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Mr A McMahon  
Headteacher  
Brackenbury Primary School  
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Dear Mr McMahon

Ofsted survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 21 September to look at work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject the visit had a particular focus on our current survey theme: provision for independent learning. 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of three lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be good, with outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good. Standards are above average.

- All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and able pupils, achieve well. Their literacy skills enable them to make good progress in subjects across the curriculum.
- Children start the Foundation Stage with below average attainment. Provision is good and they make good progress, particularly in communication skills. This good progress continues and at Key Stage 1, attainment in reading and writing is broadly in line with national standards. Progress accelerates at Key Stage 2, and by the end of Year 6 standards are above average. In 2007, test results at Level 4+ exceeded the national figure by 12%. Standards of speaking and

listening are good overall, and very good for some pupils at Key Stage 2.

- English makes a good contribution to the personal development of pupils, particularly through independent and pair work, opportunities to express personal opinions in lessons and extra-curricular activities.

### Quality of teaching and learning of English

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons and sessions are interesting, planned very well, appropriately challenging, well resourced and meet the needs of all learners well.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching and learning strategies that promote independent learning well, including good use of technology. Skills are carefully and thoroughly taught and good questioning probes and develops learning well.
- Assessment for learning features well and there is clear impact of careful assessment and tracking contributing to pupils' progress. Learning objectives are clear and well executed. The use of individual targets and very careful, thorough and supportive marking helps pupils to improve.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is carefully structured for breadth, balance and progression. This enables teachers to build on pupils' knowledge and skills well. Cross curricular links are well made and reinforce literacy. Drama, media and enrichment activities are used well to engage pupils and to further learning.
- Interventions are well planned, well delivered and show good gains in learning for targeted pupils.

### Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management are good.

- Good leadership ensures consistently good provision and contributes to above average standards. Policies and procedures are clear and include very good monitoring and systematic evaluation of provision. Good investment in professional development ensures consistently good practice.
- The school has a very accurate understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, clear priorities and a very good grasp of how to improve.
- Performance data are analysed well and good action is taken to improve already good provision further.

## Provision for independent learning

Provision for independent learning is good.

- Pupils enjoy English and gain significantly in confidence, as writers in particular, by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Independent learning is promoted well in planning and in lessons, through target setting and marking, in opportunities for independent research and in choices for reading. Teachers provide good support with writing for those pupils who need it; others write with increasing independence across a range of genres.
- Good provision for speaking and listening enables pupils to talk openly and well. They enjoy discussion and are increasingly confident and articulate in expressing their ideas and opinions.

## Inclusion

Inclusion is outstanding.

- The school is very responsive to the needs of individual pupils and provision in English has a considerably positive impact on motivation and behaviour.
- Expectations for all are very high. The progress of all groups of pupils is carefully tracked, work is well matched to need and they make at least good progress. Well targeted and well delivered interventions close gaps in attainment.
- Well trained support staff promote inclusion very well and contribute significantly to learning in English.
- Good resources from a range of cultures offer a broad experience of literature.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to improve achievement and raise attainment as outlined in the School Development Plan.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop English in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term and made available to the team for the next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Matthews  
Her Majesty's Inspector