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Mr G Davis
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Dear Mr Davis

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 29 June 2012 to look at work in ICT.

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; joint observations of three lessons and parts of two lessons with your ICT leader; a learning walk in the Early Years Foundation Stage and a tour of the school with pupils, with a focus on ICT.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

■ Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with ICT capabilities that are in line with national expectations. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school and by Year 6 leave with standards that are similar to national expectations but above in communication and presentation.

■ Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs and pupils identified as gifted and talented make the same progress as other groups.

■ Pupils' behaviour when using ICT is good overall and, at times, outstanding. Lesson observations and discussions with pupils confirm that they are very enthusiastic users of ICT.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is good.

- Teaching over time has been satisfactory, resulting in the satisfactory achievement of pupils in the past. However, new teaching appointments have resulted in an improvement in the teaching of ICT, which is now good overall and, at times, outstanding. This is having a positive impact on learning. Progress in lessons is now good or better. As a result, standards are rapidly rising, though this is not yet reflected in tracking data and in the overall attainment of pupils in Year 6.

- Teachers and teaching assistants display good, and at times outstanding, subject knowledge and are confident users of ICT. Questions are used effectively to move pupils forward in their learning. The learning objectives and the success criteria for lessons are shared with pupils and, in some lessons, the 'learning journey' of the sequence of lessons is discussed.

- Newly introduced assessment procedures are beginning to support teachers in planning more accurately for different groups within their class. However, although pupils are often encouraged to self- and peer-assess, and some teachers encourage pupils to review their learning and set their own 'next steps', this is not applied consistently in all classes and so not all pupils are always aware of their personal targets for ICT.

- Staff ensure a safe and purposeful environment in which pupils are eager to learn. Relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding. The small number of pupils identified with behaviour difficulties are fully integrated in ICT lessons and motivated by the subject. Pupils' behaviour when using ICT is good overall and, when work is very well matched and challenging, it is outstanding.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is good.

- All strands of the ICT National Curriculum are planned for, based on an extensive local authority scheme. The curriculum is regularly reviewed and updated, to increase the enthusiasm and interest of pupils. A good emphasis is placed on presenting information, communication, data-handling and data-logging. The subject leader recognises that control is a relative weakness, especially for higher-attaining pupils.

- The school is able to borrow a range of resources from the local authority to supplement its own resources. This also gives teachers and pupils the opportunity to evaluate new resources. For example, in a good lesson observed, pupils confidently used a range of pocket camcorders to record interviews evaluating 'Art Week'. This also gave pupils and teachers the opportunity to assess the suitability of the recorders before purchase.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how ICT is used in a range of subjects. ICT also extends pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural

education. For example, in an outstanding lesson observed pupils investigated how to replicate the work of Andy Warhol using ICT.

- A good emphasis is placed on keeping pupils safe when using new technologies. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of how to keep safe when using ICT in school and at home.

- The ICT and 'Master class' clubs give pupils the opportunity to further develop their skills and to explore a wider range of programs.

- The newly upgraded virtual learning environment (VLE) is used well by teachers, pupils and parents and carers. Pupils particularly enjoy using Wikis to share and exchange ideas and information about school topics and themes.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is good.

- The subject leader and senior leaders have a good understanding of the strengths of the subject and of the areas for development.

- The ICT technicians ensure that resources are well maintained and give good support to teachers and pupils in lessons.

- Self-evaluation is accurate and based on effective self-review. As a result, the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising the achievement of pupils by:

  - embedding the use of new assessment procedures so that the progress of all groups can be regularly and accurately monitored over time

  - ensuring that pupils are aware of their individual targets for ICT so that they know what they need to do to improve

- using assessment opportunities to support and challenge all groups of pupils, and in particular the more able, in control technology.

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

Anthony Green
Additional Inspector