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Mrs J Wells  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Wells

Ofsted survey inspection programme – History

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on the 12 January to look at work in history.

The visit provided valuable information that 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 and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

History

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and Standards

Achievement and standards of pupils in history are good overall.

- Progress in history throughout the school is good.
- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly average but standards are above average at the end Key Stage 2.
- Pupils in Year 6 show a high level of knowledge and understanding and very secure skills in history.

- Attitudes towards history are very good as is shown by response in lessons and the way pupils discuss their work with real interest and enthusiasm.
- They say that they really enjoy the wide range of trips, visits and visitors that the school uses to enhance their work in history.
- By Year 6 pupils show real empathy for and understanding of people in the past. The quality of their response in drama and in assemblies with a historical theme adds a valuable spiritual dimension to their learning.

### Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in history is good.

- Teaching was good or better in all the lessons observed.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use a range of strategies to make learning exciting and enjoyable.
- Pupils work independently and in groups. Tasks and resources are varied to support individuals. However, even more could be done to support those who have the ability to reach the very highest standards.
- Teachers are good at telling the story of events in the past while also ensuring a development of skills for example in the use of time lines and eye witness accounts.
- ICT is used well by teachers and pupils.
- Work is marked carefully and pupils are given guidance on how to improve. Questioning was used particularly effectively in the lessons observed.
- More use could be made of opportunities to develop and use skills in numeracy.

### Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- The existing curriculum has a very real focus on local studies in both key stages. The use of local contexts wherever possible and the emphasis on the history of the school and its place in the village are both very valuable.
- The recent refocus on cross – curricular links and support for literacy is proving very effective.
- The use of museums and visits provides a very rich experience for pupils.

## Care and guidance

Care and guidance is good.

- Teachers and support staff provide a very good quality of care.
- Pupils work in a safe and attractive environment where their ideas and contribution are really valued.
- Great care is taken in planning the range of trips, visits and residential activities.

## Leadership and Management

Leadership and management are good.

- Senior management is very supportive of work in history and is using the forthcoming tercentenary of the school to encourage all pupils to understand its role in the community.
- The two recently appointed co-ordinators have improved provision and have taken up the opportunity for training in the use of ICT in humanities.
- The school is aware of the need to ensure that pupils' skills in history are recognised when they enter Year 7 to ensure effective transition between Key Stages 2 and 3.
- Governors are involved in subject work and fully support the creative and reflective approach to curriculum planning.

## Literacy and ICT

Standards of speaking and listening are good and teachers encourage pupils to express their views and share ideas. Writing skills are developed very well in topic books and there are many opportunities for extended writing and for writing for a range of purposes and audiences. By Year 6 research skills are good and good use is now being made of computers in the classroom. Teachers are skilled in the use of computer technology and pupils use computers for research and to enhance the presentation of their work.

## Inclusion and provision for the gifted and talented

Provision is very inclusive and support for those with learning difficulties and disabilities is very effective and ensures that they play a full part in the life of the school. There is a register of pupils with particular gifts and talents and overall they are catered for well. There is the potential to offer extra challenge for them in history via work in numeracy as many have been identified as having particular gifts in mathematics.

Areas for improvement:

- ensure that higher ability pupils are challenged more, in particular by introducing number-based work.

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 web site. It will be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Stephanie Matthews  
Additional Inspector