

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



26 March 2007

Mrs A Hurrell
Headteacher
Huttoft Primary School
Church Lane
Huttoft
Alford
Lincolnshire
LN13 9RE

Dear Mrs Hurrell

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 satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Standards in are broadly average and pupils make satisfactory progress in history across the school.

- Pupils have a good knowledge of the people, places and events they are studying and more able pupils have good research skills.
- Pupils' skills of historical interpretation are underdeveloped and, although a range of primary and secondary evidence is available to them in Years 5 and 6, they are not fully aware of the pitfalls of using

different kinds of sources. Higher-attaining pupils have a sound understanding of how historians make their judgements but most pupils do not fully recognise bias.

- Pupils' personal development in history is good. They behave well and cooperate maturely with their teachers and classmates. They generally enjoy history and Year 5 pupils, for example, were delighted at the opportunities they had to establish their own archaeological site.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with some good features.

- Teachers are enthusiastic and ensure that their pupils use and handle a range of artefacts but there are few opportunities for them to consider other primary sources.
- Planning and preparation are satisfactory overall, are focused on activities to engage pupils' interest but do not place enough emphasis upon the development of historical skills.
- The level of challenge in lessons is variable. In some lessons there is too much teacher direction of learning with little opportunity for pupils to learn independently.
- Classroom management is good and relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are warm. Teachers treat their pupils with dignity and respect.
- Marking is thorough and celebrates success but is insufficiently explicit in focussing on how to progress, especially in skills. The recording of pupils' progress is insufficiently precise and therefore not used to inform future teaching which is linked to pupils' needs.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- There is an imbalance between subject content and historical skills. The latter are comparatively neglected. There is increasing use of artefacts but other kinds of evidence and more enquiry-based activities are lacking. This adversely affects standards, particularly those of the more able.
- There are some good links to pupils' literacy development, particularly in relation to comprehension but these are not formally developed and pupils are not required to write in a range of genres.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers as a tool for their personal research. However, good use is made of displays around the school and the open afternoon and annual visit engage pupils, parents and others very well.
- Pupils' benefit from a theatre group covering 1000 years of history for Key Stage 2. They also enjoy the history field trip to church farm museum.

Leadership and management of history

Leadership and management of history are satisfactory.

- The co-ordinator is a published historian and has very secure subject knowledge. She has a good understanding of where improvements in history provision need to be made.
- The school's summary framework outlines the need for the development of pupils' historical skills but does not link this with the need for continuity and progression in the subject.
- The coordinator has been active in sampling pupils' work, teachers' planning and the quality of teaching and learning but much more needs to be done if standards and achievement in history are to be raised.

Inclusion

Teachers try hard to include all pupils in everything the subject has to offer and pupils with learning difficulties receive good support. A greater emphasis on skills development, particularly for more able pupils, is now needed if individual needs and interests are to be met more effectively.

Literacy

As previously indicated, there are a range of opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in speaking, listening and writing but currently, there are no systematic links between history and the development of pupils' literacy skills.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- a better balance between content and skills development and a more precisely defined view of progression in history
- improved assessment and its use in informing teaching
- more systematic links with literacy
- more systematic monitoring of teaching, planning and pupils' work.

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