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Ms Petrie  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Petrie

Ofsted survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 June 2007 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 four lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards in English are above average and achievement is good.

- Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and enter Year 1 with good communication, language and literacy skills.
- Standards are consistently above average by the end of Year 2, particularly in reading, although they dipped in writing in 2006. Writing has been a recent focus for school development.

- Pupils make good progress in Key Stage 1 and have exceeded their targets for reading and writing in 2007 with more reaching the highest levels.
- At the end of Year 6 standards are consistently above average and there is an improving trend. Significantly more pupils than nationally attained the highest levels in 2006 and this appears to have increased further in 2007. Pupils make good progress.
- Boys' attainment is better than girls in Year 2 but this is not evident by the end of Year 6 when the attainment of all pupils is equally good.

### Quality of teaching and learning of English

The quality of teaching and learning in English is good.

- There is consistently good teaching with some that is outstanding because teachers have very good subject knowledge and use assessment information effectively to plan well-structured lessons which meet the needs of all pupils.
- Typically, pupils know what is expected of them in lessons and there are good opportunities for them to be actively involved in their learning. They respond enthusiastically to good questioning which challenges them to explain their ideas and work productively in groups and independently.
- Excellent relationships, good support from teaching assistants and the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT) motivate pupils to work productively and achieve well.
- Pupils know how well they are doing through ongoing feedback in lessons and informative marking. They have clear targets for improvement in English but opportunities for self and peer assessment should be developed further.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- Current work to develop a more interesting, relevant curriculum which links subjects more effectively contributes significantly to pupils' outstanding enjoyment and excellent behaviour.
- Planning builds effectively on prior learning and ensures there is a good balance of creative and technical aspects of English. This includes a good balance of phonics teaching in Key Stage 1 to develop early reading skills.
- Pupils experience a good range of writing genres including, poetry, play scripts, factual accounts and extended creative writing.
- There is an appropriate range of enrichment activities and special events to enhance the English curriculum such as World Book Day. However, extra curricular activities linked to the development of literacy skills are limited.

## Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management in English are good.

- The school's own view of English is accurate because it is based on a good range of monitoring evidence and the systematic analysis of performance information.
- Improvement plans are relevant and specific with clear, measurable targets for success.
- Staff are well supported in the development of their practice and subject knowledge through evaluative feedback and relevant staff development.
- The impact of good leadership in English is evident in the implementation of the Big Write initiative resulting in a rise in standards in writing, particularly at the higher levels.

## Provision for poetry

Provision for poetry is good.

- Poetry is built effectively into schemes of work following the guidance from the Primary National Strategy. This gives pupils regular and relevant opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of poetry.
- Pupils are positive about poetry, saying they enjoy reading and writing it. They particularly enjoy recording and watching their performances using ICT.
- The teaching of poetry is lively and engaging. Good use is made of other subjects such as art and music to bring poems to life.
- Teachers have a good understanding of poetic features and pupils' poems are marked carefully with comments linked specifically to the lesson objectives.
- Pupils are given good opportunities to write their own poems which are shared through classroom display and published class anthologies.

## Inclusion

Inclusion in English is good.

- Provision for English throughout the school meets the needs of all learners well so all make good progress.
- There is improving provision for the most able, expectations are high and targets are challenging.
- The progress pupils make in English is tracked carefully so those in need of extra support are identified early.
- The quality of additional support both within lessons and in small groups is good and ensures pupils develop good literacy skills.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- reviewing the variety of extra curricular opportunities to extend and develop pupils' reading and writing skills; and
- increasing opportunities for pupils to assess their own work and that of their peers.

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

Jackie Krafft  
Her Majesty's Inspector