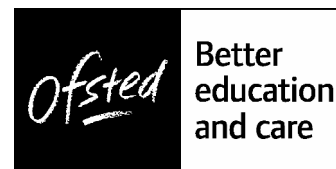


Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs Cresswell & Mrs Francis
Headteachers
Lamplugh C of E School
Kirkland
Frizington
Cumbria
CA26 3XU

Dear Mrs Cresswell and Mrs Francis

Ofsted survey inspection programme - English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 05 February 2007 to look at work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject the visit had a particular focus on our current survey theme: provision for poetry. 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 two lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be good. The strengths in the subject, noted in the inspection report of June 2004, have been maintained and some aspects of the provision have improved.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in English is good and standards are generally above average.

- All pupils, whatever their starting point, achieve well in English. Year groups are very small, often only four or five pupils, and standards vary significantly from year to year.
- Data shows that, in both key stages, standards in English have improved steadily in recent years. Pupils' results in the 2006 tests were exceptionally high in Year 2 and above average in Year 6. For three years standards have always been at least average in both key stages.

- Standards in the present Year 6 are broadly average and represent good achievement over the key stage.

Quality of teaching and learning of English

Teaching and learning are good overall.

- Knowledgeable teachers and highly skilled, well-briefed support staff work very well together. They manage flexible pupil groupings with ease, ensuring the learning needs of all pupils are met. All staff have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and build on what they have already learned. The teaching observed was stronger in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1.
- Classrooms are calm, orderly working environments in which there is a very good emphasis on achievement in a supportive atmosphere.
- Teachers know where their pupils are up to and they set appropriate learning targets for them. Lessons are carefully planned with work matched very well to pupils' varied levels of attainment. As a result of these factors, and the pupils' own desire to do well, all learn effectively.
- The assessment of pupils' learning and tracking of their progress underpins the effective planning of work, particularly in Key Stage 2.

Quality of curriculum

The curriculum in English is good.

- The school provides an English curriculum which fully meets national requirements and has several positive features.
- The balance of work is adjusted thoughtfully to meet pupils' identified needs. For instance, following thorough analysis of pupils' written work, there has recently been an emphasis on writing and spelling which has had a positive impact on standards.
- The programme of work is carefully planned to accommodate the needs of the mixed age classes.
- The provision of more books which are likely to appeal to boys and pupils who have not established the reading habit has been successful. Pupils in Key Stage 2 read for pleasure and explain their developing preferences for particular genres and authors.
- Some good English work has been done in cross-curricular projects, such as the 'Health Week', but opportunities to develop literacy skills are not yet systematically planned across subjects.

Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management of English are good.

- Effective subject leadership provides high aspiration and a clear direction for continuing improvement. Plans for the subject are securely based on an accurate evaluation of strengths and weaknesses.
- The subject leader has been instrumental in improving the quality of provision and raising standards, especially in Key Stage 2.
- A very good check is kept on pupils' progress in Key Stage 2 but progress earlier in the school is not monitored with the same rigour.

Provision for poetry

The school's provision for poetry is satisfactory.

- The majority of pupils enjoy reading and writing poetry. Several spoke with enthusiasm about the poems they wrote recently for a competition and they remember some of the poets whose work they have studied. Nonetheless, pupils do not see poetry as having a high profile in their English work.
- Older pupils show some sensitive use of language in their poems.
- Teachers ensure that pupils study a sufficiently wide range of types of poetry, but the whole-school planning does not assure progression in this aspect of the curriculum.

Inclusion

Inclusion in English is good.

- All groups of pupils make at least good progress and the school takes care to ensure that English work appeals equally to boys and girls. Boys have positive attitudes to the subject.
- For pupils with special educational needs, the careful planning of work and good teaching in small groups has led to some very rapid progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- further developing the school's planning for the development and use of literacy skills across the curriculum
- ensuring that the subject leader maintains an overview of pupils' progress as they move through the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1
- planning more systematically for progression in poetry.

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

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

Yours sincerely

Pat Kime
Her Majesty's Inspector