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Mrs J Edwards  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Edwards

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) - three year longitudinal survey

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my recent visit to look at work in ESD in your school.

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. This is a follow up monitoring visit which is intended to assess the progress the school has made in developing ESD throughout the school since the previous visit.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils including the Eco action team, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of one lesson, visits to a number of classrooms and a survey of the school environment.

The school has made some pleasing progress since the last visit to promote ESD throughout the school. The overall effectiveness is now judged to be satisfactory with some aspects that are good.

#### Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ESD are satisfactory overall with some aspects that are good.

- All children now have access to learning about sustainability through the frequent use of the outside environment in the 'Foundation' unit or

through the regular timetabled sessions in the 'WOW Factory'. As a result, the majority of pupils have a sound awareness of sustainability issues.

- Pupils talk with increasing confidence about the need to recycle and conserve energy and younger children express delight at watching plants grow and chicks hatch. They enjoy the natural world around them and see the need to care for it.
- Those pupils who are more actively involved through the Eco action team or as 'Junior Wardens' or 'Befrienders', have good knowledge and understanding about sustainability.
- Many of these pupils are showing positive behaviour change and acting in a very responsible way. For example, they are annoyed when they see adults drop litter and talk knowledgeably about how they have taken responsibility for turning off lights and electrical equipment at home.
- Behaviour has also improved around the school and is now good. There is a much calmer atmosphere evident, especially in classrooms. The strong emphasis on care for oneself, each other and the environment is having a positive impact. Pupils have themselves remarked on these encouraging improvements.
- As part of the 'care' agenda the school has established a very effective system to manage conflict resolution. This is very well organised by the mid-day supervisors and supported by the 'Red Hats'. Disagreements are diffused very effectively by encouraging the children to reflect on their actions and discuss solutions to their problems.
- Poor literacy skills continue to hamper pupils' ability to express themselves, especially when they are basing their writing on limited personal experiences. Scrutiny of work shows that better outcomes are achieved when the writing is linked to topics which engage their interest, capture their imagination and are investigative such as the work on pollution, renewable energy and endangered species.

### Quality of teaching and learning of ESD

Insufficient ESD related lessons were observed to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching and learning in ESD. Evidence from work produced and through discussions with pupils shows that they enjoy their time in the 'WOW Factory'. There is a clear structure to the lessons and pupils enjoy searching for information and attempting challenging tasks. Engaging with real issues encourages thinking. Collaborative working has also improved and is more effective. Also, the investigative approach in the 'Foundation' unit has improved the children's social development, language and communication skills. The children are now more inquisitive and asking more questions than previously.

## Quality of curriculum

The quality of the ESD curriculum is satisfactory overall but is good in the 'WOW Factory'.

- Innovative use of the 'WOW Factory' ensures that all Key Stage 2 pupils have access to a curriculum which focuses on ESD. This is well structured and clearly builds up pupils' learning about sustainability in a purposeful working environment.
- ESD has not yet permeated fully into other subjects apart from science and the curriculum in the 'Foundation' unit. The school is planning to link sustainability into other subjects through integrated topic work.
- Good use is made of the outside environment and pupils benefit from the good range of extra-curricular visits to such places as the alternative technology centre in Hebden Bridge or birdwatching in the local park. This is extending children's views of their immediate locality and the diversity in the region.
- Satisfactory links are being established with the local community with a group of 'Junior Wardens' working hard to improve the local environment in Ovenden.
- The global dimension remains weakly developed. The school has some tentative links with several schools abroad but these need further development to relate more closely to learning in the classroom.

## Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD are good

- Senior managers provide good support for the initiative. Sustainability is central to the school mission statement and has been identified as a priority area to support the school improvement process. There is a clear vision as to how ESD is to become a part of the learning fabric of the school.
- There has been a clear focus on organising and promoting ESD through the taught curriculum. The partnership between science and the 'WOW Factory' has been particularly productive.
- ESD has been identified as an area for future staff development. Management is prepared to invest time and resources to make it a whole school focus.
- There is now a greater awareness among staff of sustainability. However, there remains an inconsistency of commitment. Some staff are good role models for leading sustainable lives by recycling materials and turning lights off in classrooms etc. Others remain to be convinced.
- The School Council is taking more ownership of and participating in decision making around the school. However, there remain inconsistencies across classes as to how their ideas are shared with their classmates.

## Inclusion

The provision for sustainability is good

- All pupils are able to participate in learning about how to lead more sustainable lives.
- Very good support is available for pupils to promote anger management and resolve conflict.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are especially encouraged to take responsibility and become involved as a 'Befrienders' or 'Redhats' etc to build up their confidence and self esteem.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- using sustainability topics to engage pupils and improve the quality of their extended writing
- encouraging greater involvement and commitment from more staff to promote ESD as a whole school initiative
- ensuring that opportunities to teach about sustainability are identified in planning
- developing the global dimension through stronger curriculum links with partner schools abroad
- formalising school council business into the timetable to ensure that all classes are actively able to participate in discussions about how to improve the quality of life around the school
- encouraging the good practice evidenced in the 'Foundation' unit and the 'WOW factory' to permeate through the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop ESD 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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Leszek Iwaskow  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools  
Specialist Adviser for Geography and ESD