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Mrs L Stephenson  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Stephenson

Ofsted survey inspection programme – History

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Tuesday 19 September 2006 to look at work in history.

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 staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in history are good.

- Pupils make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of important historical skills as they move through the key stages. In Reception, pupils are introduced well to basic concepts such as change over time and are encouraged to articulate their views clearly and accurately. Pupils deepen their skills and concepts effectively in Key Stage 1 and their work indicates sensible links with literacy strategies addressed elsewhere in the curriculum. Pupils extend their historical knowledge and understanding effectively in Key Stage 2.

- Pupils' attitudes towards history are very positive; behaviour is very good and pupils develop good attitudes towards learning and working with others.

### Quality of teaching and learning of history

The quality of teaching and learning in history is good.

- Teachers form good relationships with pupils and make good use of a wide range of active strategies, such as re-enacting life in Viking times and working with artefacts. Pupils have good opportunities to work on their own and co-operatively in small groups. Teaching provides good opportunities for all pupils to be involved productively in history activities.
- Assessment procedures have been improved but these need developing further, especially improving the tracking and monitoring of individual pupil progress in key historical skills. Marking is satisfactory but varies in the extent to which it provides helpful feedback to pupils. Otherwise, support and guidance for pupils in history is good.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the history curriculum is good.

- The school provides a sensibly balanced history curriculum which meets the needs of learners well. This has been reviewed recently in order to increase flexibility in terms of how topics are addressed and how they link with other areas of the curriculum. A particular strength of the history curriculum is the way it enables pupils to develop their literacy and imaginative writing. Pupils enjoyed this aspect of their history lessons. The curriculum also enables pupils to begin to understand the world in which they live. However, further opportunities need to be created for pupils to develop their extended writing skills on key historical concepts.

### Leadership and management of history

Leadership and management in history are good.

- The co-ordinator has clear views about the place of history in the school curriculum and has developed good plans to reduce dependency on externally published frameworks. History topics have been interwoven well with other elements of the school curriculum.
- History schemes of work are clear and effectively identify how pupils progress through the National Curriculum.
- Self-evaluation in history is developing but monitoring and evaluation need to be more formal.

## Subject issue

Good emphasis is placed in history to the development of literacy in all its aspects. This is a consequence of the school's effective general cross-curricular approach to developing the literacy skills of pupils.

## Inclusion

All groups of pupils make good progress in history. However, as already stated, tightened approaches to assessing individual pupils progress in key historical skills and more formalised monitoring and evaluation, will improve achievement and standards further.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing further assessment procedures so that pupils' progress in key historical skills is tracked more rigorously
- developing further self-evaluation in history
- providing more extended writing opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their grasp of key historical skills and concepts
- ensuring that marking, especially in Key Stage 2, helps pupils to understand how they can improve their work in history.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop history 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

Peter Limm  
Her Majesty's Inspector