

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



21 March 2006

Mrs Spence
Headteacher
Orton CE Primary School
Orton
Penrith
Cumbria
CA10 3RG

Dear Mrs Spence

Ofsted survey inspection programme – geography

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 12 March 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 lessons at each Key Stage.

Geography

The overall effectiveness of geography was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall.

- Achievement is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils reach nationally expected standards.
- Pupils' achievements are enhanced by the effective focus on knowledge and understanding of the world in the Foundation Stage.

- Pupils' recent geography work, seen as part of the inspection, is of good quality. Pupils show good understanding of maps and the relevance of geography items in the news.
- Pupils make their best progress when teachers share expected learning outcomes with them.
- Pupils' personal development is very good overall, with good opportunities for them to work both in pairs and groups as well as independently.
- Social and moral development are good because of regular opportunities for fieldwork, decision making and taking responsibility. Spiritual development is good as pupils are given time for reflection and there is good consideration of the 'awe and wonder' potential of outstanding landscapes.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge. They have good awareness of pupils' common misconceptions and address them in their planning.
- Planning is good. Cross-curricular links are particularly well developed. Teachers plan good opportunities for independent enquiry but do not always plan to encourage pupils' extended writing sufficiently.
- Good reference is made to subject specific vocabulary.
- Teachers use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies. They use ICT well to support both teaching and learning. They plan learning which builds from pupils' own experiences.
- A wide range of well chosen resources, including visual images, is used effectively.
- Marking is generally subject specific and helps pupils to improve their work. However, a small number of geographical errors remain uncorrected. Teachers make effective one to one interventions to support pupils' learning.
- Insufficient consideration is given to the most effective use of support staff during teacher led periods of lessons.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The curriculum includes frequent opportunities for appropriate fieldwork.
- There is a very clear emphasis on progression in key geographical concepts and skills.
- Schemes of work are well planned around key geographical questions with good references to pupils' personal development and their literacy needs. They include good opportunities to promote creativity,

have the flexibility to address topical issues and promote pupils' interests.

- The curriculum is not sufficiently referenced to a range of specific geographical locations to enhance pupils' knowledge of places.

Leadership and management of the subject

Leadership and management are good.

- There is good capacity for improvement. Self-evaluation is leading to the identification of appropriate areas for development. In particular, the need for curriculum review was identified in order to improve pupils' achievement in geography. Recent work is already showing improved outcomes for pupils.
- Good links have been made with a local high school to support staff in the teaching and planning of geography. Teachers also have access to subject specific professional development from the Local Authority. These links have increased teachers' confidence in the development of the subject
- The management of assessment is being developed well. Teachers standardise their judgements about pupils' attainment in geography by making good use of national curriculum level descriptors. Pupils' achievements in geography are not yet being monitored sufficiently well to identify discrepancies in the progress they make.

Subject issue: the global dimension

Pupils' learning about the global dimension is good.

- The curriculum includes initiatives that are well designed to promote the global dimension within school. Pupils learn about Fair Trade, sustainability, children's experiences of village life in Kenya and the impact of their local actions at national and global levels.
- Staff are very aware of the need to counteract stereotyping when pupils are learning about less economically developed countries. However, more could be done to actively promote positive race relations as part of pupils' cultural development.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- Pupils are supported well by their teachers and appreciate the help and encouragement given.
- There is no evidence that any groups of pupils achieve significantly differently from others. Teachers generally plan well to address the needs of all pupils within the mixed age classes.

Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- improve the use of assessment data in the monitoring of achievement
- share learning outcomes consistently with pupils so that their progress can be assessed more effectively
- increase opportunities for pupils' extended writing about geographical issues
- enhance pupils' knowledge of a range of locations and cultural issues.

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

Sonya Williamson
Her Majesty's Inspector