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Mrs H Fox  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Fox

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 3 December 2007 to look at work in Science.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards in science are average and achievement is good.

- Standards at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 in 2007 was below the national average.
- Standards at the end of Year 6 have been improving and were just above the national average in 2007.
- The presentation and recording of work are of a good standard.
- Pupils make good progress in science throughout the school.
- Pupils enjoy science. They particularly like the opportunities provided for them to find things out for themselves through designing and carrying out their own experiments.
- Pupils' personal development is promoted well through the opportunities they have to work in pairs and small groups. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.

## Quality of teaching and learning of science

The overall quality of teaching and learning in science is good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well around clear learning outcomes for pupils.
- Lessons are characterised by the good relationships that exist between staff and pupils.
- Lessons contain a range of interesting activities that engage pupils and stimulate their sense of curiosity.
- In most lessons tasks are pitched at the right level to meet the needs of the range of pupils in the mixed age classes. However, some lessons in Key Stage 1 do not provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teachers make good use of interactive white boards to maintain the pace of lessons and encourage the learning of pupils.
- Teaching assistants support the learning of pupils well.
- Teachers mark work well and give helpful comments to pupils about how to improve.

## Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The science curriculum is based around a two year rolling programme to ensure that pupils cover all aspects of the science programme of study within mixed age classes.
- The curriculum is reviewed each year to ensure that it meets the needs of different year groups as they move through the school.
- Schemes of work have a clear focus on the development of scientific enquiry skills.
- There are too few opportunities for cross-curriculum links between science and literacy and numeracy.
- The science curriculum days, trips and visitors to the school help raise pupils' enjoyment and make learning more lively and relevant.

## Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management in science are good.

- Science is well led and managed by you as headteacher, and as science coordinator. You have a clear picture of the strengths and areas in need of development in science and provide a clear strategic direction for improvement.
- Very good systems of self-evaluation are in place. These include observation of lessons, scrutiny of work, analysis of tests and conversations with staff and pupils.
- The school's high expectations are evident in the challenging targets set for pupils. The progress of pupils towards these targets is monitored well although the science coordinator has identified the need to ensure greater accuracy of these assessments across year groups.
- The science development plan identifies key areas for development although success criteria need to be more specific and measurable.

## Inclusion

Provision for inclusion is good.

- All groups of pupils make similar progress in science.
- Staff meet the wide needs and abilities of pupils in mixed age classes well. Pupils are well supported and relationships in lessons are good.
- Science lessons are used to promote pupils social development well by providing them with opportunities to work with others who have different abilities and aptitudes.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that all lessons in Key Stage 1 provide sufficient challenge for the most able pupils
- developing further cross curricular links between science and literacy and numeracy
- ensuring the accuracy of assessments in science through further moderation activities.

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

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson  
Her Majesty's Inspector