23 January 2012

Mrs J Carabine
Headteacher
Walnut Tree Walk Primary School
Walnut Tree Walk
London
SE11 6DS

Dear Mrs Carabine

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 17 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; observation of three lessons and a learning walk with your ICT coordinator.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

■ Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with ICT capabilities that are below national expectations. They are supported well and learn how to manipulate the interactive whiteboard and use basic technologies such as the keyboard and mouse, microphones, simple cameras and radio controlled toys. They make good progress and enter Year 1 with standards that are generally in line with expectations. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils leave with standards that are in line with national expectations overall and above in presentation and communication.

■ Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other groups of

pupils. Pupils with specific special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress against the small and specific targets they are set.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory.

- Teaching is satisfactory overall but ranges from satisfactory to good. Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and are confident users of ICT. As a result, they are able to support pupils well in lessons.

- Teachers share the learning objectives of each lesson so that pupils know what is to be learnt. However, teachers do not share or involve pupils in setting the success criteria for a lesson, so that pupils can self-assess their progress and set their own targets for their next stage of learning.

- Newly introduced assessment procedures are supporting teachers to plan more accurately for different age and ability groups within their class. However, assessment procedures are not yet sufficiently embedded to ensure sufficient challenge for all groups of pupils. This has been identified in the ICT development plan as an area for improvement.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is satisfactory.

- All strands of the National Curriculum are taught, with an emphasis on communication and presentation. Excellent links have been established with the City Learning Centre (CLC) to support gaps in the curriculum due to limited resources. The school has borrowed laptops and hand-held games consoles from the centre and classes make regular visits to use data loggers, sensors and robotics. A Year 6 visit to a national newspaper enabled pupils to produce their own front page and supported their understanding of how ICT is used in the real world.

- The ICT curriculum has a positive impact on the way in which pupils cooperate and support each other. The ICT curriculum also has a good impact on pupils' behaviour and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, in a Year 4 lesson using an art program, pupils clapped spontaneously as they used repeat patterns and stamp tools to produce an underwater scene.

- Approximately 30% of pupils have limited access to new technologies at home. Pupils are able to use class computers and/or the computer suite outside of lesson time, for homework or to develop their ICT skills.

- There is a good emphasis on teaching pupils to be safe when using new technologies. By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using new technologies at home and at school.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is satisfactory.

- The subject leader has been in post for a year. In that short period, she has evaluated the strengths and weaknesses in ICT and has produced a subject development plan to manage the weaknesses. However, she has only had limited opportunities to formally monitor teaching and learning in ICT and to work alongside colleagues. As a priority, she has ensured that the infrastructure for ICT is now reliable and in good working order.

- The subject leader has established good links with the local CLC to supplement ICT equipment in school and to teach aspects of the curriculum which cannot be taught in school because of limited resources. The CLC also supports staff training.

- The Family Learning Project is helping parents to develop their own ICT skills and gives guidance on how they can support their children's ICT skills.

- The ICT technician ensures that resources are well maintained and gives good support to teachers and pupils in lessons.

- The school has plans in place to develop the website and virtual learning environment.

- Governors fully support the development plan for ICT.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising pupils' achievement by:
    - embedding the use of assessment so that the progress of all groups of pupils can be regularly and accurately monitored
    - ensuring that pupils understand the success criteria for a lesson so that they are aware of what they need to do to improve and can act on targets set

- continuing to resource the subject, as financial constraints allow, so that there is flexibility within the school's delivery of the curriculum and less reliance on the CLC to 'plug gaps' in 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