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Mrs S Buczkiewicz  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Buczkiewicz

Ofsted survey inspection programme – History

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 04 February to look at work in history.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on information and communication technology (ICT).

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 the observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and pupils' standards are satisfactory.

- Pupils make good progress. As they get older, they are developing well their knowledge and understanding of, for example, the lives of children in Tudor times and about the relationship of Henry VIII to each of his six wives.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 are increasing their knowledge and understanding of Victorian Britain. They have a sound understanding of the lives of the wealthy in Victorian times and about working conditions in factories, especially for children.

- Pupils of all ages are developing a good sense of chronology and they work well with various primary and secondary sources. Some pupils have a good understanding of how the same events in history can be interpreted in different ways. However, pupils do not write extensively.
- Pupils' attitudes to their learning are excellent. They respond well to the teachers' questioning in whole class discussions and they work well in pairs and in small groups. Pupils sustain their concentration on the activities set and their behaviour is impeccable.

### Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons are planned in detail and the needs of the various abilities are taken into account. Staff work hard to ensure that the topics being studied are made interesting through activities such as 'role plays' and the use of ICT.
- Teaching is well organised and staff offer pupils a good range of learning activities. They employ good questioning skills which extend the pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- Relationships are good, leading to a productive learning environment. Pupils feel comfortable with the routines and expectations of the staff, enabling them to participate freely in the various learning activities.
- Teaching assistants are used generally efficiently. However, they are not always involved with identified pupils at the start of the session.
- Pupils' work is regularly marked. The teachers make comments when appropriate but these tend to be brief and do not always indicate to pupils how to improve their work. Short-term targets for pupils are not routinely identified.
- Pupils' work is thoroughly assessed after each unit of work has been studied. The assessment is based on using statements of attainment from the National Curriculum.

### Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is broad and meets requirements. It is organised around a two-year planning cycle. Units of work have been planned in detail and provide good guidance to the staff.
- Pupils' interest is stimulated by the use of a good range of resources, including the use of external visitors, for example veterans from the Second World War. The unit on the Indus Valley civilisation was recently replaced by the unit on the Aztecs. It is important that the latter unit is properly resourced.
- Visits are made to some places of historical interest, for instance the local canal and to Chatsworth House. However, this aspect of the work is limited.

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good.

- The part-time co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that the subject is well resourced and that all staff are supported. She has good knowledge and understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. However, she has not been able to attend any recent in-service training in history.

## Subject issue: ICT

The use of ICT is good.

- Staff are confident users of the interactive whiteboard and they use it well to offer a richer experience to the pupils. PowerPoint presentations are regularly used.
- Pupils are developing their ICT skills well. Pupils in the Reception class, for example, can competently click and drag images using Textease.
- Older pupils enjoy working in the ICT suite and are developing their skills well, including the use of various websites for the study of historical topics. They have recently been interrogating the 1901 census data.

## Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- The needs of all abilities are well known to the teachers and work for them is planned accordingly.
- Pupils make good progress as they are supported well by the teaching styles and by the additional support offered by teaching assistants.

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

- there is a greater range of extended writing by pupils of all abilities
- the marking of pupils' work helps them to enhance their progress and that it regularly identifies short-term targets for the pupils to aim for
- the range of visits to places of historical interest is extended.

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

Champak Chauhan  
Her Majesty's Inspector