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Mrs Flannery
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Dear Mrs Flannery

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 06 December 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 staff, governors, parents and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of two lessons, an assembly and a survey of the school environment.

The overall effectiveness of ESD was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ESD are outstanding overall.

- Evidence from written work in expected areas indicates that pupils are reaching above average standards.
- A good basis for learning about sustainability is quickly established in the Foundation Stage, where for example, pupils already appreciate personal responsibilities towards the school and wider environment and act accordingly.

- Involvement in ESD activities has made a significant contribution to the wider academic achievement and personal development of targeted groups of potential underachievers.
- The overall personal development and well being of pupils is outstanding. This is because the school's aims are underpinned by a very strong commitment to the "Every Child Matters" agenda and it deliberately sets out to ensure that the principles of sustainability permeate its work and characterise its ethos. Consequently it makes a reality of its mission statement that "we give children wings to fly".

Quality of teaching and learning of ESD

Teaching and learning are good overall with some features which are outstanding.

- Shared expectations for teaching and learning are designed to ensure that pupils acquire the knowledge understanding, skills and values to be active participants in creating a more sustainable society.
- During the visit, good and outstanding teaching was observed in the Foundation Stage and Year 3. In a numeracy lesson in Year 3, pupils made excellent progress when learning about the properties of two - dimensional figures. The teacher's high expectations bore fruit as pupils were captivated and excited by group tasks, very well matched to their capabilities, which made highly effective use of music, movement and independent research.
- Pupils are routinely involved in self and peer assessment of their progress in lessons against clearly defined lesson objectives which are shared with them.
- Discussion with parents indicates that pupils are keen to ensure that the principles they learn at school are put into practice at home.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum for ESD is outstanding.

- The sustainability agenda permeates the taught curriculum and extra-curricular provision in response to a shared philosophy about what this school seeks to do for its pupils.
- There is a wide range of opportunities for pupils to pursue their interests in aspects of the sustainability agenda, to exercise leadership and responsibility on behalf of other pupils and to work in a way which benefits the wider community.
- The school recognises that, although pupils have some opportunities to learn about diversity through the global dimension and make links with their own life experiences, this provision is not yet strong enough.

Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD are outstanding.

- Your outstanding vision for ESD has been clearly communicated to and promoted among all stakeholders to the extent that it now underpins the everyday life of the school.
- Management responsibilities for ESD are clearly defined, well understood, supported through appropriate training. The impact of initiatives on pupils' academic progress and personal development is also monitored.
- The school's excellent and reciprocal partnership with the local community supports its work in sustainability well. For example, there is a developing use of its "community room" by local groups of various kinds and it makes good use of resources provided by a local organic gardening association in support of relevant projects.
- The school's contribution to ESD is recognised in its achievement of a wide range of relevant local and national awards.
- Sustainability principles are evident throughout the school environment. For example an extensive "wild life" area has been created and is used for learning in many curriculum areas as well providing a focus for the work of the school's "eco-warriors".

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is outstanding.

- The school's mission to ensure that "every child can fly" is borne out in reality.
- The targeted involvement of potentially underachieving groups of pupils, for example, white working class boys, in activities which reflect the sustainability agenda is having a significant effect on overall standards and achievement within the school. Pupils gain confidence and improve their self-esteem which results in more positive attitudes to learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to develop ways of strengthening opportunities for pupils to appreciate and experience the link between the local and global dimensions in ESD.

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

Anthony Pearson
Additional Inspector