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Mrs E Brand  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Brand

Ofsted survey inspection programme - English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 09 November 2006 to look at work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject the visit had a particular focus on our current survey theme: provision for poetry.

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.

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 four lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in English are good.

- School evidence suggests that standards on entry to the school and at the start of Year 1 are broadly average.
- The small size of cohorts makes it difficult to track progress accurately from year to year or to make national and gender comparisons.
- Standards in 2005 at Key Stage 1 were broadly average. In 2006 standards rose and were above average for reading and writing.

- At Key Stage 2, all pupils reached the expected level in 2005. In 2006 the percentage attaining level 4 decreased, but the prior attainment of this group was much lower.
- PANDA information indicates that the achievement made by pupils in Key Stage 2 in 2005 was good.
- Lessons and work seen during the visit indicate that standards are above average and pupils make good progress during their time in school.
- Personal development is good. Pupils' behaviour is very good and they enjoy their work in English.

### Quality of teaching and learning of subject

The quality of teaching and learning is good but better in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1.

- Planning is good. Lessons have clear objectives and planned progression. There are good links with previous and future lessons.
- There is good provision to meet the needs of all pupils in mixed age classes. There is a good balance of challenge and support across the ability range.
- Teachers assess work regularly and set targets. Marking is helpful since it gives pupils clear advice on what they need to do to improve.
- In the teaching that was only satisfactory, although the planning was good it was allowed to become too restricting. Opportunities to profit from pupils' interest and enthusiasm were overlooked.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Joint planning of work ensures that pupils in mixed age classes have a broad and balanced curriculum. There is provision for a range of fiction, non-fiction, non-literary texts and poetry.
- Teachers' joint planning means that there is continuity and progression for pupils spending a second year in the same class and also for those going into a new class.
- Literacy planning is monitored effectively on a weekly basis.

### Leadership and management of English

The quality of leadership and management of English is satisfactory overall.

- The temporary head teacher provides good leadership in English, alongside her other significant roles within the school. There is no

literacy co-ordinator in post at present, although one has been appointed for next term.

- The temporary head teacher has introduced arrangements to track the progress of all pupils against their own prior performance.
- Good guidance has been provided for teachers to enable them to set targets more accurately. Similarly, pupils have recently been given individual handbooks to enable them to be more closely involved with tracking and enhancing their own progress.
- The temporary headteacher has an accurate picture of the quality of teaching and learning in English but this has not been acquired through a process of lesson monitoring. A more formal programme has been delayed until the new co-ordinator takes up the appointment, and none has taken place for some time.
- Good use has been made of testing in Year 5 to identify some potential under-achievement and measures have been put in place to rectify this.

#### Provision for poetry

Provision for poetry is good.

- Poetry features regularly in schemes of work and some outstanding teaching of poetry was seen.
- Pupils discuss confidently and enthusiastically a wide variety of their favourite poetry and poets, including significant figures such as Sylvia Plath and Seamus Heaney. They show a reflective and sensitive response.
- Pupils enjoy their frequent opportunities to write poetry. With just cause, they are proud of what they have written and are eager for it to be read by as wide an audience as possible.

#### Inclusion

Inclusion in English is good.

- Pupils form good relationships with each other and with adults.
- PANDA evidence shows that in 2005 all pupils achieved well except for the higher attaining pupils. The school has identified this as an area for development and there are plans in place to address this.
- Pupils show in their study of literature great respect for other cultures.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving monitoring of teaching to identify ways to ensure that teaching is of equally good quality throughout the school
- using the good quality planning to inform teaching rather than as a constraint on pupils' learning.

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

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority/Local Learning Skills Council. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term and made available to the team for the next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Patricia Walker  
Additional Inspector