

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 January 2012

Mrs S Fennell
Principal
Montsaye Academy
Greening Road
Rothwell
Kettering
NN14 6BB

Dear Mrs Fennell

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 11 and 12 January 2012 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 six lessons wholly or significantly linked to citizenship education.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is good.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement in citizenship is good.

- Students' attainment in citizenship is satisfactory overall. Knowledge and understanding of the concepts and processes of the National Curriculum are satisfactory, with strengths in aspects such as diversity and European and global issues; government and politics are areas of relative weakness. Students' attainment in advocacy, participation and responsible action is good and, by the time they reach the sixth form, outstanding.
- Students' progress in the lessons observed was good. Students enjoy citizenship, willingly engage in whole-class and group discussion and support their arguments with good reasoning. There are no data to support a judgement on progress over time. Neither is there a substantial

written record of students' work in citizenship as the emphasis in lessons is on discussion and debate.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- As a large number of teachers teach citizenship it was not possible to see a representative sample; however, the available evidence supports a judgement that teaching is good overall.
- The teaching observed in citizenship and in other subjects with strong citizenship links was good, with some outstanding teaching. These lessons were characterised by very thorough preparation, strong classroom organisation and management of stimulating learning activities. Teachers mostly displayed good subject knowledge, drawing on topical and relevant issues.
- As noted in the departmental self-review, a feature of good teaching was the way in which teachers adapted and augmented course materials to take ownership of lesson content and learning styles.
- 'Assessment for learning' techniques were evident in teachers' questioning and the adaptation of lessons. Written work was sensibly marked. However, periodic assessments are of very uneven quality and do not enable students to demonstrate their skills in aspects such as enquiry and communication through extended writing, or produce reliable data to show students' progress. Little use is made of homework to deepen students' learning.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Citizenship has a secure place within the citizenship and Personal, Social and Health Education programme. The Key Stage 3 curriculum includes a broad range of content but insufficient weight is given to government and politics; there is no explicit unit on this in Key Stage 4.
- The focus on discussion and advocacy is a strength of the curriculum. There are opportunities to learn about and engage in campaigning activity but, linked to lack of time for in-depth enquiry, these tend to be limited.
- Some course units include material that is not central to citizenship study and there is some overlap with subjects – for example global issues, which are extensively treated in geography.
- Course booklets provide teachers with defined objectives for each unit of work but these are sometimes insufficiently focused on learning steps referenced to progression.
- The curriculum is augmented by other subjects and other aspects of school life, including the vertical tutor system, houses and committees, and extended services in the local and wider communities. These provide

broad and rich opportunities for representation and responsible action, which increases as students move through the school.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is good.

- There is a clear vision for citizenship in the curriculum and the broader life of the school. A thorough process of self-review and action planning demonstrates continuing commitment to improvement.
- Building on existing programmes, the head of department has introduced a rolling programme of curriculum review to ensure that teachers have the support they need to teach their respective year groups. Course booklets provide a baseline of resources with suggested activities and the encouragement to personalise them. Teachers on the programme, mainly non-specialists, appreciate the opportunity to work in year teams and the support provided.
- External advice has been sought and training provided but there is a continuing need for support in areas such as assessment.
- There is good capacity for further improvement.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- increasing the emphasis on politics and government, especially in Key Stage 4
- reviewing course units to ensure that these are well aligned with citizenship concepts and processes and eliminating unnecessary overlap with other subjects that make significant contributions to the citizenship curriculum
- developing periodic assessments that are valid and provide reliable data to support evaluation and analysis of students' progress.

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.

Yours sincerely

Scott Harrison
Additional Inspector