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Mrs H Luckman
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Luckman

Ofsted survey inspection programme: Innovative Curriculum

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 November 2006 to look at work in developing an innovative curriculum.

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 and the observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the curriculum was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Standards are above average and pupils make very good progress especially in their personal development which is outstanding.

- While standards are high there has been a slight decline in the last two years in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels.

Quality of teaching and learning of subject

Teaching is good and some is outstanding.

- Teachers are well prepared and confident in what they are doing.

- Very good relationships are established between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils.
- A key feature of the school's very effective teaching is the consistency between classes.
- All teachers have high expectations of pupils and this has a positive impact on learning.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons and as result they are well motivated to learn. They persevere and are keen to finish their tasks. They readily answer questions and offer their own ideas especially in whole class sessions.

Quality of curriculum

The schools curriculum provision is outstanding.

- The school provides a broad curriculum to ensure that pupils have a rich and varied experience of learning. Despite the imperative to raise standards in English and mathematics, a strong emphasis on sport, drama and art has been maintained and emphasised by the school's Activemark Gold and Healthy Schools Advanced awards. Developing pupils' coordination through physical education in order to improve overall learning is an important part of the philosophy of the school.
- The school day is organised in such a way that lessons are long enough to sustain and finish activities. Additional planned breaks are used effectively to lengthen the morning session. Teachers have the flexibility to determine how best to manage the time and curriculum content in their classes. Teachers place a strong emphasis on establishing very good links between different subject areas. Clear links were established between writing, art and music in a recent project about Africa.
- The school provides a very wide range of extra curricular activities. Pupils appreciate the opportunities they have and enjoy taking part. This is important in maintaining pupils' positive attitudes to school and their willingness to attend.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school are excellent.

- You have a very clear vision for the school and with the deputy headteacher form a highly effective team which ensures a consistently high standard of education.
- The school's clear policies and procedures provide explicit expectations of staff. As a result, the opportunities for curriculum flexibility helps teachers meet the needs and interests of their pupils in the most effective way.
- A very well organised process for monitoring and checking the quality of planning, teaching and learning is embedded in practice and this important strand of management ensures consistently high standards throughout the school.

Inclusion

- The broad curriculum offered by the school is inclusive and provides a range of experiences which are appealing to all pupils.
- Attendance is very good.
- Support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is very well organised and pupils do well.
- The support for pupils who are gifted and talented is effective. However the schools' policy for all teachers' planning to start with the highest level of attainment is not fully embedded in all curriculum plans.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure that the school's policy for all teachers to plan for the highest levels of attainment is consistent in practice
- analyse carefully any downward trend in overall school test results.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your curriculum.

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

Daniel Towl
Her Majesty's Inspector