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Mrs S Barrett
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Dear Mrs Barrett

Ofsted survey inspection programme – citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 24 September 2007 to look at work in citizenship.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on provision for teaching and learning about Britain's diversity.

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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of four lessons, registration, playtime and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in citizenship are good overall.

- Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the key areas of the curriculum. At Key Stage 1 they learn about fairness, right and wrong and how to express their opinions. Circle time helps them to take part in simple debates, although some find this difficult as they are at early stages of learning English. Most understand the class rules which they have helped to negotiate.
- At Key Stage 2 they are given more opportunities to undertake research, talk and write about their opinions and explain their views.

The many pupils who put themselves forward as candidates for the school council make an excellent job of this in their manifestos.

- Pupils are particularly well informed about the diversity of cultures and religions in the UK. Many have visited a number of different places of worship and have a good understanding of the range of religious festivals.
- Pupils have the chance to take part in community activities such as designing a sculpture for the local park. However, many opportunities to participate are passive rather than active, such as non-uniform day. Few pupils are aware of which charities they are fund-raising for or have negotiated which groups they would prefer to support.
- Pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility within school as playground buddies, peer mentors or school council representatives.

Quality of teaching and learning of citizenship

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

- Teachers use a range of methods and approaches to engage pupils well, including imaginative use of interactive whiteboards. Pupils enjoy the lessons. They are encouraged to work independently as well as cooperate with others in their learning.
- Teachers exploit local and topical issues to help pupils grasp concepts. A good example of this is looking at photographs of the local area in a geography lesson to explore how to improve the environment.
- Teachers deal well with sensitive and controversial issues in citizenship, such as racism and bullying.
- High quality citizenship displays in classrooms and around the school enhance the teaching and learning.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is well-planned and coordinated, although some issues are covered in more depth than others. Britain's diversity, social and moral issues, human rights and responsibilities and the environment are well covered as evidenced by pupils' work, planning and displays around the school. Other areas such as the work of local councils, parliament and the media are more light touch.
- The programme is sufficiently detailed, comprehensive and coherent.
- Topical issues feature well and the strong programme for inclusion and the effective use of teaching assistants in lessons ensures entitlement for all.

Leadership and management of citizenship

The quality of leadership and management in citizenship is good.

- The school has effectively managed the implementation of citizenship through the taught and wider curriculum.

- The vision for citizenship has clear aims and is linked to wider agendas in the school such as inclusion and Every Child Matters.
- In response to the development of the 'pupil voice' there are a range of interesting initiatives in the pipeline to further enhance the subject.
- Planning and evaluation are sound and there is good capacity to improve.

Subject issue: teaching and learning about Britain's diversity

The school plans particularly well for teaching and learning about Britain's diversity.

Diversity is high profile and celebrated throughout the school. Staff and pupils appreciate the rich resource the school community provides. This is well illustrated by events such as the 'Super Learning Language Day' which celebrates the range of languages spoken in the school, and the opportunities many pupils have to study a range of cultures and beliefs.

Inclusion

Inclusion is a strength. The citizenship curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all learners and all groups are encouraged to do well.

Community languages are celebrated and well deployed teaching assistants ensure that pupils with language or learning difficulties are well supported.

The emphasis on inclusion is best summarised by the successful 'Attendance', 'Feeling Smart' and 'Circle of Friends' groups which are specifically designed to ensure that the school meets the specific emotional needs of vulnerable pupils, thus enabling them to fully access the curriculum.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring all areas of the citizenship curriculum are covered in sufficient depth
- encouraging pupils to participate more actively in community based programmes.

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

Janet Palmer
Her Majesty's Inspector