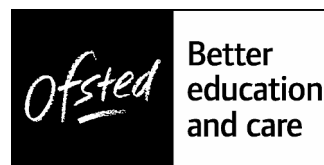


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Mrs Julia Kedwards  
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Dear Mrs Kedwards

Ofsted survey inspection programme – geography

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 27 February 2007 to look at work in geography.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of geography, 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 four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of geography was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards are satisfactory.

- By the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils reach standards in line with national expectations; this is an improvement on the previous inspection.

- In lessons, pupils in both key stages make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of geography. Written work indicates that most pupils are making good progress across the units of work.
- At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good knowledge of places they have studied in the United Kingdom and are able to locate these on a map. Their knowledge of places abroad is much more limited. Pupils are developing their understanding of the concept of distance and the impact this has, for example, on transport. They are able to locate their home on large scale maps and some can draw accurate maps and describe routes using directions. The skill of analysing photographs is developing well.
- At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are beginning to ask good geographical questions about places they are studying. They demonstrate a good understanding of physical processes, especially where they have observed these first hand, for example in relation to river erosion. They can describe accurately the location of physical features such as mountain ranges and deserts. Many are beginning to produce longer pieces of descriptive written work, often supported by facts. The more able are including explanations in their writing.
- Pupils are keen to learn and enjoy geography. Their behaviour in lessons was very good.

#### Quality of teaching and learning of geography

Teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers planned well structured lessons with clear learning objectives and a range of activities to support pupils' achievement of these.
- The lesson objectives were made clear to the pupils as were the 'steps for learning' needed to achieve them. Appropriate activities relevant to the pupils' abilities were a feature of all the lessons observed.
- Lessons had a good range of opportunities for pupils to work in pairs and groups and for them to talk about what they were learning.
- Maps of various types were used well by teachers, with some particularly challenging work in Year 5 using Ordnance Survey maps of a contrasting locality.
- A strength of teaching across all years is the focus on asking geographical questions which require pupils to think, investigate and reason.
- Pupils' work in geography is marked regularly but the quality of this varies. The most effective marking provides pupils with informative comments about the quality of their work and how they can improve it.

## Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The geography curriculum is broad and balanced with physical, human and environmental elements all given consideration in the long term plans. There is sufficient time provided for its delivery.
- There is a consistent approach to medium term planning that focuses on National Curriculum coverage, objectives, activities and outcomes.
- Good geographical displays in all rooms help enhance the planned curriculum.

## Leadership and management of geography

The leadership and management of geography are good.

- The dual coordinator strategy works well and helps give the subject greater status.
- The two coordinators work well as a team and have a good focus on raising standards. This is built upon a good understanding of the strengths in geography achieved through planning, work scrutiny and observation of teaching.
- The coordination of geography has improved since the last inspection resulting in improved achievement and provision.

## Subject issue

Pupils' knowledge about the global dimension is satisfactory overall.

- There is a focus on the global dimension across the school which is evident in the long term planning and through initiatives such as Eco Schools. Medium term planning of specific units in geography includes good consideration of aspects of the global dimension, such as global issues related to the environment and conservation.
- Pupils have a good grasp of the environmental aspects of the global dimension, for example, recycling, water issues and pollution.
- Older pupils have knowledge of specific distant places but a lesser understanding of the interdependence between the local and global.

## Inclusion

The provision for inclusion in geography is good overall.

- In the lessons observed, well targeted differentiated activities were provided for pupils with different learning needs.
- Medium term planning suggests appropriate activities for different ability groups.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed in geography lessons to support individual pupils and groups, for example, pupils with English as an additional language.

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

- ensure the subject improvement plan's success criteria focus on outcomes for pupils
- build assessment into the medium term planning process
- identify in each unit of work what is to be assessed and provide level descriptors for this.

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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Dowgill  
Additional Inspector