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Mrs S Chalkley  
Headteacher  
Trowell Church of England Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Chalkley

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 26 November 2007 to look at work in science.

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 and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in science are good.

- Standards are above average and all pupils achieve well, whatever their prior attainment.
- Pupils have very good enquiry skills. They predict, explain their predictions and plan investigations with 'fair testing' in mind.
- They make careful observations and measure accurately, checking results to ensure that the results of experiments are reliable.
- Pupils use graphs and different ways of presenting data, including spreadsheets, well.
- Pupils express their ideas and understanding confidently in writing and speech.

- Pupils work well together. They enjoy science lessons, behave sensibly in practical work and follow instructions carefully.
- The subject prepares pupils well for their future lives, enabling them to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills well.

### Quality of teaching and learning of science

The quality of teaching and learning in science is good.

- Lessons are challenging with work generally well matched to pupils' learning needs.
- Learning objectives for lessons are clear. They mostly encourage pupils to ask questions and to think about what they are learning.
- Lessons are well organised. The three-part lesson strategy is used effectively, engaging pupils quickly at the start of lessons, developing main ideas well and pulling together what has been learned thoroughly at the end.
- Lessons are conducted at a fast pace, with interesting activities and expectations that pupils will discuss, explain, plan and write independently, using the scientific terminology and ideas they learn.
- Marking is good and usually gives a clear indication of what pupils know and how to improve.
- Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall, and give a good picture of how well pupils understand the subject. However, assessment of pupils' scientific enquiry skills is inconsistent and teachers are not fully secure in how accurate their assessments are.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is well organised and meets all statutory requirements.
- The inclusion of scientific enquiry is excellent and is an integral part of the scheme of work. Investigative processes are incorporated into planning so that pupils build competence and confidence in developing their thinking skills and understanding.
- The curriculum is effectively planned to meet needs of all pupils, including those who are gifted and talented and pupils with learning difficulties.
- There are well planned opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- The school provides a wide range of trips and visitors to make science interesting and relevant. There are good links with other subjects. For example, links with history help pupils understand the development of clean water and effective sewage management.

## Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management of science are good.

- The subject leader gives a very clear direction for improvement which is well supported by all staff. The capacity for further improvement is good.
- The focus is clearly on raising standards and this is having a positive impact. She has worked effectively to establish scientific enquiry as a major part of the science curriculum. The drive to engage pupils in discussing and explaining all aspects of science is leading to improving achievement and standards.
- The monitoring and evaluation of provision is good. The school has accurately identified the need to improve the quality and consistency of assessing pupils' investigative skills.
- Support to help staff develop their science teaching skills is good.
- Links with secondary schools are good, with the school striving to ensure a smooth transfer from this to several other secondary schools.
- Within the school, transfer between classes and key stages is well managed to ensure good continuity as pupils move through the school.

## Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- The needs of all pupils are met.
- Teachers are sensitive to pupils' specific needs. Classroom support staff work effectively to ensure that pupils with learning difficulties fully understand the work being done in lessons, and achieve as well as they can.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving the accuracy and confidence with which teachers assess pupils' scientific investigation skills.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop science 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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Ted Wheatley  
Additional Inspector