

01 February 2007

Mr S Foot  
Headteacher  
Minet Junior School  
Avondale Drive  
Hayes  
Middlesex  
UB3 3NR

Dear Mr Foot

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

I am grateful for the hospitality and co-operation of you, your staff and your pupils during my visit on 30 January 2007. As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of ICT, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of ICT on whole-school improvement. 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 ICT lessons in Years 3 and 5.

The overall effectiveness of ICT as a subject was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ICT are satisfactory and improving.

- ICT has helped to further improve pupils' attitudes to learning. Consequently, they are keen to learn and several expressed the view that the use of visual images helps them to understand new concepts quickly and with greater ease.
- Pupils are beginning to use ICT creatively in a way that challenges their thinking.
- ICT is having a satisfactory impact on raising standards particularly in mathematics. However, it is contributing extremely well to supporting the development of basic skills in English.
- ICT is contributing well to pupils' personal development and well-being.

- The limited number of laptops and access to computers is reducing the school's capacity to further accelerate the rate of progress made by pupils.

### Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with pockets of good practice.

- Since the time of the last inspection, teachers have become more confident and better skilled in their use of ICT; this is leading to better provision for pupils.
- Where teachers make good links with other subjects they are helping pupils to learn and reinforce a good range of skills simultaneously and in context. A good example was observed in a Year 5 ICT lesson, with pupils using and recalling the knowledge of reflective symmetry to help them design a Tudor Knot Garden.
- ICT has enabled pupils to enjoy areas of learning that were previously not as engaging. Consequently, through the use of virtual tours pupils are now developing a good knowledge of other cultures and faiths and would welcome more links with other schools.
- However, teachers do not always apply the good teaching strategies they use in other subjects during ICT based lessons. There are for example, missed opportunities for pupils to share and discuss ideas in pairs or as a group. Furthermore pupils are not sufficiently engaged in the assessment of their learning and often struggle to articulate what they have learnt or understood.
- Although teachers assess pupils' progress at the end of units of work, there are currently insufficient systems in place to ensure that the progress being made by all pupils is rigorously tracked and monitored. However, the school is currently piloting a way of doing this more effectively.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The informed use of ICT is leading to a more flexible and creative curriculum.
- Although links between ICT and some subjects are developing well, the use of ICT across the curriculum has yet to become firmly embedded throughout the school.
- Pupils would welcome more access to ICT during lessons as well as after school to support their learning.
- Although coordinators for subjects other than ICT have ICT included as part of their remit, this is not sufficiently well reflected in their action plans.

## Leadership and management of ICT

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

- The ICT policy is clear and detailed; it makes appropriate reference to integrating ICT across the curriculum and to teachers using a range of teaching and learning styles. While there is also appropriate reference to using ICT to support the needs of pupils with special educational needs, there is insufficient guidance about how to use ICT to support the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL).
- The action plan for ICT does not clarify the intended outcomes for learners well enough and success criteria are not sufficiently measurable. This is reducing the potential for ICT to impact further on raising standards particularly in English.
- Although the quality of technical support is good the level of support has become insufficient given the extent to which ICT is now used throughout the school.
- The newly appointed ICT coordinators are developing their roles well, but they have yet to undertake lesson observations.

## The impact of ICT on whole-school improvement

The impact of ICT on whole school improvement is satisfactory overall.

- ICT is being used as an effective management tool to reduce bureaucracy and unnecessary paperwork as well as to track and monitor the progress made by pupils in English, mathematics and science.
- The use of ICT to raise standards is not sufficiently explicit within improvement planning.
- The school makes effective use of ICT to engage and motivate pupils as well as to teach them how to keep safe and be healthy. Pupils themselves recognise that by learning how to use computers effectively this will help to prepare them well for later life and future employment.

## Inclusion

The development of ICT to support underachieving and vulnerable groups is satisfactory overall.

- The school is making excellent use of an ICT synthetic phonics programme to support the needs of pupils who arrive at the school with very little spoken English. This used in conjunction with a published scheme is enabling targeted pupils to make outstanding progress.
- However, the expectation of what some of the more able EAL pupils can achieve when using ICT is at times too low.

- The school has yet to undertake an audit of those pupils who have access to computers at home to identify those who may require additional provision at school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included the following

- consider ways of further increasing pupils' access to ICT during class based lessons as well as increasing levels of technical support
- ensure ICT based lessons include the good teaching strategies which are used to teach other core subjects
- implement a systematic whole school approach to assessing the progress pupils make in ICT
- ensure the use of ICT is firmly embedded across the curriculum and that this is reflected within action and improvement plans for all subjects
- ensure that all improvement planning includes measurable success criteria and that these relate directly to the intended outcomes for learners
- develop guidance for teachers about how to make the best use of ICT to support the needs of EAL pupils with different levels of fluency
- continue to develop the roles of the newly appointed ICT coordinators so that this includes lesson observations and the auditing of pupils to determine which ones would benefit from having additional access to ICT at school.

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

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

Yours sincerely

Gehane Gordelier  
Her Majesty's Inspector