

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



28 February 2012

Mr P Blackwell  
Headteacher  
Dinnington Comprehensive Specialising in Science and Engineering  
Doe Quarry Lane  
Sheffield  
S25 2ND

Dear Mr Blackwell

### **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 31 January and 1 February 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 15 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is satisfactory.

### **Achievement in citizenship**

Achievement in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Students' knowledge and understanding of the key areas of citizenship curriculum are variable. They are better in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form than in Key Stage 3. Although students in Key Stage 3 tackle a wide range of issues in citizenship, these often lack depth and breadth. Students have a sound understanding of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination, bullying and health-related issues affecting their lives. However, they have limited understanding of the role of parliament, the criminal justice system and diversity in Britain.
- When given the opportunity, students demonstrate their abilities of enquiry and research to good effect. They understand alternative viewpoints and recognise the virtues of being tolerant and open-minded. However, students are less confident and secure in the validity of their own personal opinions.

- In Key Stage 4 and the sixth form in particular, students are actively involved in many facets of school life. They take the opportunities provided to demonstrate leadership and support the learning of younger students through activities such as peer mentoring. Such opportunities are afforded to a cross-section of students who gain much through their involvement in various 'student voice' activities.

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

The quality of teaching in citizenship is satisfactory.

- In the most effective lessons seen, teachers are able to engage and maintain students' interest through, for example, skilfully formulating appropriate questions that probe students' responses and challenge their views. Students are presented with well-rounded arguments and an objective and balanced overview of issues being considered, for example, how people in Germany were persuaded to vote Hitler into power. In these lessons, resources such as interactive whiteboards are used well to add pace and engage students' interest.
- In contrast, less successful lessons are characterised by teachers' talking too much unnecessarily, and asking questions that do not probe or challenge students' views and attitudes sufficiently. This is because teachers do not have an in-depth knowledge of the subject and lack confidence. Where citizenship is taught within other subjects, the work does not always bear close enough relation to the National Curriculum programmes of study.
- Citizenship taught through the recently established vertical tutorial and 'Learning for Life' programmes is generally less effective than that found more broadly across some of the more established personal, social, health education programmes and through social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) approaches. In other subjects, such as the humanities, modern foreign languages and English, those teachers who are more confident convey clear messages and focus on extending students' knowledge and understanding of the key concepts. For example, they challenge stereotypical thinking and promote students' social, moral, spiritual, and cultural awareness effectively.
- At present, all aspects of assessment are underdeveloped.

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

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is satisfactory.

- The curriculum meets statutory requirements overall, but at Key Stage 3 it is insufficient to enable in-depth coverage of National Curriculum requirements. Limited attention is paid to some issues; for example, the criminal justice system, parliamentary democracy, the role of public services and the voluntary sector and issues related to British diversity. Aspects of these topics are covered in religious education and modern foreign languages but the work is not assessed in line with subject requirements.

- The delivery of the citizenship programme through a variety of subjects is not monitored sufficiently to ensure a coherent programme overall. For example, in religious education at Key Stage 3, students explore equality and crime and punishment, world poverty and study a range of faiths, but the work does not relate directly to citizenship objectives. A curriculum audit has been partially completed but this is not comprehensive enough to inform future planning.
- Most students have opportunities to engage in active citizenship through school elections, youth parliament, holding debates and participating in a range of extra-curricular activities, such as visiting local and national museums, theatre and field trips, but participation in these activities is not monitored or formally assessed.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is satisfactory.

- The senior leadership team have been successful in generating a good sense of ownership and community among students at all levels. It is strongest at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form where students play vital roles as mentors, student leaders, sports leaders and ambassadors.
- Leaders are aware of the shortcomings in citizenship and have registered the need to review its delivery to establish a well-planned, coherent programme that ensures the entitlement of all students. They are also strengthening measures to support teaching and learning as well as assessment through professional development activities, subject reviews and observations of teaching and learning.
- Resources, particularly technology, are appropriate in terms of lesson materials, but the time allocated for discrete citizenship at Key Stage 3 is insufficient. At present the subject leader does not undertake sufficient monitoring and evaluation activities or provide enough support for teachers in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding in delivering citizenship through their subjects.

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

- providing professional development activities to enable all teachers to reach a shared understanding of the citizenship programmes of study
- developing assessment of learning and improving monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in citizenship
- establishing curriculum coverage that fully meets students' entitlements and achieves depth and progression from year to year across the school.

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

**Rashida Sharif**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**