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Mr M Lyons
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Lyons

Ofsted survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 6 June to look at work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject the visit had a particular focus on our current survey theme: provision for poetry. 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.

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 English was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards are above average.

- The school has high expectations for the achievement of all pupils.
- Pupils start school with average attainment and make good progress.
- At Key Stage 1, standards are above average and by the end of Key Stage 2, rise to well above average.
- Standards of handwriting and presentation from older pupils are good and pupils take considerable pride in their efforts.
- English makes a good contribution to the personal development of pupils through collaborative and independent work, the expression of

personal viewpoints in lessons and good opportunities for speaking and listening, reading and writing.

Quality of teaching and learning of English

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons observed were challenging, interesting, varied, well resourced and well paced.
- Good planning for progression and good differentiation meets the needs of all learners well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to develop and extend learning.
- Teaching assistants provide very good support to targeted pupils.
- Good opportunities for independent work promote self-sufficiency in learning.
- Assessment for learning, including differentiated objectives, probing questioning, targets for pupils, careful and thorough marking and good feedback to pupils on their work, is used well to motivate and encourage and to track progress.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The English curriculum is carefully structured. It ensures systematic progression in learning and skills and meets the needs of all pupils well. Skills are developed further through good opportunities for writing in other subjects.
- The use of technology for learning is featuring increasingly and teachers use interactive whiteboards to good effect.
- Intervention strategies are carefully targeted, well executed and result in clear gains in learning.

Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management are good.

- The school evaluates performance in English well. Very careful analysis of data and other information identifies strengths and weaknesses accurately. Remedial action is timely, well targeted and monitored thoroughly for its impact on pupils' progress.
- The school's priority for consistently good quality teaching is assured through relevant and timely development and support for teaching and support staff and from robust monitoring.
- The curriculum leader has very good subject knowledge and a clear sense of direction. Planning at all levels is good. Action to improve achievement, for example in reading and writing for pupils whose skills

are weaker, is well considered and well targeted. Schemes of work and good planning by teachers ensure systematic progression in English.

- High quality resources are used very well to ensure inclusion and assure learning.

Provision for poetry

Provision of poetry is good.

- Poetry is well established in schemes of work and given good emphasis in the English curriculum.
- Pupils and teachers enjoy poetry, which is taught well, with a good emphasis on reading and writing for pleasure. Pupils are encouraged to think analytically about poems, which contributes well to their personal development.
- Progression is based on exposure to a range of poetry, opportunities to explore meaning and form and the development of analytical skills.
- Higher attaining pupils are stimulated by carefully chosen and challenging texts and the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are met well through good, differentiated activities.
- Pupils like writing poetry that has been inspired by reading poems but have difficulty in recalling titles and the names of poets. Some assessment of poetry written by pupils takes account of impact alongside form and technique, but this is not consistent.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- The school prioritises high achievement and is very responsive to the needs of all learners.
- Good curricular provision, well targeted and successful intervention strategies, good differentiation of tasks in lessons, a good range of teaching and learning strategies and good quality resources successfully engage pupils of all abilities.
- All groups of pupils are well supported, carefully tracked and make good progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to improve achievement in reading and writing for targeted pupils, as already identified by the school
- establishing consistency in teachers' responses to poetry written by pupils.

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

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term and made available to the team for the next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Matthews
Her Majesty's Inspector