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Mrs J Proctor-Blain  
Headteacher  
Tankersley St Peter's CofE (Aided) Primary School  
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South Yorkshire  
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Dear Mrs Proctor-Blain

### **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 4 February 2013 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 four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is good.

#### **Achievement in English**

Achievement in English is good.

- On average, pupils enter Nursery and Reception below the level of development expected for their age in communication, language and literacy. They make good progress and, by the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage, attainment in communication, language and literacy is above average.
- At Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is average in reading and writing. There is an improving trend in reading, but writing is more variable. In 2012, more pupils than average met the required standard in the national check on pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds. School assessments show that current pupils are making the expected progress in reading and writing.

- At Key Stage 2, attainment rose from average to above average in 2012 as a result of pupils making improved progress. School data show that current Year 6 pupils have made good progress from their starting points at Key Stage 1, and are on track for similarly good results. School data indicate that Key Stage 2 pupils are making faster than average progress in each year.
- Most pupils enjoy their English lessons. They have a clear grasp of what skills they are learning, which helps them to improve their reading and writing more rapidly. They enjoy the varied activities and the opportunities to write creatively. They assess their own and each other's work with good understanding.

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

The quality of teaching in English is good.

- Observed teaching was good overall and ranged between outstanding and requiring improvement. Teachers usually define the skills to be learnt accurately, which gives pupils a clear idea of how to succeed. The planning of lessons and the use of resources are generally well-matched to the range of abilities. Topics and stories are used effectively to provide a meaningful purpose and to engage pupils well in their own writing. Displays provide good support for pupils' use of grammar. The best teaching demonstrates strong subject expertise; inspiring activities are imaginative and practical; well-presented examples of writing and high expectations challenge pupils to extend their vocabulary, sentence structure, and punctuation. In an observed lesson requiring improvement, the objectives were too broad, and the task was not broken down into small enough steps, with the result that a few pupils did not engage well enough.
- Good marking in all years provides specific praise for what pupils have achieved and sets accurate targets for their next step on the ladder. Pupils have time to respond to the teacher's comments, which enables them to keep up. Self- and peer-assessment make a strong contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding. Teachers' records of pupils' progress contribute well to the planning of learning activities for pupils of different abilities.

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

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- The curriculum is well-planned with good coverage of different types of fiction and non-fiction writing and effective links to a range of topics. A coherent approach to assessment identifies pupils' skills at the beginning of a unit and tests their improvement at the end. Pupils do a piece of extended writing each week, which provides a good opportunity for personal and creative writing. Guided reading has well-focused activities for pupils of different abilities, with regular assessment of reading skills.

Pupils have good opportunities for drama activities and to read and write poetry. Plans for extending the use of computers for research are about to be implemented.

- The increased use of one-to-one tuition for weaker pupils and a gifted and talented club for the higher ability have contributed to faster progress in Year 6. Year 5 and 6 pupils enjoy the responsibility of reading with Key Stage 1 pupils, who benefit from the extra support. A popular reading club involves pupils across the age groups.

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

The effectiveness of leadership in and management of English is good.

- The new headteacher has set a new ambition to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching and has quickly gained an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses in English. The senior leaders for English provide clear direction and are effective role models for teaching. They have improved the teaching of letters and sounds and have established effective whole school approaches to planning and assessment. They have successfully promoted imaginative approaches to the teaching of writing.
- Teachers receive accurate and direct written feedback from senior leaders following observations of teaching and checks on lesson plans and pupils' work. The accuracy of assessment is checked with partner schools. Senior leaders regularly measure and review the progress of pupils with teachers and appropriate actions are taken to tackle underachievement. Leaders have set a target to exceed the nationally expected rate of progress in reading and writing, which most pupils already achieve. The expectations of good progress at Key Stage 2 are not currently defined sharply enough.

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

- increasing attainment at Key Stage 1, especially in writing, and setting more sharply defined expectations for good progress at Key Stage 2.

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**