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Mrs H Channing
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Channing

Ofsted 2007-08 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 21 January 2008 to look at work in citizenship.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the aspect, the visit had a particular focus on provision for teaching and learning about Britain's diversity.

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 and activities.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Pupils are self-assured and their discussions skills are good. They express their views and opinions in class to good effect.
- Pupils willingly contribute to lessons and are familiar with and apply class rules.
- Key Stage 1 pupils grasp citizenship related concepts well. For example, they can describe the characteristics of the local, the school and the family community.

- Older pupils willingly take responsibility within the school as junior play leaders. Some provide younger pupils with care and support around the school as a matter of course.
- Pupils at Key Stage 2 research issues well through written work and class discussion. They consider consequences, roles, rules and regulations. Preparation for transfer to secondary school enabled them not only to develop coping strategies but to explore youth stereotyping.

Quality of teaching and learning of citizenship

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- There is a good focus by teachers on helping pupils express their own views and opinions in class. They use real life issues effectively.
- Teachers use a very good range of methods and approaches to engage pupils and ensure lessons run at a good pace including circle time, small group work, and one-to-one activities. They explain concepts well and in doing so pupils develop new and extended vocabulary.
- Sensitive and controversial issues are explored openly and maturely.
- As well as exploring the need to help others in the community, lessons encourage pupils to recognise the importance of seeking help for themselves.
- Teachers provide very good and clear explanations about concepts linked, for example, to 'the community'.
- Excellent relationships exist between pupils and staff, enhanced by the effective use of learning support assistants to promote learning.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good

- There is good scope for staff to be able to respond to current and topical issues through their general teaching and in themed activities.
- The curriculum encourages students to think independently, handle agreement, disagreement and consider alternative views.
- Good use is made of on-line and up-to-date learning packages.
- Progression planning between primary and secondary provides an opportunity to focus on the learning achieved through projects such as the buddy scheme.
- The annual subject report 2007 demonstrates progress against actions but less so on the impact of teaching and learning.

Leadership and management of citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are good.

- Leadership and management are good.
- Senior staff recognise inconsistencies in assessment in personal and social development.
- The school council has been given due status and is valued by staff. Pupils derive much learning from it.

- Staff have created an ethos where views and opinions are shared well among staff and pupils.
- The Governing body is supportive and interested in pupils' progress.
- Capacity for further improvement is good.

Subject issue: teaching and learning about Britain's diversity

The school promotes pupils' awareness of the various communities of which they are a part. Key Stages 1 and 2 each explore cultural differences and the value of social harmony. Pupils participate in activities such as the 'shoebox appeal' which leaves them with a greater understanding of international wealth distribution and equity. Pupils begin to understand democracy and are encouraged to test out their views and opinions within lessons.

Inclusion

The work is inclusive and the school creates a harmonious atmosphere. School council activities involve a broad cross-section of ages and abilities and pupils are mutually supportive. In-class support and flexible approaches to teaching enable all pupils to participate in lessons.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- further develop the means by which the impact of citizenship teaching and learning is measured.

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

Tony Gallagher
Her Majesty's Inspector