

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



16 October 2007

Mr I Yapp
Headteacher
Hustwaite Church of England Primary School
Low Street
Hustwaite
North Yorkshire
YO61 4QA

Dear Mr Yapp

Ofsted survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 October 2007 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: independent learning in English. 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 five lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards are above average and achievement is good.

- The full range of evidence indicates achievement has recovered well from a dip in test results in 2006, when pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) made less than expected progress. Tracking and early indications from tests in 2007 indicate that progress has improved and is on the whole good.
- Foundation Stage outcomes have improved and are better than average.
- Reading has improved and is good, following a concerted effort to improve skills and encourage independent reading.

- Having identified that writing needs to improve, the school has taken appropriate steps to improve motivation and basic skills. There are early signs of a positive impact.
- Girls have made better progress than boys in the past, but the school has narrowed the gap by making sure that activities motivate boys too.
- Pupils enjoy lessons and are keen to take part in enrichment, including a book club and drama.

Quality of teaching and learning of English

Teaching and learning are good overall.

- Strengths of teaching included the use in some lessons of discussion and role play. These helped all pupils to articulate their ideas, supported emerging writing and motivated older pupils to develop their skills. However, in some lessons, opportunities were missed to engage pupils in discussion to develop their learning. Pace was slower and explanations were insufficiently clear.
- Teachers consistently differentiate work to challenge all learners and in some cases involve pupils well in appraising progress.
- Marking has improved and gives informative and constructive feedback. However, in some lessons the lack of relevant and clear learning outcomes and success criteria left pupils unsure how to reach more challenging expectations.

Quality of curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- It is up to date, broad and varied. Lessons are planned as coherent sequences which build on prior understanding.
- Good steps have been taken to improve the motivation of all pupils, including boys and those at risk of disaffection. Special events, well chosen reading and initiatives which promote discussion contribute well.
- Pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) for research, to develop and present ideas using different media and to communicate beyond the school.
- Activities which develop pupils' interest in reading and writing include a book club and opportunities to work with real authors.

Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management are good.

- The subject is given a clear lead by the headteacher and subject leader. Outcomes for pupils are accurately analysed. Concerted action has raised attainment in some key areas.

- The school's commitment to literacy shows in its Basic Skills and Dyslexia Quality Marks, its investment in books and real writers to work with children, and the involvement of a governor in evaluating its ambition to have "literacy everywhere".
- Standardised assessment and systematic tracking of progress now highlight any slippage in reading or writing, and this is rigorously followed up. Performance targets for pupils' progress are being monitored carefully.
- The subject leader has excellent subject knowledge and provides a very good model of teaching. The sensible strategies adopted across the school are rightly being consolidated this year.

Independent learning in English

Independent learning is satisfactory.

- The use of writers in school to work with a year group for a sustained period encourages a more independent approach to investigation and making choices about writing. Older pupils, treated as professional writers, learn to take responsibility for improving their writing skills.
- In designing resources to support writing, teachers balance guidance with scope for individual choice. However, learners are not always helped to apply success criteria independently.
- Drama is used well in some classrooms to boost young children's progress towards independent writing. For example, through role play, young children identified well with a character and worked out for themselves how to tell his story vividly and coherently.
- Good opportunities to choose their own books help pupils develop a lively interest in reading.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- The school has reviewed its provision for inclusion, and early indications are that, last year, the progress of all groups was good and there was little difference between boys and girls.
- Work challenges different groups and individuals, including the gifted and talented and those with LDD.
- Appropriate arrangements are made for intervention. Support in the classroom is effective when planning makes clear the specific goals.
- Progress is carefully monitored. Marking and reports give clear information on achievement and guidance on how to do better.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- increasing the proportion of good teaching
- consolidating pupils' progress in writing.

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/Local Learning Skills Council. 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

Susan Bowles
Her Majesty's Inspector