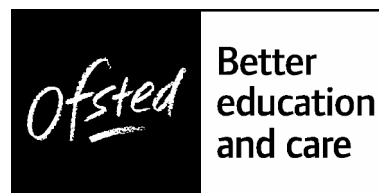


Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 0207 4216855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



21 March 2007

Mrs J Marston
Headteacher
North Hykeham Ling Moor Primary
School
Richmond Drive
North Hykeham
Lincoln
Lincolnshire
LN6 8QZ

Dear Mrs Marston

Ofsted Subject Inspection Programme - History

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during the visit I made on 06 March to look at work in history.

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.

I undertook to provide a brief written version of the main points made in my feedback at the end of the visit, to support development in history. This follows. 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.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards in history are above average and pupils make good progress in the acquisition of historical skills throughout the school.

- Pupils have a detailed knowledge of the periods, people and events they are studying and are well aware of the range of evidence they can use to make judgements on the past. Pupils in Years 3 and 4, for

example, make accurate deductions from artefacts and also use computers very effectively for research. They are becoming adept at formulating questions to support their enquiries and use historical terminology accurately and in context. As they say, 'we don't write stories about people any more, we write biographies!'

- Older pupils in Years 5 and 6 talk confidently about how historians make their judgements and demonstrate good levels of objectivity when they are piecing the past together. They know the dangers of bias and warn of the pitfalls when using contemporary accounts, the diary of Tacitus for example. They have a good understanding of why the study of history is important if they are to combat prejudice.
- Pupils' writing is of high quality and they produce extended assignments in a range of genres. They write play scripts and also present balanced arguments on the reign of Henry VIII, for example.
- Pupils' personal development in history is good. They behave well and engage maturely with each other as 'talk partners' and in groups. They display respect for their teachers and classmates and enjoy their history lessons. They demonstrate their interest in the subject by the high quality of work they produce and by their willingness to make oral contributions in class.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with some outstanding features.

- In all key stages, teachers are concerned to foster pupils' natural inquisitiveness and also to develop their historical skills and knowledge of people and events in the past. Planning and preparation are comprehensive and lessons are clearly focused on learning objectives and activities to engage pupils' interest.
- Teachers pass on their enthusiasm for history to their pupils and use information and communication technology very effectively as a teaching and learning tool. They work hard to modify their methods to meet the different learning needs of their pupils and there is a strong emphasis on active and enquiry-based learning. Lessons are also fun and pupils volunteer to do extra work because they are so motivated by the subject-matter.
- Assessment is good and is improving. It has developed from the use of the 'expectation' statements from the QCA scheme of work and is now closely based on the rate of skills acquisition and National Curriculum level descriptors. Pupils are actively involved in the assessment of their own work through the 'traffic lights' system and the interactive whiteboard is used well by teachers to encourage their pupils to assess the quality of their classmates' work. Marking is regular and of good quality. Teachers give their pupils detailed advice on how they may

improve their work and 'R Time' ensures that pupils can reflect on their achievement.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding and represents an ideal balance between local, national and international history.

- There is a strong emphasis on the development of historical skills and curriculum planning comprises detailed information on coherence and progression in the subject.
- Pupils benefit from joint planning with other subjects and there are regular curriculum focus weeks with history as the starting point. Pupils speak highly of the Gunpowder Plot and Olympic Games weeks and they enjoy producing Roman sculptures as part of their art lessons.
- There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities and a wide variety of visits and visitors brings history alive for the pupils.

Leadership and management of history

Although the history co-ordinator is relatively new in post, subject leadership over time is good and the school has an accurate view of provision in history and of pupils' standards and achievement in the subject. Day-to-day and resource management are good.

- The subject leader has already produced an impressive development plan to ensure more systematic monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning.
- In a short time she has also developed assessment practice and has ensured that judgements on pupils' standards and progress are based more closely on National Curriculum level descriptors.
- Focused lesson observations are at an early stage of development but the school has already done much to prepare the new subject leader for her monitoring role.
- In-service training for history is at a premium.

Inclusion

A wide range of teaching methods to meet individual learning needs, appropriate challenge for more able pupils and very effective support for those who find the work difficult mean that all youngsters can take full advantage of what history has to offer. Detailed planning and lesson preparation also ensure that history is a most inclusive subject.

Literacy

Pupils' skills in literacy are fostered well in history lessons. There are many opportunities for speaking and listening through 'talk partners' and pupils' use of historical terminology is very good. The strong links with literacy also benefit pupils' extended writing and they produce impressive work in a range of genres.

Overall effectiveness of the subject

Provision in history is good, with some outstanding features. Teachers are enthusiastic about history and pupils enjoy the subject as a result. The quality of teaching and learning ensure that pupils achieve well and that they reach above average standards and acquire historical skills at a good rate. There is a rich curriculum which is enhanced by strong links with other subjects and also a wide range of enrichment activities. Subject leadership over time is good but the skills of the new subject leader need to be developed.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- more systematic and focused monitoring of teaching and learning
- the further development of the leadership and management skills of the new subject co-ordinator
- the possibility of more subject-specific in-service training.

Thank you once again for your kindness during my visit. I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop history in the school.

Yours sincerely

Jim Kidd
Additional Inspector