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Dear Mr Clarkson

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 25 September 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 outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in ICT are outstanding.

- Pupils enter the Foundation stage with below average ICT skills. By the end of Key Stage 1 their standards of attainment are above national expectations. This represents very good achievement.
- Pupils continue to make good progress at Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6 their standards of attainment are well above national expectations.

- Pupils develop ICT capability well in the context of other subjects and this contributes to the outstanding standards and achievements found throughout the school in the core subjects.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants in ICT. This group of pupils achieve well in the subject.
- By the end of Year 6 pupils are beginning to critically evaluate their work in ICT. They understand that ICT solutions need to be fit for purpose and are beginning to refine, amend and improve their work to make it more suitable for a specific target audience.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning in ICT are outstanding.

- Teachers' and their assistants have very good ICT subject knowledge. This is due to thorough training needs analysis and sufficient time provided for the necessary professional development and training to take place.
- Teachers regularly use ICT within their subject lessons to enrich the content. This helps to provide motivating and enjoyable lessons for the pupils. Teachers make particularly effective use of interactive whiteboard technology.
- Teachers' planning takes into account the needs of all pupils and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by teaching assistants during independent learning in ICT.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the ICT curriculum is outstanding.

- The ICT scheme of work is based on the national QCA units of work. However these have been modified skilfully to better suit the specific needs of the pupils at the school.
- Curriculum planning is undertaken in teams and particularly good links are made between the ICT units of work and the ICT elements in the other subjects. This system works well to develop pupils' ICT skills and to provide good opportunities for applying these skills to their work in other subjects. This leads to high levels of pupil confidence and capability in their use of ICT.
- Assessment opportunities are effectively built into the scheme of work. This works well to focus teachers' efforts on the elements of pupils' learning that need improvement.
- The ICT scheme of work is very well thought out and leads to good opportunities for progression all the way from the Foundation Stage to the end of Year 6.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- The senior management team provide excellent leadership and vision for the continued development of the subject. Those areas that need to be improved are identified quickly and strategies are put in place to address them. The staff at the school have a shared vision for the use of the subject that helps to raise standards in ICT and across the curriculum.
- Very good links have been forged with the local secondary school. This has enabled cost effective and prompt technical support for the school systems. It has also provided a Linux / open source software system that has reduced cost and therefore enabled more resources to be purchased, resulting in very good access to ICT for pupils. These facilities are also made available to parents and other adults in the community which supports pupils' development of ICT capability in the home.
- Pupils' progress is well tracked and monitored. Assessments are made against National Curriculum levels but as yet there has been no attempt to quantify this with summative assessment data.
- ICT self evaluation is good, though the school is at an early stage in the use of the national benchmarks for evaluation provided by the national self review framework (SRF).

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

- The schools standards and achievement were judged to be outstanding in the last Section 5 Ofsted inspection. Since then the high standards have been maintained, with 2007 results being at least as good as those in previous years.
- The approach to ICT use has supported the raising attainment agenda well. Pupil tracking and monitoring systems are well developed and enable timely intervention to support pupils when needed.
- The strong natural links between the discrete teaching of ICT and its application across the curriculum have enriched and enhanced pupils' learning and supported high levels of achievement. This is underpinned by good subject knowledge through high quality professional development for all staff at the school.

Inclusion

- The planning of the ICT scheme of work and lesson planning in ICT meets the needs of all learners well, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- This group of pupils make good progress and are particularly well supported during discrete ICT lessons by well trained and skilful teaching assistants.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- using summative assessment data to further improve the monitoring of the standards in ICT
- the use of national benchmarks as set out in the self review framework to support the self evaluation processes in ICT
- to include more opportunities for sensing and data logging activities in the ICT scheme of work at Key Stage 2.

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