strength is the collective action that students have taken of which there are many examples, including: a sponsored workout for the charity LEPRO, teaching English in Kenya and Uganda and producing an anti-smoking presentation for primary schools.
- Students were observed learning about democracy which, for some groups made a sound contribution to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural education.

### **Quality of teaching in citizenship**

The quality of teaching in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Teaching observed is most effective through cross-curricular subjects where teachers use specialist subject knowledge to create suitable depth of learning. This was observed in a Year 11 sociology class considering issues of equality through an analysis of the reading curriculum in the 1960s. Similarly, in a Year 13 economics group studying protectionism, students were able to analyse the principle of Free Trade in the context of the Eurozone crisis.
- Some weaker teaching is due to a lack of subject knowledge so students are unable to demonstrate higher levels of thinking. While some effective teaching of controversial issues was observed, opportunities were missed to deconstruct ideas and challenge stereotypes.
- Teaching during the floating form period was too variable and as the session also included an assembly, it left little time for quality teaching.
- While assessment of citizenship takes place, it is not sufficiently robustly linked to levels to illustrate incremental steps of progress.

### **Quality of the curriculum in citizenship**

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Citizenship is delivered through a combination of themed days, use of the form period and cross-curricular lessons. Good evidence was found of critical thinking and enquiry and some evidence of advocacy and representation. However, opportunities are missed to ensure that all students take part in some kind of informed and responsible action.
- Good extra-curricular links to a number of organisations suitably enrich the citizenship curriculum. Organisations include Samaritan's Purse, Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts and Liverpool Football Club.
- Students spoke with great enthusiasm about the recent Anthony Walker Day which focused primarily upon issues of diversity and involved all year groups across the curriculum. The day culminated in a powerful performance of drama and dance watched by families and the local community.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Statutory requirements for citizenship are met under the leadership of the new head of faculty for life-skills. A thorough audit of the subject has taken place and a detailed evaluation completed.
- The head of faculty and senior leaders are clearly committed to raising achievement in the subject which has already had a positive effect with the success of 'One World Day' and 'Anthony Walker Day'. However, capacity is not fully exploited as some key subject specialists do not currently form part of the citizenship team.
- The monitoring of the quality of teaching is in its infancy and the curriculum delivery currently under review.

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

- raising achievement in citizenship by:
  - using cross-curricular opportunities to deliver the range and content of citizenship effectively
  - monitoring the quality of teaching more rigorously
  - embedding the use of assessment
  - providing opportunities for key staff to develop significant depth of subject knowledge.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop citizenship 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

**Sally Kenyon**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**