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Mr P Addison  
Headteacher  
South Wingfield Primary School  
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Derbyshire  
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Dear Mr Addison

### **Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: English**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 26 April 2012 to look at work in English.

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 observation of five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is good.

#### **Achievement in English**

Achievement in English is good.

- Children enter the Reception class with strengths in communication but with weaknesses in their knowledge of letters and sounds. They make good progress in communication, language and literacy and more than average numbers of pupils met the age-related expectations in 2011.
- School data show that most pupils make good progress in meeting their targets at Key Stage 1. Attainment is average in reading and writing. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 although on occasion it is slower in writing in one or two year groups. At Key Stage 2, attainment is average in writing and above average in reading. Rates of progress have steadily improved and almost all pupils make the nationally expected levels of progress in English.

- Most pupils enjoy English lessons, concentrate well and make good progress in developing their skills. A few pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make slower but satisfactory progress.

### **Quality of teaching in English**

The quality of teaching in English is good.

- The school acknowledges some variability in the quality of teaching. In observed lessons, the effective use of success criteria showed children the language they needed to use in order to achieve success. Well-focused tasks enabled pupils to develop and apply specific knowledge and skills. Good use was made of 'talking partners' to help pupils to consider and develop ideas. The grouping of pupils and the use of resources were carefully planned to meet the range of abilities, with good support from teaching assistants. The teaching of letters and sounds was well focused and pupils enjoyed acquiring and practising basic skills in reading and writing through well-paced activities.
- On occasion the teaching was too narrowly focused on the planned task and insufficient attention was paid to assessing how the children were responding. Opportunities were missed to adjust the task to build on pupils' contributions and extend understanding.
- Marking provides pupils with detailed and informative feedback on their strengths and weaknesses. Pupils have some opportunities to review the marking but this is not used consistently. Pupils enjoy providing each other with feedback which strengthens their understanding and insight.

### **Quality of the curriculum in English**

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- Topic work stimulates pupils' imagination and results in a good range of reading and writing. The observed lesson in the chocolate topic was enriched by a visit to a chocolate factory and by making chocolates. This inspired expressive writing of advertisements, enthusiastic instructions and a well-scripted radio programme.
- The curriculum is well balanced and includes opportunities for drama and poetry. The well-structured and detailed curriculum plans for mixed age and ability groups meets pupils' needs well. Pupils use information and communication technology well to present their work.
- Interventions to support underachieving pupils are based on regular assessment that leads to clearly identified actions. Their impact is reviewed regularly but evaluation is not formally enough linked to the termly assessments of pupils' progress.
- The use of more than one scheme to teach letters and sounds has created some inconsistency in teaching and learning. Leaders have rightly decided to use one scheme in order to increase the coherence and impact of the programme.

- The improved writing curriculum has resulted in a methodical and effective approach to the teaching of writing skills. In Reception and Year 1, good opportunities have been provided for pupils to develop independence and pride in their writing.
- Reading for pleasure has been strengthened by introducing a common time for guided reading and new activities such as buddy reading, where older pupils work with younger pupils. Pupils are enthusiastic about the new approach to recording and rewarding their reading.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in English is good.

- You have acted effectively to tackle the weaknesses in English identified at the last inspection and pupils are making improved progress in writing. Staff training and the coaching of individual teachers have been used in a systematic and sustained way to improve the methods for teaching writing across the school. Assessment of pupil progress is thorough and is used effectively to measure progress and inform teaching. Rigorous and frequent monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work contributes to accurate and reflective self-evaluation which drives improvement. Links with the local playgroup have been established with a view to improving reception pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds.

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

- continuing to improve the consistency of teaching and achievement, particularly in writing by:
  - improving pupils' basic skills in literacy through a stronger link with the playgroup and by strengthening the letters and sounds programme
  - assessing and building on pupils' responses in lessons more effectively and checking more consistently how they have responded to teachers' marking
  - evaluating the impact of interventions more systematically.

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

**Bernard Campbell**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**