

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



25 June 2012

Mr D Sadler
Headteacher
Chiltern Edge Community School
Reades Lane
Sonning Common
Reading
Berkshire
RG4 9LN

Dear Mr Sadler

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 13 and 14 June 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 documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of parts of 12 lessons, an assembly and extra-curricular activities.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is satisfactory.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement in citizenship is satisfactory.

- No data are provided to give an objective view of students' attainment or progress in citizenship. In lessons and interviews, students demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of issues they had studied but, reflecting the curriculum, notable gaps exist. Strengths include aspects of rights, responsibilities, justice and the law. Knowledge and understanding of government and politics are weaker, particularly in Key Stage 3. In general, the strength of students' achievement is in discussion and debate and little written record of their work is in place.
- Students demonstrate skills in and commitment to active citizenship, with a range of opportunities open to them. Skills in advocacy are particularly associated with the English department's requirement for all students to

take part in public speaking. Involvement in sustained campaigning activity is outstandingly well demonstrated by students in the Amnesty International Club. Students on the school council also have a very active role, including consultation on aspects of policy.

- All students are expected to take part in activity to support the community and their achievement in areas such as fund-raising is impressive.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Citizenship teaching observed in the tutorial programme developed students' understanding of the United Kingdom and its diversity; and in personal, social and health education (PSHE), teaching seen addressed the work of an international health organisation. A range of lessons was seen, all of which had some useful links to citizenship including English, history, geography, science and religious education (RE).
- The general quality of teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and engaging, with a strong focus on learning through discussion at the level of the whole class, groups or pairs. Teachers make good use of relevant resources to make links to current social or political issues. Students praised lessons for their interest, including, for example, a sustained role-play on the work of the courts.
- Subject teaching is not better than satisfactory because planning and assessment do not ensure consistency in students' progression over the medium and longer term. In part, this is related to subject knowledge of the teachers with a wide range of subject backgrounds who teach citizenship explicitly or as a cross-curricular dimension of their 'home' subject. The first steps towards assessing attainment in citizenship have now been taken in RE.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is satisfactory because sufficient, albeit disparate, elements come together to provide the basis of a programme and within this are areas of strength and relative weakness. The most important weakness is the lack of a comprehensive and progressive programme that is both taught and assessed.
- Strengths exist in particular units of work in PSHE and the tutorial programme. In both Years 7 and 10, useful planned units are complemented by work in parallel in RE. In Key Stage 4, explicit units of citizenship are taught within the philosophy and ethics programme. Some subjects including English, the humanities and science also make strong links to citizenship, such as between historical topics and government and politics today, as shown in the subject of the poll tax, and public speaking. Additionally, 'themed weeks' and focus days on topics such as global/environmental issues are in place.

- The taught programme is augmented by a range of extra-curricular activities that provides students with opportunities for participation and responsible action. This includes the Amnesty International Club and the Power Group (anti-bullying).

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is satisfactory.

- The school has an appropriate vision statement that supports the principles of citizenship education.
- Taking into account some discontinuity in subject leadership, capacity to improve is shown in the units of work introduced into the PSHE programme and the effective management of the tutorial programme.
- Effective leadership is also apparent in the way that subject departments across the curriculum have responded to the changes in the revised National Curriculum, with its aim of responsible citizenship.
- However, the lack of key components of the National Curriculum programme of study and related assessment arrangements show that work is still to be done in producing a coherent programme, supported by the necessary time and resources for training and course development.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- re-appraising the citizenship curriculum to identify key strengths and those gaps that need to be met
- building a coherent scheme of work for citizenship, matching planned content concepts and processes linked to effective assessment
- working with departments that have strengths in citizenship to refine their contributions to make a more explicit contribution to the overall programme and its assessment
- identifying opportunities for subject training and ensuring that resources including time are available.

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

Scott Harrison
Additional Inspector