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11 June 2007

Mrs L Bruce
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bruce

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Religious Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 11 June 2007 to look at work in religious education (RE).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of RE, the visit had a particular focus on the subject's contribution to the promotion of community cohesion.

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 RE was judged to be satisfactory with some good elements.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement in RE is satisfactory.

- Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress to reach the standards expected for their age. By the end of Year 5, pupils describe the key beliefs and teachings of the religions they have studied and show the capacity to raise questions which help them to explore their own viewpoints and values. Some of the more able pupils make good progress because they are able to make connections between different

religious practices and link them to their own experiences. However, the level of challenge to enable more pupils to achieve better is insufficient, particularly in relation to 'learning from' religion.

- The contribution of RE to pupils' personal development is good. Pupils have a good grasp of the importance of understanding religious diversity and they value opportunities to explore cultural, moral and spiritual dimensions within their studies. They show high levels of respect for diversity and are prepared well for life in the wider community.
- Pupils approach learning in RE with very good attitudes. Behaviour in lessons is good.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is satisfactory.

- Lessons are planned well. Pupils know what their lessons are about because teachers explain in simple terms what they will know, understand or be able to do by the end of sessions.
- Teachers form good relationships with pupils that help to engage their interest and enthusiasm. There is suitable emphasis on practical activities. Visits to places of worship enhance pupils' experiences and learning.
- Assessment procedures are underdeveloped. The school has identified this as a priority so that the use of levels to assess pupils' progress becomes more robust and informs teachers' planning and marking more effectively.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum in RE is satisfactory.

- The school is in the process of redesigning the curriculum, including for RE. There is a sensible long term plan which takes account of the Leicestershire agreed syllabus. Medium term plans are being formulated, with the expectation that they will be implemented from September 2007.
- The current curriculum has adequate breadth and balance but there is insufficient time allocation at Key Stage 1.

Leadership and management of RE

Leadership and management are satisfactory with some good elements.

- The subject leader shows drive and determination to improve provision for RE and to raise standards of teaching and learning. Evaluation of RE is thorough and the priorities for further improvement are accurately identified.
- The subject leader provides good direction to staff. This is significant because all staff will be responsible for teaching RE from September 2007.

- There is a strong appreciation of the contribution of RE to students' personal development. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and value the challenge it offers to make an impact on their lives.

The contribution of RE to the promotion of community cohesion

RE makes a very positive contribution to the promotion of community cohesion. The school makes effective use of its outstanding links with the local community which benefit pupils greatly.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good. All pupils are encouraged to participate in lessons and pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress at a similar rate to their peers. The pupils' rich diversity of religions and cultures is suitably celebrated and used to foster good relationships across the school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing assessment procedures so that pupils' progress is tracked robustly and improves their progress
- ensuring that curriculum planning fully meets the agreed syllabus expectations, including the recommended allocation of time in Years 1 and 2.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop RE in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and SACRE and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Dilip Kadodwala
Her Majesty's Inspector