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Mr I Gage  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Gage

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 13 November 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 governors, pupils, teachers and other staff, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and attendance at four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ESD was judged to be good with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

Standards and achievement in ESD is good.

- Pupils and students have good levels of knowledge issues relating to energy use such as ways of reducing or conserving it where possible.
- Pupils and students recognise the need to conserve natural resources such as water and appreciate that some resources are finite.
- The importance of students and pupils leading healthy lives, through regular exercise, is evidenced in their high participation in physical education activities.

- The promotion of the school café, including new healthier eating options, contributed to the school gaining the Healthy Schools gold award. Nearly half the pupils walk to school, although few cycle.
- A good proportion of pupils and students are involved in initiatives requiring them to work on behalf of the school or wider community, for example as members of the School Council or through involvement in the school's annual 'shoe box' appeal for children in other countries.

### Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in ESD is good overall.

- Teachers have a good understanding of ESD principles in a wide range of subjects such as art, geography and science.
- Good aspects in teaching were seen in science, geography physical education and general studies.
- Past work indicates that teachers encourage students and pupils to think deeply about issues. Good examples included identifying sources of pollution by pupils in Year 8 and investigating the nutritional benefits of meals for athletes preparing for the 2012 London Olympics by a pupil in Year 12.
- In some activities, opportunities were missed to raise pupils' and students' awareness of the positive influence they can individually exert on their environment.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good overall and there are outstanding aspects in the way healthy lifestyles and physical education are promoted.

- The school's concerted approach to combining enterprise learning with high levels of responsibilities is preparing pupils very well for their future roles in society.
- The curriculum helps enrich students learning significantly, such as the range of local and more distant annual visits to North America and major European countries.
- ESD is highlighted well within schemes of work such as geography, science, Religious education and modern foreign languages.
- The curriculum is very broad and makes good references to ESD principles such as citizenship, enterprise learning, healthy lifestyles and community involvement.

### Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD are good overall.

- Although there is no overall policy in relation to ESD, the school's philosophy and ethos has promoted the sustainability agenda significantly. For example:
  - (i) stakeholders' views are canvassed and acted upon conscientiously
  - (ii) the school has been proactive in investigating the different ways pupils and students travel to school and in solving some difficulties for those travelling on buses
  - (iii) the focus on developing high levels of inclusion by modifications to the building and by specialised teaching in physical education for example
  - (iv) considerable effort has gone into identifying ESD principles within the curriculum
  - (v) the school's work has a positive impact in both the local community and in other countries.

## Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- Effective procedures ensure that the academic progress and personal development of its most vulnerable pupils and students are carefully monitored and that good support and guidance is provided.
- All pupils are encouraged to participate in all lesson activities and modifications to the building and equipment support pupils well.

## Areas for Improvement

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

- develop a school policy for ESD so that the many good initiatives can be drawn together, celebrated further and enhanced
- review exterior use of the buildings and grounds as a learning tool to promote ESD principles such as wind power, solar energy or water conservation
- take forward the school plans to gain 'eco status'
- develop more informal links between the school council and governing body to facilitate the exchange of ideas or concerns.

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

Kevin Hodge  
Additional Inspector