

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



19 July 2007

Mr A Hutchinson  
Principal  
Ivanhoe College  
North Street  
Ashby-de-la-Zouch  
Leicestershire  
LE65 1HX

Dear Mr Hutchinson

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in poetry

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on 12 July to look at work in 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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and a review of pupils' poetry writing.

Features of good practice observed

- English teachers are committed to poetry and enthusiastic in their teaching; this has a positive impact on pupils' response.
- Teachers use a very wide range of approaches to develop learning about poetry. All of these are focused on building pupils' appreciation of the poems and awareness of the techniques used by poets.
- At the heart of the teaching of poetry is enjoyment. Poems are used in a variety of ways, as stimuli, starter activities, models and for analysis. As a result, pupils see poetry as something to read and enjoy.
- Teachers have a clear understanding of the progression required in pupils' ability to read and understand poems as they move through the school.
- A range of other activities highlights the importance of poetry such as a visiting poet, poetry day and the use of poetry in assemblies and other subjects.
- Pupils particularly enjoy the compilation of an anthology of their own poetry in Year 7. They take pride in their work which is presented to a

high standard. They readily point out techniques and ideas which they have drawn from some of the poems they have studied. The anthologies are given value by the comments from peers, parents and teachers who are encouraged to read them.

- Teachers' assessment of pupils' poetry is rigorous and supportive, containing a personal response to the poems with suggestions for improvement.

#### Areas for development

- The school should ensure that older pupils continue to have opportunities to write poetry.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop poetry 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

Martin Cragg  
Her Majesty's Inspector