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Mr Vallely  
The Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Vallely

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 five lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in English are good.

- Pupils achieve well. They make very good progress in speaking, listening and reading skills throughout the school, helping their work in other subjects. Achievement in writing is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2.
- Teacher assessments show standards to be above average by the end of Year 2. Test results at the end of Year 6 in 2006 were average. Pupils did better in mathematics and science, as they have done traditionally, but standards in English during Key Stage 2 are improving.

- Pupils are making good progress in adapting their writing style to match the audience and the effect they want to have on the reader. Standards of presentation are good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes and develop into mature, confident and thoughtful learners.

### Quality of teaching and learning of English

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons are well planned and teachers make very effective use of group and pair work to cater for varying needs and interests. As a result, speaking and listening skills are notably good.
- Teachers present work in a lively and interesting way. They make very good use of display, work walls, and a range of resources including computers so that lessons are stimulating. Teaching assistants are capable and well used.
- Pupils learn to write neatly and with relevance to the topic but some are slow to get ideas down on paper, especially in timed conditions. Regular marking is helpful, but does not give a clear and consistent enough steer as to how improvements can be made.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Schemes of work ensure that pupils experience a good range of topics and approaches.
- A strength is the use of literacy in the context of school life and other subject areas. Thus reading and writing have real purposes such as researching information and taking notes, preparing letters of complaint and invitation, writing reports, or planning persuasive speeches.
- Information and communication technology, discussion and drama are well integrated. For the youngest pupils a mock vet's surgery provides good opportunities for role play and language development.

### Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management are good.

- There is good vision and direction, evidenced in the quality of development planning and the strong sense of teamwork amongst staff.

- Analysis of results, trends and pupil progress is very thorough. Checking the quality of learning in classrooms and sharing ideas about what works best are less well developed.
- Organisation is excellent and communication clear so that things run smoothly and there is good understanding of what needs to be improved. Teachers get good guidance about how to tackle change.

### Provision for poetry

Provision for poetry is good.

- Planned units of work ensure that pupils in each year get a good experience of poetry, and both teachers and pupils enjoy it.
- Poems for study are chosen according to theme. This gives them purpose and helps link them to other work, but means that pupils do not get a consistent diet or progression of poems or poets.
- Both pupils and teachers appreciate poetry and enjoy working with it. It is celebrated in good quality displays and pupils contribute to anthologies.

### Inclusion

Inclusion in English is good.

- Teachers use the mix of ages and abilities in classes to create an atmosphere where all feel valued, and pupils learn to support and help each other.
- Group and pair work allow ideas to be developed fully by all pupils before being usefully shared in whole class discussion.
- Pupils with learning difficulties are given the structured help and praise to encourage good progress. At times higher attaining pupils would benefit from clearer reminders of their standards and potential.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving writing standards by the end of Key Stage 2
- teaching older pupils how to write more quickly under timed conditions
- making sure that marking gives more precise guidance about how to improve work.

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.

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

Jon Lövgreen  
Additional Inspector