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Mr G Gentle
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Gentle

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 2 May 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, the Chair of Governors and several groups of pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; observation of an assembly and three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is good.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement in citizenship is good with some outstanding features.

- From below-average starting points, pupils make good progress in developing personal and social skills. By Key Stage 2, they have good citizenship-related skills and understanding of many key aspects. Pupils demonstrate particularly good knowledge of democracy and different layers of power, identity and diversity, caring for the environment and fair trade issues. This results from a coherent, substantial curriculum and good teaching.
- Pupils are confident and articulate by Key Stage 2; they demonstrate care and concern for each other and tolerance for diversity. They spoke of the

importance placed upon equality and respect for difference in school; this is having a powerful influence upon their positive attitudes and values.

- The active citizenship evident within the school and beyond is impressive. Many pupils take up responsible positions in school, as members of the school council, peer supporters, 'Bilston Bugs' – tackling environmental issues, gardening club members or sports leaders. The work of the Junior Wardens in the local neighbourhood, having been trained for their roles, is exemplary. These pupils are able to articulate the importance of community participation and take responsibility with great maturity. This work includes liaison with elderly residents to promote positive relationships, break down age barriers and add significantly to community cohesion.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Teaching is consistently good with many common features. These include: good relationships with pupils, thought-provoking questioning to prompt pupils' reflections, use of a variety of relevant learning activities and encouragement of independence in pupils.
- Pupils' advocacy skills are well developed through opportunities to explore issues and make a case for a particular course of action, either verbally or in writing. For example, in a highly successful Year 6 literacy lesson, pupils were developing their political literacy well through their persuasive writing on behalf of the Green Party.
- Some good examples of peer- and self-assessment are evident in lessons; this has potential to be developed further in assessment in citizenship, which is currently under review.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is good.

- A comprehensive curriculum covers the vast majority of aspects well. This builds progressively throughout the school to provide a solid foundation for all pupils. A number of aspects contribute well, including the discrete provision, aspects within the International Primary Curriculum, and work covered through literacy and RE. In particular, the unit 'Rulers and Governors' contributes much to pupils' political literacy. The only lighter-touched dimension is in terms of the role of voluntary and pressure groups.
- Links with external agencies and use of visitors to enrich and enhance learning is a curriculum strength.
- Successful use is made of pair and group work within curriculum units to build pupils' verbal skills and develop confidence in discussion.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is good with some outstanding features.

- Citizenship receives positive endorsement and a shared vision across the school, arising from a strong commitment from you, your subject leader and governors to ensure that citizenship pervades the school's work.
- The subject leader is a strong, confident expert who leads with vigour and enthusiasm. Subject documentation is clear and detailed. In addition, many staff make positive contributions to the subject through the International Schools work, fair trade and community cohesion work, eco-activities and the outreach work beyond the school in the local community. This together with the school's over-arching ethos creates a citizenship-rich school.
- Good use is made of the pupil voice to influence decisions and ensure that pupils feel valued and able to make contributions. Pupils' achievements are celebrated well.
- Monitoring and evaluation of planning is strong; monitoring outcomes, in terms of pupils' progress, is less secure and could be strengthened through streamlining assessment procedures and using this information more fully.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- including some work on the roles of voluntary and pressure groups where appropriate in the curriculum
- developing assessment in line with the assessment procedures in other subjects to ensure pupils' progression can be monitored more closely.

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

Judith Matharu
Her Majesty's Inspector