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Mrs S Jezard
Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Jezard

Ofsted 2013–14 subject survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 24 May 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 joint observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is good.

Achievement in English is good.

- Attainment in English has been consistently above the national average for the last five years. Attainment in reading is above that in writing. Current attainment for Year 6 pupils is above average in both reading and writing. Pupils articulate their thoughts well. Their speaking and listening skills are above average.
- Pupils apply their literacy skills well across a wide range of subjects. Their well-developed use of information and communication technology and good collaborative skills prepare them well for the next stage of learning.
- Pupils make good progress in reading and writing. They enjoy English lessons, take pride in their work and have good attitudes to learning which support their achievement well.

- The small proportion of pupils in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and those with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils because they are well supported and teachers plan lessons well to meet their individual learning needs.

Teaching in English is good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and know their pupils well. They plan lessons which are interesting and well-matched to the individual learning needs of all pupils. As a result, pupils make good progress in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- Good questioning skills and effective use of modern technology enhance the learning experience for pupils. In one class, pupils were highly skilled in using computer tablets to improve their writing and evaluate their partners' writing. They made exceptional progress in the lesson.
- Pupils know their targets for improvement in reading and writing, but are not always sufficiently involved in checking the progress they are making towards achieving their targets.
- Teachers regularly mark pupils' work, including their homework, to a high standard. The comments they make provide useful guidance to pupils to enable them to improve their work.

The curriculum in English is good.

- The curriculum is carefully planned for the mixed age-range classes. Good links between other subjects enhance pupils' learning experiences. The curriculum is planned to make effective use of a range of texts with meaningful and interesting approaches, ensuring pupils' literacy skills are developed in a range of subjects. The recently introduced cross-curricular books encourage pupils to maintain good standards of writing across the curriculum.
- The curriculum is enhanced through a wide variety of additional educational experiences such as visits to local places of interest, museums and art galleries. Year 2 pupils thoroughly enjoyed the work they completed about 'The snail and the whale' following the visit of the author Julia Donaldson. These visits from authors provide memorable experiences for pupils. Pupils were also very enthusiastic when recounting the visit of the authors Simon James and John Farnham.
- Pupils enjoy reading and develop the skills to read well. Younger pupils are encouraged to blend sounds to read unfamiliar words. Pupils read regularly in school and at home and are able to use the school library to borrow fiction and non-fiction reading material.

Leadership and management of English are good.

- The English subject leader has a passion for all aspects of English and improving learning experiences for pupils. Staff undertake suitable training to develop their teaching skills. The introduction of greater use of media technology and useful links with a range of subjects has successfully

increased pupils' enjoyment in developing their reading, writing and speaking and listening skills.

- Resources are well managed and there is a consistency of approach to the environment for learning in classrooms. Displays are well-organised and lively, with a range of prompts to support learning. Celebration of pupils' work on show is of a high quality, particularly their writing.
- Plans for the development of English are based on the analysis of a range of monitoring activities, which include checking on pupils' progress in lessons and in their work and discussions with pupils. However, this would be enhanced through a greater focus on the analysis of the tracking information on pupils' attainment and progress and by setting clear milestones within the plan to provide a formal overview of expected progress for each year group.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- increasing the opportunities for pupils to monitor their own progress towards achieving their targets
- further strengthening the leadership and management in English by:
 - making greater use of the analysis of information about pupils' progress to inform strategic planning
 - including milestones in strategic planning linked to expected levels of pupils' achievement in reading and writing throughout the year.

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

Ann Henderson
Her Majesty's Inspector