

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 0207 421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Ms Laura Wynne
Headteacher
Argyle Primary School
Tonbridge Street
London
WC1H 9EG

Dear Ms Wynne

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff, pupils and parents, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of one lesson, an assembly as well as a number of outdoor sessions and a survey of the school environment.

Since the last visit, good progress has been made in continuing to develop ESD throughout the school. The overall effectiveness is now judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

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

- The pupils have become engaged with the ethics of leading sustainable lives. Their knowledge and understanding of sustainability issues is well developed through the curriculum.

- They are very aware for the need to look after their environment. They show great pride in the plants they grow in their garden. The school grounds are litter free.
- Most pupils are aware about the need to recycle, conserve energy and to reuse other resources sensibly.
- Positive values and attitudes help pupils to develop a sense of responsibility, fairness and commitment. They are engaged with a range of projects where they want to make a difference towards improving their local community. For example, this has involved them participating in consultations with the local council and agencies developing the underground extension to Kings Cross.
- They are also interested in the issues which impact on their community. When writing about this, their work is detailed and frequently of a high quality because they are writing about a context they are familiar with and have some knowledge of. They write with passion about the need for the Council to provide traffic calming measures outside their school or to curb dog fouling in the neighbourhood.
- Pupils are friendly, have a natural inquisitiveness and a vibrant energy. They respect each other and flourish in the caring ethos of the school. They are very welcoming and respectful of visitors.
- The behaviour of the children is generally good. The school provides them with a stable and a safe refuge.
- There is increasing evidence of behaviour change with pupils taking the lead in conserving energy in their homes and taking responsibility for turning off lights and electrical appliances. Pupils are also beginning to inform parents of the need to lead more sustainable lifestyles.

Quality of teaching and learning of ESD

Insufficient ESD related lessons were observed to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching. Evidence through observation, discussions with teachers, pupils and scrutiny of work suggests that the quality of learning is good overall with some aspects outstanding. The ESD curriculum engages pupils and they learn better. The emphasis on thinking frequently results in challenging tasks being set. Girls tend to be more reasoned thinkers. Their explanations are often more detailed and in greater depth and they show greater maturity in their understanding about sustainability. Teachers and teaching assistants deal with challenging pupils well. Classroom relationships are good.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the ESD curriculum is outstanding.

- ESD permeates the curriculum and is evident in much of the teachers' planning which is very detailed. As a result, ESD values are frequently being reinforced through lessons and there is a whole school approach.
- The curriculum is enriched by the imaginative way the school utilises the outdoor and local environment. Pupils receive many positive experiences. For example, visits to Hyde Park, Willows Farm, the Green Road Show etc, broaden pupils' understanding about the need to look after the environment and lead sustainable lives.
- The many visits and trips the school provides broaden pupils' experiences beyond the narrow confines of their street and the local shopping centre. For example, the recent short walk across central London introduced Year 2 pupils to a whole new world of interesting places many of which they were previously unaware of and made them appreciative of their local environment.
- The school celebrates diversity well. Very good use is made of celebratory themed days and outside speakers to raise pupils understanding of a range of sustainability issues as well as celebrate the diversity of cultures.
- The curriculum promotes pupil participation well through the frequent opportunities to become involved in local debate. The school works collaboratively with officials from the Town hall and provides good opportunities for pupils to state their case in the Council Chambers.
- Parents have identified aspects of the curriculum which could be improved or which could make better use of cultural and religious links. By taking on board parents' suggestions, the curriculum now offered better reflects the needs and interests of the pupils and takes into account their cultural heritage better.

Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD are outstanding.

- The leadership of the school is committed to make sustainability a central part of the school ethos. There is a culture in the school which places sustainability at the centre of school life.
- The school management is committed to ethical purchasing and does so wherever possible.
- The principles of good use of resources are well established. Pupils fulfil their monitoring role conscientiously. The school is very adept at reducing consumption and re-using resources, especially paper. As a result of this good management there is less to recycle.
- Communications with parents are an outstanding feature. The 'Parent's Action and Development' group is potentially a powerful driver for

school improvement. It already has had an impact on improvements linked to healthy living, safe play and road safety and has made suggestions on how to improve the curriculum and make it more relevant.

- The school engages with the local community well and through adult learning classes encourages families to lead more sustainable lives. For example, adult cookery classes encourage parents to use local, fresh produce and cook healthily.
- The school council has improved. It is now more active and engaged in making decisions about improving the school environment. Pupils feel they have a voice and can make a difference. They raise sensible suggestions for discussion for example linked to the new build planned for the school entrance.
- However, there remains some inconsistency in the opportunities for school councillors to engage in discussion about issues within their own classes.

Inclusion

The provision linked to ESD is outstanding.

- The whole school ethos is very inclusive. There is a real community spirit where all the pupils feel they belong. The children care and respect each other and offer mutual support. They all feel safe in this environment.
- All pupils have access to and engage with a curriculum which teaches them about sustainability.
- The school uses focussed days such as the 'Careers' day to raise pupils' aspirations. This includes presentations by successful black professionals and makes pupils aware that they too can become doctors, solicitors and teachers.
- The school involves the wider school community well. The ethos is on ensuring that the school is an inclusive community. All pupils' contributions are respected and valued.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to develop the school council to ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to debate and consider the issues raised by their councillors
- continuing to involve the parents and the local community in engaging with the 'sustainability' agenda. The proposals to work with local religious communities are innovative
- developing the 'sustainable schools forum' to provide a collaborative approach to developing sustainable schools in the local authority.

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