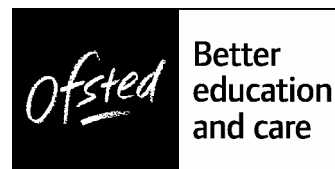


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13 February 2007

Mrs Mears
Interim Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Mears

Ofsted survey inspection programme – geography

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 29 January 2007 to look at work in geography.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the global dimension.

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

The overall effectiveness of geography was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- Standards are above average. Pupils are able to articulate their good understanding of aspects of the geography of their local area and good knowledge of the wider world.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing knowledge, skills and understanding as a result of satisfactory teaching and good curriculum provision.

- The quality of pupils' written and other work does not always match their understanding of the subject.
- Pupils enjoy their geography lessons.

Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

- Lessons are well planned, enabling pupils of different ability to make at least satisfactory progress. Where activities are more challenging, pupils make good progress as they respond well and are given good support and encouragement.
- The use of interactive white boards effectively enhances teaching and pupils are engaged by a variety of well-resourced activities.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to extend their writing in geography, which limits their eventual progress.
- Teaching assistants provide effective support when pupils are working individually or in small groups but are less well deployed during whole class teaching.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The school makes good use of the local area through fieldwork and other visits.
- The pupils have good knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world through good use of atlases and other resources.
- The school makes good use of pupils' own experiences of different places, both locally and further afield, to enhance the curriculum provision for all pupils.
- There are clear links made between the geography curriculum and other curriculum areas such as literacy and information and communication technology.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- You and your subject co-ordinator have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. This, together with whole-school planning to improve writing and further enhancement of the geography curriculum, ensures that the capacity to improve is good.
- Schemes of work are adequate but lack detail. The newly developed geography policy statement provides a good overview of provision in the subject.

- Arrangements for assessment are satisfactory but information on standards achieved by pupils is not used to monitor and track their progress in sufficient detail.

Subject issue: the global dimension

Pupils' learning about the global dimension is good.

- Pupils have a good awareness of other parts of the world because of the good curriculum provision and its enhancement through use of pupils' personal experiences.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of pollution on the environment.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- Planning for teaching and learning takes account of the needs and aptitudes of all pupils.
- Groups and individuals are effectively supported in the classroom.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing procedures to record assessment more frequently so that assessment information can contribute to planning for more rapid progress
- providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their writing in geography.

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

Tom Winskill
Her Majesty's Inspector