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Ms J Barrett  
Headteacher  
Sellincourt Primary School  
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London  
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Dear Ms Barrett

### **Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: science**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 February 2012 to look at work in science.

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; and observations of six lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science is good.

#### **Achievement in science**

Achievement in science is good.

- Pupils' attainment at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are at, or slightly above, national averages. Pupils make very good progress, significantly above expected levels, from Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2.
- Attainment in science lessons is good. The standard of work in practical investigations is good, as is the quality of the pupils' written work.
- The pupils respond very well to investigations. They answer questions with confidence and make sensible predictions before setting up their experiments.
- The standard of work in lessons is good. The pupils work hard in their lessons and show real enthusiasm for their studies. Their behaviour is very

good and a caring and encouraging atmosphere is evident throughout the school.

### **Quality of teaching in science**

The quality of teaching in science is good.

- Teachers plan the science curriculum well and provide the pupils with interesting and relevant activities. The pupils respond well to the challenge and make good progress in their lessons.
- The children are most engaged when they are experimenting and finding out for themselves, but they also enjoy listening to each other and discussing their ideas.
- In the best lessons, the teachers take into account the range of ability and stage of development of the pupils and set identified groups of children different tasks. Teaching assistants provide good support for the children, with the teachers of the deaf providing especially good support.
- However, some tasks are too general and do not always help the pupils focus on the science involved. In a minority of practical investigations, working groups are too large and do not allow all of the pupils to be busy and engaged.
- Pupils' work is well marked and regularly scrutinised. Teachers' comments are helpful and, in most cases, the children know what they have to do to improve.

### **Quality of the curriculum in science**

The quality of the curriculum in science is good.

- The Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum provides the children with a good range of opportunities to investigate their world. Managers have recently purchased new and relevant science equipment to help the children learn.
- The International Primary Curriculum is successfully used across the whole school. This curriculum has been thoroughly mapped against the National Curriculum science criteria to make sure all the topics are covered.
- Enrichment of the science curriculum is a key strength of the provision. The pupils benefit from well-established science activities at St George's Hospital and Imperial College. In addition, the science clubs are popular and well attended, links with local secondary schools are productive and on Friday afternoons the pupils can choose from a range of interesting and challenging activities that includes science.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in science is good.

- Science is well led in the school, both by senior managers who are fully supportive of science and by the science coordinator.
- Teachers' morale is high and they take pride in the progress made by the pupils. The teachers are well qualified and good opportunities for relevant professional development are both offered and taken up.
- Pupils' progress in science is well assessed and recorded. Data on pupils' attainment and progress are shared and moderated in collaboration with a local primary school. However, pupils' progress in science is not reported until late in the autumn term.
- Resources for practical work in science are good.
- Attainment is improving, and teaching and learning are consistently focused on helping the children achieve to their potential.

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

- making sure that all science activities focus on specific tasks, and practical work is carried out in groups that allow all the pupils to be busy.
- reporting on the children's progress in science earlier in the autumn term to allow relevant interventions to take place as necessary.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop science 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

**Alex Falconer**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**