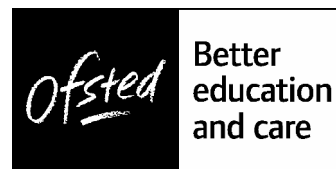


Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045  
F 020 7421 6644  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



20 November 2006

Mrs Janet Dingvean  
Headteacher  
Southfield Primary School  
Banbury Road  
Brackley  
Northamptonshire  
NN13 6AU

Dear Mrs Dingvean

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 8 November 2006 to look at work in ESD. 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 many pupils and staff, scrutiny of relevant documents, consideration of your helpful check lists and observation of two lessons, circle time and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of Education for Sustainable Development was judged to be good.

#### Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ESD are good overall.

- The pupils' own resolution for the present academic year, "To eat a healthy lunch", is commendable. The school's termly 'health weeks' and regular visits by the 'Life Bus' are valuable in helping pupils to understand how to lead healthy lives. Pupils have a good amount of physical exercise each week, use stimulating play equipment and have easy access to drinking water. Many boys are quite clear that fruit is important 'to make your bones grow strong'.
- Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are fully aware of health issues related to substance abuse, smoking and relationships.

- Pupils have a good understanding of environmental links, for example between soil type, growing things and composting. They learn about many aspects of ESD, such as world disasters, farming, acid rain, landfill or the ozone hole. Pupils particularly enjoy considering statistics, such as: it takes six gallons of water to produce one lettuce!
- The active citizenship award achieved for the pupils' work on graffiti and vandalism in the local area confirms their good understanding of these issues. Basic recycling is well established. The Year 5 geography work last year, which evolved into a major debate on a local building issue, was a particularly worthwhile experience.
- Pupils have a better than average grasp of the fact that solutions to world and local problems are never straightforward.

### Quality of teaching and learning of ESD

Too few lessons were observed to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in ESD. The teaching seen was good. Teachers and pupils speak to each other respectfully and learning takes place in a supportive, well-structured atmosphere. Teachers encourage pupils to articulate their ideas and to reflect on issues. Interesting practical work in science brings topics such as micro-organisms alive. Local field work and visits enhance learning in many subjects.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum for ESD is good overall.

- The school correctly evaluates that ESD is well embedded in the curriculum, particularly evident in science and geography during the visit. This is confirmed by the pupils' written work and by displays in several parts of the school.
- Lunchtime clubs, such as yoga and 'Grow and Eat' contribute well to pupils' well-being and to their understanding of sustainable food supplies.
- Pupils' ability to consider and discuss ESD issues is stimulated through the 'Philosophy for Children' programme and the debating society. These are valuable additions to the curriculum.

### Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD are good.

- The helpful preparation for this visit reflects how seriously the school is already involved in ESD and wishes to develop it further.
- It is most encouraging that the staff and governors' recent 'Vision' day, and past and present SDPs include several ESD elements.
- The governing body is clearly supportive of the ESD agenda and has a new member who plans to share his highly relevant, professional ESD expertise to generate future developments.

- Several members of staff have an enthusiastic interest in sustainability issues and are keen to be involved in their development.
- At present no member of staff acts as co-ordinator for ESD activities and the school has already decided to develop such a role in the near future.
- The school has already reduced its energy use, to save money, but appreciates how this and consumable consumption should be related to ESD. Such a focus does not have a high profile around the school buildings.

## Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good overall.

- The Every Child Matters agenda is a significant focus for the school. Pupils consider ways to reduce bullying and how to take care of each other. The brightly decorated suggestion boxes in each class room encourage pupils to share their concerns about any aspects of school life.
- The school council is well established although it takes a while to have any impact in the autumn term. It is good that a governor is a member of this council.
- The appointment of a Welfare Assistant reflects the school's already strong and effective commitment to provide the best care for individual pupils.
- Pupils with particular needs, from ethnic backgrounds or those for whom English is not their mother tongue, are fully integrated into school life. This was particularly apparent in the nursery.

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

- develop the role of ESD co-ordinator and nurture the staff's talents and interests in this subject
- extend the focus on ESD in everyday school life through signs and displays around the school
- share existing expertise to incorporate ESD into pupils' learning across the whole curriculum.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop Education for Sustainable Development in the school. 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

Clare Gillies  
Additional Inspector