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Mrs J Whiteley  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Whiteley

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit with Terry Holland HMI on 07 March 2007 to look at work in science.

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, talking with pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good<sup>+</sup>.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in science are good.

- Several years ago the year on year performance of the school varied considerably, and there has been quite a high turnover of staff which has now reduced.
- The achievement of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 has risen significantly over the last three years, rising from being at the 63rd percentile in 2004 to the 13<sup>th</sup> percentile in 2006.
- In 2006 the science national test results showed the school to be significantly above other similar schools.

- The rise in performance of all pupils has risen and has been greatest for the more able pupils.
- Pupils respond well to the opportunities provided to act responsibly and they take pride in their work.
- Pupils' attitude to work is good and their behaviour is also good with very little off task behaviour being seen.

### Quality of teaching and learning of science

The quality of teaching and learning in science are good.

- All the teaching seen was good and some had outstanding features.
- Good planning underpins the good teaching, and coverage of the National Curriculum is secure in the schemes of work.
- Individual lessons are planned by class teachers, contain a good variety of activity and are well matched to purpose.
- Teachers use questioning effectively to elicit ideas from pupils, engage them and evaluate the learning taking place.
- Assessment is not yet carried out systematically across the school and each teacher decides how to evaluate the progress made by pupils.
- Staff do keep good records of attainment for each pupil that are passed on to the next class teacher.
- While the teaching of science investigation skills is carried out by each teacher, the planning for progression in this area is weak.
- There are good relationships between pupils and with teachers and pupils receive good feedback to enable them to improve.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- While the coverage of the National Curriculum is secure in the scheme of work, it does not set out clearly the progression to be achieved in science skills such as investigation.
- The detailed schemes of work do show how teachers expect pupils' knowledge and understanding of science to progress.
- The school is currently looking for ways of capturing good practice such that it can be shared more effectively amongst staff.
- Planning grids for all year groups are now available to all staff electronically, and will be modified with staff suggestions and through discussion.
- The curriculum in science is broad and balanced and contains a substantial element of practical and investigative work that pupils enjoy.
- The curriculum incorporates experiences at a field study centre and the school is seeking ways of further enriching the curriculum.
- While some good literacy and numeracy practice is seen in lessons these opportunities are not planned into the science scheme of work.

## Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management of science are good.

- Under your management of and that of the relatively recently appointed deputy headteacher, science has made strong improvements over the last three years.
- Improvement planning for science is rational and well structured but has yet to be fully implemented.
- The management and leadership have a clear vision for the further improvement of science in the school.
- Given the imminent changes in staffing, succession planning and clear priorities need to be firmly in place to ensure improvements can be made.

## Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- There is a clear culture of inclusion in the school and scrutiny of data and classroom observation gave no evidence of inadequate progress of any group.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing tracking of individual pupils to evaluate the progress they make
- improving the opportunities for sharing good practice in science teaching and planning
- making progression in science skills (SC1) explicit in planning
- ensuring the implementation of the science development plan.

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

Ian Richardson  
Her Majesty's Inspector