

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



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Mr D McGarrigle
Headteacher
Maryvale Catholic Primary School
Old Oscott Hill
Kingstanding
Birmingham
B44 9AG

Dear Mr McGarrigle

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 25 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 two lessons; a tour of the school with Year 4 pupils; and a learning walk with your deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher, to briefly observe the use of ICT in six lessons from Nursery to Year 6.

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 in line with national expectations. They make satisfactory progress and continue to Year 1 with standards that match expectations. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 continues to be satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 pupils leave with standards that are at the level of national expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language make similar progress to other groups of pupils.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory.

- Teaching is satisfactory overall, as reflected in the progress pupils make from the Early Years Foundation Stage to Year 6. However, teaching in the lessons observed was good. Teachers and teaching assistants displayed good subject knowledge and confident use of ICT. As a result, pupils were supported well in lessons and made good progress.
- Teaching observed during the learning walk was satisfactory, mainly due to a limited range of resources within each class to challenge and support pupils. Much of the ICT work observed was consolidation of the literacy and numeracy being taught.
- Teachers share the learning objective of each lesson through 'We Are Learning To' (WALT), so that pupils know what is to be learnt. Good use is made of 'What I'm Looking For' (WILF) so that pupils have a good understanding of how they are to be assessed in the lesson. Throughout lessons, teachers and teaching assistants encourage pupils to self-assess against WALT and WILF so that the lesson content can be adjusted to meet the pupils' needs. However, teachers do not set, or involve pupils in setting, personal targets for their next stage of learning.
- Newly introduced assessment procedures are beginning to support teachers in planning more accurately for different groups within their class and especially for more able pupils.
- 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 and often outstanding.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is satisfactory.

- The curriculum meets the pupils' interests and all strands are planned for. However, as a result of a limited investment in ICT in recent years due to budget constraints, the school has had to rely on the neighbouring technical college and the City Learning Centre (CLC) to support gaps in the curriculum, especially for control technology, data logging and use of sensors.
- An audit of pupils' access to new technologies at home shows that almost a third have little or no access to computers. No homework club or ICT club exist to give this group of pupils extra support.
- Good, and regular, emphasis on teaching pupils to be safe when using new technologies is in place. By Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe. By Year 6, pupils have an outstanding understanding of how to stay safe both in school and when using new technologies at home.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is satisfactory.

- ICT has not been a recent focus in the school's development plan. There has been no ICT leader for a year, but you and your senior managers, have acted as 'caretaker' leaders until a suitable coordinator is appointed.
- Due to a rolling programme of major building works, which will be completed by the summer 2012, the school has been unable to invest in new resources for ICT or update existing resources. However, the ICT development plan identifies that this will be addressed once the budget for 2012-13 has been set.
- The ICT development plan identifies well the weaknesses in the subject and how they can be improved, including the need to appoint a new subject leader.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising the quality of teaching from satisfactory to good or better, so as to raise the achievement of pupils, by:
 - embedding the new assessment procedures so that the progress of all groups of pupils can be regularly and accurately monitored and planned for
 - involving pupils in target setting, so that they are better informed of how well they are progressing against the learning objectives and how they can achieve the next level in their ICT
- improving resourcing so that there is flexibility within the school's delivery of the curriculum and less reliance on the CLC and the local technology college
- appointing an ICT coordinator to manage and lead the development of the subject.

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