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Mr K Seed
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Dear Mr Seed

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, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of a drama project, visits to a number of classrooms and a survey of the school environment.

The school has made good progress since the last visit to promote ESD throughout the school. The overall effectiveness in promoting sustainability is now judged to be good with some aspects being outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ESD are good.

- There is increased awareness of sustainability among the majority of pupils due to the greater involvement of more staff and subjects in promoting ESD. Most pupils are aware of the need to care for the environment and the need to recycle and save energy.

- Pupils develop a wide range of social and co-operative skills through their exposure to ESD and the outdoor curriculum. This prepares them well for life beyond the secure school environment.
- Through working in the 'Quad' or on the allotment pupils gain confidence as well as environmental knowledge. They also learn to work as a team and to respect their surroundings.
- Pupils are aware of the need to lead healthy lives. They understand the impact of food miles and talk enthusiastically about the value of local purchasing. They are keen to promote 'Fair Trade' and support the 'healthy tuck shop'. They, themselves have noticed the benefits in terms of improved behaviour around the school.
- An active core of very motivated pupils has a strong personal interest in promoting sustainability. These pupils are committed to improving the school environment and the quality of their own and others' lives.
- The school grounds are generally litter free. The majority of responsible pupils are pupils prepared to challenge peers who are not respecting the school grounds and premises.

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. From scrutiny of pupils' work and through discussions with pupils, learning is good in those subjects such as geography which have a curriculum which is strongly linked to promoting sustainability values. Elsewhere pupils use research skills to study the benefits of cycling to school and use this evidence to promote sustainable actions. They learn practical skills such as when they designed a wind turbine to power the polytunnel. Learning how electricity works and how it can be harnessed not only develops their understanding of science but also teaches them how to stay safe.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good and outstanding in some aspects.

- Learning for sustainability is addressed strongly in several subjects notably geography, art, design and food technology but is also now being developed across a wider range of subjects. This is leading to a greater whole school approach which is reinforcing sustainability messages.
- The ESD curriculum is focussed strongly on providing a range of quality experiences which develop social and interpersonal skills for the pupils. In particular, the work related learning and the garden project provide good opportunities for pupils to develop as responsible adults.
- There is an imaginative curriculum which makes good use of the outdoor classroom to engage pupils in caring for their environment. The allotment is used as a 'classroom with a difference' which supports social enterprise. This, and the pupils' involvement in selling the

produce they grow and process at the Bromley farmers' market, raises pupils' confidence and esteem and develops communication skills.

- Life skills are practically taught through the development of the 'Quad'. This is leading to a visible improvement of the school environment which is being managed and kept tidy by the pupils. This encourages an awareness of nature and the need to protect wildlife. It also raises awareness of health and safety issues by teaching pupils how to work safely outdoors.
- The links with the Caribbean and a school in Bangladesh are currently at an early stage of development. They are potentially a rich resource to encourage pupils' learning about diversity, interdependence, injustices linked to exploitation and the ethical aspects of 'Fair-trade'.

Leadership and management of ESD

Leadership and management of ESD are good.

- There is a clear commitment from senior management to promoting ESD and using the many practical opportunities to engage pupils in their learning.
- The school has identified a clear range of strategies to develop and promote ESD. Many of these are practical and pupil focused to encourage them to learn through involvement and doing. They benefit from seeing and celebrating the practical outcomes of their efforts.
- Pupils are given responsibilities and are expected to become involved in the running of their school. The ten ambassadors are actively involved in promoting various aspects of ESD.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is outstanding.

- Inclusion is a key factor which is driving the ESD agenda in the school. There is a family atmosphere where pupils and staff care for each other and the environment.
- There is a strong focus on developing pupils' self esteem to enable them to function outside the safety of their school environment and prepare them for life outside the school. This is done well and many pupils make the transition successfully.
- Many of the activities support collaborative action which enables all pupils to participate. Many pupils blossom in this supportive environment.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to encourage the spread of ESD across the whole curriculum so that it becomes part of a wider school approach
- promoting the global dimension more purposefully by better utilising the links with the Caribbean and Bangladesh to engage pupils' interest
- ensuring that ESD is more clearly signposted in the school development plan to identify it as a clear priority for 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