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Mr A Fielder  
Headteacher  
Sandy Hill Community Primary School  
Sandy Hill  
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Dear Mr Fielder

Ofsted survey inspection programme of primary schools 2007/8  
Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff during my visit on 23 November 2007 to look at work in ICT.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of ICT, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of ICT on whole-school improvement.

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 you, your subject co-ordinator, your assistant network manager, your deputy headteacher, Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of a Year 2 and a Year 6 lesson in the computer suite.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Standards in ICT are well above expectations by Year 6 and achievement is outstanding. The contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being is also outstanding.

- Pupils enter school with standards below expectations in ICT. By Year 2 standards are above expectation and by Year 6 they are well above, representing outstanding achievement.
- Throughout the school, pupils have excellent basic skills. They use ICT with extreme confidence.

- ICT has a very good impact on raising standards in other subjects. Pupils also recognise that ICT is supporting their learning in a range of subjects.
- Pupils very much enjoy using computers, interactive whiteboards and digital cameras. They are not afraid to experiment should things go wrong and they support each other very well to overcome problems or to share skills and knowledge.

### Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

- Teaching of ICT is outstanding overall. The subject knowledge of teachers is very good and often outstanding. Where teachers lack confidence in the use of ICT they are given excellent support by the assistant network manager.
- The assistant network manager has an excellent knowledge of ICT. As a result, she provides outstanding support for teachers and pupils, especially in the computer suite. She also leads the teaching of ICT for Year 6.
- Pupils are very well managed and consequently work very together, in a calm and purposeful atmosphere.
- Very good use is made of interactive whiteboards in classrooms to add impact and interest to lessons and to motivate pupils. They also enjoy using the whiteboards and do so with confidence.
- The use of assessment to track progress is very good. Teachers track pupils' progress well against the learning objectives. Assessment is used very well to identify planning for different groups of pupils and to ensure that they all make similar progress. Pupils are encouraged to self-evaluate their learning at the end of lessons, against the learning objectives. However, not all pupils are aware of their personal ICT targets for the future. The school recognises that this is as an area for further development, which is already noted in the Vision Action Plan for ICT. The co-ordinator is developing ICT "target setting" cards, which will inform pupils of their personal targets.

### Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the ICT curriculum is outstanding.

- The programmes of study are being taught very well and there are excellent links between other subjects. An outstanding example was seen in Year 2 of the links between ICT, physical education (PE), dance and drama through a topic on the 'Seaside'. This includes pupils' use of digital cameras and recorders to photograph and video their work on a beach and metal detectors to search for objects, to stimulate ideas for dance and drama. This contributed extremely well to English, mathematics, science, art, geography and PE.
- The links between literacy, numeracy and ICT are excellent.
- Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very good and they make very good progress in ICT.

- The use of the Makaton sign language to support pupils with very specific learning difficulties is also being used by other groups of pupils and their teachers and further supports inclusion.
- Provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good, through well planned activities and well-matched work.
- Research work on inclusion, in partnership with a university, is further enhancing the awareness of staff to plan for, and meet the needs of, all groups of pupils.
- The subject is very well resourced. All classes have interactive whiteboard and there is a very well resourced suite.
- Very good links have been established with a local supermarket for pupils to observe the use of ICT in the commercial world.

### Leadership and management of the subject

Leadership and management of ICT are outstanding.

- The ICT co-ordinator gives outstanding leadership and ensures that ICT has a high profile throughout the school and also has very well planned links with other subjects.
- The co-ordinator is very ably supported by the assistant network manager.
- The senior management team and governors are very well informed and give very good support for the subject.
- The ICT governor has an excellent, first-hand, knowledge of education and brings an extra perspective to the subject, especially in the areas of ICT to support special educational needs and secondary school links.
- The policy for safe use of the internet is known by parents and pupils. Pupils appreciate that e-mails are monitored by a 'moderator' and so can be sent and received in safety.
- The co-ordinator uses data analysis very well to track the progress and achievement of pupils and to highlight the strengths of the subject and the areas for development.
- The school has a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses from its own data analysis and monitoring but is not yet using the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) self review framework to evaluate its effectiveness against a recognised national standard.

### Subject issue - the impact of ICT on whole-school improvement

The impact of ICT on whole school improvement is outstanding.

- There are excellent links to all subjects of the curriculum through well-planned activities, including 'creative curriculum' themed days and weeks.
- ICT is supporting a rise in achievement and standards in a wide range of subjects, including the schools' focus on raising achievement in boys' writing.
- Assessment data is used very well to plan for different groups of pupils and to analyse strengths and weaknesses in ICT.

## Inclusion

- Very good use is made of ICT to support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- Provision for gifted and talented pupils is very good. Pupils support each other very well in lessons.
- Planning for different groups of pupils is very good and based on very thorough assessment, which results in outstanding achievement.
- The school is working closely with a university research team on inclusion of all groups of pupils. This has heightened the awareness of all staff to the issues of inclusion.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included to:

- develop and evaluate the 'target setting' cards so that pupils throughout the school have a clearer understanding of their individual targets for learning
- consider the use of the BECTA review to self-evaluate against national standards.

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

Anthony Green  
Additional Inspector