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Mrs J Harland  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Harland

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 18 October 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 staff and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ICT are satisfactory and improving.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress from the foundation stage; through to the end of Key Stage 2.
- Pupils enjoy their work in ICT and generally collaborate well.
- There are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to achieve highly in the more complex areas of ICT such as information handling, sensing and control.
- The impact of ICT in raising standards in other subjects is improving due to better access to computers and the improved subject knowledge of the majority of staff.

## Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and improving.

- Pupils enjoy their work in ICT and they are well motivated by it in most lessons.
- In some lessons, planning does not take into account the needs of all learners in the class limiting the progress of higher attaining pupils.
- There are insufficient opportunities for older learners to evaluate, refine and improve their work. This prevents them from attaining the higher National Curriculum levels.
- Assessment of ICT is improving. A portfolio of levelled ICT work is used well to support this process but this does not include sufficient annotation to explain what children have been asked to do.
- All classrooms now have interactive whiteboards and most teachers use these effectively. Digital cameras are regularly used for recording images which are used in effective 'learning wall' displays.
- Pupils with learning difficulties are well supported by a range of staff and parent helpers.
- Teachers' ICT subject knowledge is improving but there is still some inconsistency which has an impact on the quality of ICT provision for some classes.

## Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The schemes of work in ICT are well planned to provide a broad and balanced curriculum in the foundation stage and through Key Stage 1 to lower juniors.
- At Key Stage 2 there is too much emphasis on work in the presentation strand and not enough in the areas of information handling, modelling, sensing and control.
- The work-save directories provided for pupils are too difficult to find on the network. This problem is being addressed with a new network system but some pupils currently have difficulty saving and retrieving work.

## Leadership and management of ICT

The leadership and management of ICT are good.

- You have a good vision for ICT and have successfully shared this across the senior management team and the staff. You've made a number of important improvements to the development of ICT at the school though the full impact of these on standards will take time.
- You have recently prioritised spending on ICT. This has improved access to resources for pupils, in the ICT suite, classrooms and across the school.
- A recently purchased set of wireless laptops has further extended the flexibility with which teachers can use ICT to support learning across the school.

- Technical support is much improved since you found a new provider. Changes to the network filing system are currently being made and this has improved the ease of saving and retrieving files in those classes that have been set up.
- ICT has been well used to set targets for pupils and track their progress. This has enabled appropriate intervention to improve pupils' performance and raise attainment.
- Documentation for ICT is thorough and up to date. Planning is focused on issues arising from self evaluation and policies are monitored and updated when needed.
- Progress in ICT is monitored and assessed to National Curriculum levels, though currently the levels do not take enough account of the full breadth of the subject.

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

The impact of ICT on whole school improvement is satisfactory and improving.

- The use of ICT to support work in other subjects is satisfactory and improving but is good in mathematics and English.
- ICT systems are well used for performance data analysis, target setting and pupil tracking, allowing appropriate intervention to reduce under-achievement.
- Pupils' confidence and competence in the use of ICT to support independent learning and creativity is still limited but improving.
- The headteacher and staff have a good shared vision for ICT and recent improvements to the infrastructure and resources are beginning to have a positive impact on standards as indicated by the improved 2007 test results.

Inclusion

ICT makes a good contribution to the learning of underachieving and vulnerable pupils.

- The curriculum in ICT is well planned and inclusive. It is appropriate for most pupils although more limited for higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 2.
- Assessment and monitoring systems work well to identify under-achievement and intervention to support pupils is well developed.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and / or disabilities are well supported in their work in ICT by teaching assistants and parent helpers.
- The school makes particularly good use of helpers from the community to support pupils with English as an additional language.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included the need to:

- provide more challenging activities for older learners by increasing the opportunities for them to critically evaluate and refine their work and study information handling, modelling, sensing and control
- improve ICT assessment by taking into account the full breadth of the subject when determining National Curriculum levels
- continue to improve the school network to aid the storage and retrieval of pupils' work
- improve the annotation of the ICT portfolio of samples of assessed work
- continue to improve teacher's ICT subject knowledge through training needs analysis and professional development.

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

Ralph Lilley  
Additional Inspector