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Mr S Peacock
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Peacock

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 16 January 2012 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; analysis of pupils' work, joint observations of three lessons with your ICT coordinator and a learning walk in the Early Years Foundation Stage with you.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is good.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is good.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of attainment in knowledge and understanding of the World, including ICT, and communication, language and literacy, which are well below expectations. As a result of a good range of ICT activities and resources, they make good progress and learn to confidently use basic technologies, floor robots, walkie-talkies and CD players. By the time they enter Year 1, they are close to achieving the expected standards for ICT.
- Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is good. By the end of Year 6, pupils leave with levels of attainment which are in line with expectations overall.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and pupils who speak English as an additional language, make similar progress to other groups.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is good.

- Teachers use a range of contexts to demonstrate the value of ICT in pupils' daily lives. Year 6 pupils, for example, discuss how they use spreadsheets at home to budget their pocket money.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and are confident in their use of ICT. They use this to good effect when delivering their lessons to the whole class or to a set group. However, the use of assessment data does not always ensure that tasks are well matched to all pupils, especially the more able.
- Teachers share the learning objectives of the lesson, so that pupils know what is to be learnt and can review their progress against 'I can' and 'Where am I?' statements. However, pupils are not always involved in setting and evaluating the success criteria for a lesson, so they can set personal targets for achieving their next level in ICT.
- Good use is made of a range of resources to support pupils' learning in ICT and other subjects. However, pupils are not always given the opportunity to independently select the most appropriate resources to use.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding. Staff ensure a safe environment in which pupils want to learn and enjoy learning. Pupils' behaviour when using ICT is good overall, and often outstanding.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is good.

- The curriculum is broad, balanced and well planned to meet the interests of all pupils. Good use is made of the local authority's revised scheme of work for ICT to engage pupils and to build on their prior knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Good links are made between ICT and a range of subjects. In 2009, Ofsted inspectors highlighted the need to develop the links between science and ICT. This has been addressed well. Pupils articulate how ICT supports their learning in a range of subjects. ICT also makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- A high priority is placed on keeping pupils safe. Pupils have a good awareness of how to stay safe at school and at home when using new technologies.
- A regular audit of pupils' access to new technologies at home shows that almost 20% have little, or no, regular access. The ICT technician runs lunchtime clubs for pupils to catch up with work and to develop their ICT skills.

- A 'TV Club' gives interested and more able pupils the opportunity to film and edit a range of experiences for the school's television channel, which can be also viewed by parents.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is good.

- Leadership and management of the subject are good, with some outstanding features. The priorities for the development of ICT are based on effective self-review and on wider whole-school priorities. Governors fully support the development and finance of ICT.
- The subject coordinator has developed excellent links with a large number of primary schools within the authority and in the neighbouring authority, to trial and evaluate games-based learning and a range of tablet computers before purchase.
- A computer in the school's entrance foyer is dedicated to use by parents. The school website and TV channel present a good range of information to parents and pupils about the curriculum, school policies and e-safety.
- Technical support is good and ensures that systems are reliable and available when needed.
- Leadership shows a good capacity to further improve the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the success criteria for ICT, or for ICT when supporting other subjects, are shared with pupils so that they can evaluate their learning and be involved in setting their own targets for improvement
- ensuring that all lessons are sufficiently planned to meet the needs of all pupils, especially the more able
- planning opportunities for pupils to be more independent in their choice and use of new technologies within lessons and a range of subjects.

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