

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



03 July 2007

Ms S Bailey
Headteacher
Queensbridge Primary School
Albion Drive
Dalston
Hackney
London
E8 4ET

Dear Ms Bailey

Ofsted survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 29 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 four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be satisfactory, with good features.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good. Standards overall are below average.

- The school works very hard to raise achievement against a background of previously unstable staffing, high levels of deprivation and mobility, very high numbers of pupils entering the school with English as an additional language (EAL), and a well above average number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN). Although 2006 figures show a downward trend at Key Stage 1, and significantly below average

attainment in reading and writing, current work demonstrates that the impact of greatly improved provision is reversing this trend.

- Children start the Foundation Stage with well below average attainment and particularly weak speech and language skills. Provision is good and they make good progress. Many are on course to reach standards expected at Key Stage 1. From a low base, pupils at Key Stage 2 make steady progress in years 3 and 4 and good progress in Years 5 and 6. Year 5 pupils are on course to achieve average standards by the end of Year 6. Standards of handwriting and presentation are below expectations across the school.
- English makes a good contribution to the personal development of pupils through group and independent work, the expression of personal opinions in lessons, participation in circle time and through talk partners.

Quality of teaching and learning of English

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons are well planned, interesting, appropriately challenging, well resourced and meet the needs of learners well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and good questioning probes and develops pupils' learning well. Weak skills that constrain progress are identified well and systematically addressed. Modelling is used well to develop independence.
- Assessment for learning features well as the school consolidates its focus on raising attainment. Recently introduced assessment, tracking and moderation procedures are working well to ensure consistently high expectations and that pupils make steady progress.
- Some very careful marking is helping pupils to improve.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The English curriculum is carefully structured for breadth, balance and progression and enrichment activities are successful in motivating pupils. Much progress has been made in provision for information and communication technology (ICT) but resources do not yet fully support learning in English.
- A good range of interventions is carefully planned, delivered well and shows clear gains in learning for targeted pupils.

Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management are good.

- The school has an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses in English, clear priorities and a good grasp of how to improve. The capacity to make further improvement is very good.
- Clear policies and good guidelines are ensuring consistent practice and challenging targets are supported well by focused activities that are already demonstrating improved achievement.
- Data and other information are analysed well and good interventions result in at least satisfactory gains in progress. Speech and language groups in nursery and reception classes and talk partners in Year 3 are particularly significant in this respect.

Provision for poetry

Provision for poetry is satisfactory.

- Poetry is established securely in schemes of work.
- Good use of modelling extends pupils' vocabulary well and enables them to produce interesting poetry.
- Pupils enjoy reading and writing poetry and are proud of what they produce. Despite this, too few recall the titles of poems and the names of poets.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- The school is very responsive to the needs of individual and vulnerable pupils and provision in English has a positive impact on the motivation and behaviour of all groups.
- The progress of pupils with SEN and EAL is carefully tracked and work well matched to need. Pupils make at least satisfactory and often good progress from a very low base. Well targeted and delivered interventions are beginning to close gaps in attainment. Gifted and talented pupils are challenged well.
- Well trained support staff promote inclusion effectively and contribute significantly to learning in English.
- Good investment in dual language texts and texts from a range of cultures provide a broad experience of literature and poetry.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to improve achievement and raise attainment in all aspects of English, as identified by the school
- developing the use of ICT to fully support learning in English.

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 HMI
Her Majesty's Inspector