

17 October 2006

Mrs K Dukes  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Dukes

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 12 October, 2006 to look at work in information and communication technology (ICT).

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on ICT and its impact on whole-school improvement. 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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with a governor, staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ICT are satisfactory.

- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are broadly in line with the national expectations. Year 1 and 2 pupils are able to discuss their experiences of using ICT and can describe, for example, the importance of placing instructions for the floor turtle in the right order. In Year 6 pupils

are enthusiastic about the opportunities they have to use ICT in discrete lessons and in other subjects. They understand safe working practices when using email but know less about the different ways in which they might evaluate their own work.

- Limited access to ICT during some of their time at the school has depressed the standards of Year 6 pupils and some, including the more able, have not made enough progress.

### Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Pupils behave well, are keen to answer questions and, when working in pairs at the computer, are helpful to each other.
- Teachers emphasise key words to extend children's ICT vocabulary. However, the pairing of pupils at the computers restricts independent working. In both lessons observed, work was not matched well enough to pupils' varying levels of ICT capability and too little was expected of the more able pupils.
- The increased tracking of pupils' progress and regular assessment against explicit criteria is enabling the school to identify pupils in need of additional support and those for whom greater challenge is needed.
- The school is aware of the need to provide opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and to ensure that they receive regular feedback on how well they are progressing in the subject. Target setting, to encourage pupils to give of their best, is not yet carried out.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- At the time of the last inspection the curriculum for ICT was judged to be inadequate. Since then the planning has improved and the curriculum now provides for the discrete teaching of ICT. Improvements to the computer network, technical support and accommodation are enabling teachers to incorporate ICT more frequently within their teaching of other subjects.
- Despite these improvements, some weaknesses remain in the school's provision for ICT. In particular, the National Curriculum strand which focuses on pupils' ability to review, modify and evaluate their work and

the provision for pupils with differing levels of ICT capability are not given enough attention. In addition, pupils' experiences of ICT, although much improved over the last two years, are not always continuous as they progress through the school.

## Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are good.

- You and the governors are committed to improving the school's provision for ICT. The ICT subject leader is very effective and has made a significant impact during the two years in which he has held the post. The school's ICT strategy is well managed and rightly focuses on improvements to the ICT infrastructure, curriculum planning and staff expertise in order to raise standards.
- The school is evaluating its own provision in ICT effectively. The use of both local and national guidance has helped the school to identify accurately its main strengths and weaknesses.
- Good attention is paid to continuous professional development in ICT. You have led by example through your attendance on a national training course. Audits have helped identify the needs of all staff and the training provided by the subject leader and the local high school has been successful in building staff confidence and skills. Teachers have also been helped by the provision of laptop computers.

## The impact of ICT on whole-school improvement

- Staff confidence and expertise in using ICT to support learning have increased since the time of the last inspection. ICT is now used more regularly to support learning in a range of subjects.
- Inadequacies in the school's buildings and ICT resources have been, and remain, serious impediments to improvement. Senior leaders and governors have shown resolve and resilience in tackling these problems and their success is evident in the improvements in staff expertise, ICT infrastructure, curriculum planning and assessment mentioned elsewhere in this letter. Nonetheless, the financial costs of maintaining the buildings limit the school's capacity to further improve its ICT provision in order to raise standards.

## Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is satisfactory.

- The school is aware of the potential of ICT to support pupils' learning and makes use of a range of computer programs to help improve children's auditory and visual memory and their literacy.
- The school has recently purchased its first interactive whiteboard. It knows that it still lags behind many others in the provision of the electronic visual aids to help make lessons varied, interesting and accessible to pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included the need to:

- ensure that the planning and teaching of ICT lessons takes full account of pupils' needs and their varying levels of ICT capability
- widen the range of teaching strategies used so that pupils develop greater confidence and independence when using ICT and have the opportunity to assess their own work
- continue to monitor and evaluate the ICT curriculum to ensure that there is good continuity between the years and that all aspects of the programmes of study are covered in sufficient depth.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop ICT in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Rhona Seviour  
Her Majesty's Inspector