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Mr R Burman  
Headteacher  
Winterhill School  
High Street  
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Rotherham  
S61 2BD

Dear Mr Burman,

### **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 21 and 22 February 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 12 lessons and one learning walk.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is satisfactory.

### **Achievement in citizenship**

Achievement in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Achievement is limited by the curriculum time allocated to cover the range and content, particularly at Key Stage 4; topics such as the work of parliament and the civil and criminal justice system are underdeveloped.
- In some lessons, students apply skills of critical thinking and enquiry well, giving reasons for their views, effectively analysing sources and evaluating different viewpoints. For example, students in a Year 9 history lesson asked whether the assassination of JFK was justified, engaging in powerful discussions exploring the motives and evaluating the right to life.
- However, opportunities in other lessons were missed to create extended opportunities for critical thinking to allow students develop their own and take account of other people's viewpoints.

- Many students are involved in taking responsible action to help others; this is a key feature of the school's ethos and makes a positive contribution to social, moral, spiritual and cultural education. For example, at lunch time students sold cakes to help orphans as part of their 'Love Cambodia' campaign. Similarly, students who wish to take on more long-term responsibilities, apply for posts such as librarians, peer mentors and prom show helpers. The governors' awards are one of many ways the school recognises the achievements of its active citizens.

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

The quality of teaching in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Some good practice was seen, however, the majority of teaching remains satisfactory with a small minority inadequate.
- In the best lessons, teaching is creative and engaging with many opportunities to develop higher-level thinking through extended independent learning. Clear objectives and appropriately staged levelled outcomes, together with highly effective differentiation allow students to make good progress. Teachers display strong subject knowledge and are able to explore difficult issues confidently. For example, in a Year 8 registration session, the teacher allowed students to explore the issue of racism by innovatively sharing their thoughts with the class, then commenting on or questioning other people's views. When asked at the end of the session, one student said, "I didn't realise that racism could be all those things."
- Less-successful teaching fails to inspire and is insufficiently challenging, thus having a negative impact upon engagement. Some lessons do not use information about students' abilities to plan to meet their individual needs. Opportunities are missed to develop ideas and opinions because the lesson is dominated by the teacher talking and a lack of subject knowledge is evident.
- The curriculum constrains the quality of assessment through lack of opportunities for progression in some key topics, such as the work of parliament, democracy and the civil and criminal justice systems.

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

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is satisfactory and is stronger at Key Stage 3 than Key Stage 4.

- Citizenship is delivered primarily through humanities. Some good examples of critical thinking and enquiry, advocacy and representation and most notably, taking informed and responsible action, were seen. However, the quality of provision mapping means that some key subjects are not fully exploited to deliver the complete range and content.
- Stand-down days, assemblies and registration are used to investigate issues such as global awareness, multiculturalism, rights and responsibilities, the environment and anti-bullying.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Leaders and managers have an accurate picture of standards within the subject. Yet, staff training in the subject is weak which has a negative impact on the quality of delivery. The capacity for improvement is limited, partly by the size of the team allocated to the strategic planning of citizenship.
- Some monitoring of standards within citizenship by leaders at all levels is undertaken; however, this is insufficiently well developed at senior leader level.
- Due to historical curriculum issues, consideration of the delivery of the range and content of citizenship has not taken prominence. However, the school has invested heavily in building a cohesive community and encouraging students to make a positive contribution to their local, national and global communities.

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

- Raising achievement, particularly at Key Stage 4 by:
  - coherently mapping all aspects of the curriculum
  - identifying key subjects to deliver the full range and content
- Improving the quality of teaching by:
  - ensuring that staff have up-date subject knowledge
  - increasing opportunities for extended independent learning
  - using data about students' abilities to plan sufficient challenge and support in all lessons
  - creating robust and meaningful assessment points to clearly illustrate progression
- Strengthening leadership and management of the subject by:
  - expanding the team of teachers that can contribute to the planning and delivery of citizenship
  - monitoring the quality of provision regularly at senior leader level.

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

**Sally Kenyon**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**