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Mrs C Doogan
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Doogan

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff during my visit on 27 February 2008 to look at work in ICT.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, 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 discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and the joint observations of three part lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be good. The partnerships with the local secondary school and the local City Learning Centre, are contributing significantly to the good progress the school has made in ICT since the time of the last inspection.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement and standards in ICT are good and pupils progress well from a low starting point when they begin school in the Nursery.

- By the end of Year 6 pupils are able to use ICT confidently, independently and creatively. However, the progress they make is not consistently good in all the different strands; the good work which takes place in developing pupils' understanding of control technology at Key Stage 1 is not progressed sufficiently well in Key Stage 2.
- The school is now making better use of data to identify pupils at risk of underachieving and to set challenging targets. However, pupils are not

sufficiently aware of the level at which they are working and what they need to do to get to the next level of the ICT curriculum.

- The application of ICT in subjects like literacy and numeracy as well as in science, art and some aspects of religious education, is also contributing to the good progress made by most pupils in these areas.
- However there are missed opportunities for using ICT to reinforce pupils' knowledge and skills of phonics. This is reducing the rate of progress made by some of the lower attaining pupils in developing these basic skills.
- Pupils with special educational needs are able to complete work to a high standard by using the computer.
- Informed use of ICT is helping to accelerate progress and raise the standards of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.
- ICT contributes particularly well to the personal development and well being of pupils because in their collective use of ICT, pupils learn to work well together, take turns and help each other.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of how to keep themselves safe when accessing the internet.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning of ICT is good overall.

- The use of ICT has become a frequent and natural part of teaching. This is welcomed and valued by pupils, who have noticed the positive impact this has made to making teaching and learning more enjoyable and purposeful. Pupils appreciate being taught at a faster pace with teachers being able to provide high quality demonstrations and recall previous work and examples at the touch of a button.
- Where teaching is best, key words are explicitly taught and teaching ensures pupils have understood what is expected of them and the purpose of the lesson. In these lessons, pupils are encouraged to be reflective learners, to talk about their work with each other and to consider during the course of the lesson the progress they are making, what they are learning and how they can improve. Teachers maintain a good overview of pupils enabling them to provide good levels of support to pupils, ensuring all groups of learners progress at a good pace
- Where teaching is less effective, the quality of planning although satisfactory is not sufficiently well tailored to the needs of all pupils. In a minority of lessons teaching makes insufficient use of assessment to support learning during the course of a lesson and there is insufficient challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teachers make good use of visual images to demonstrate new learning and concepts pictorially.
- However, there are missed opportunities for enhancing the language development of pupils, particularly those in the early stages of language acquisition and some teachers do not take full advantage of the range of multicultural materials available to them.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The quality of the curriculum for ICT is good.

- The school has made good use of external source material to supplement and improve the quality of the ICT curriculum. However curriculum provision for control and use of data logging is limited at Key Stage 2.
- The application of ICT across the curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils to make choices, be creative and be innovative. A good example is the creation of multi-media presentations in Year 6.
- The school has made good progress in embedding ICT in other subjects but further developments are constrained due to the small size of the ICT suite and the limited access that pupils have to ICT on a day to day basis.
- Pupils would welcome more use of ICT in class based lessons; they would also appreciate having ICT clubs during as well as out of school hours.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are good.

- The coordinator has developed her role well and is having a positive impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning in ICT and in helping to raise standards.
- There is effective monitoring and rigorous self-evaluation of ICT. This has ensured that senior leaders have an accurate view of the strengths in ICT and areas in need of further development. The strategic leadership of ICT includes the headteacher but does not include a nominated member of the governing body.
- Although the school has its own dedicated website it requires further development if it is to provide parents with sufficient information about how they can support their children's learning.
- ICT is an integral and successful part of the school's inclusion strategy.

Impact of ICT on whole school improvement

The impact of ICT on whole school improvement is good.

- Good leadership and management as well as very effective external and technical support, have enabled the school to make good use of ICT in a range of contexts.
- The increased application of ICT for teaching purposes has helped to make learning more meaningful and enjoyable, and is contributing to good levels of progress in subjects other than ICT.
- ICT is being used well as a management and administrative tool. Senior leaders and coordinators are able to interrogate data to identify those at risk of underachieving and to track and monitor pupils' progress more purposefully.

- Staff at all levels make effective use of ICT to reduce paperwork and otherwise labour intensive tasks. A good example is the ease with which planning documents can be amended and updated.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving the provision for control technology in Key Stage 2
- ensuring pupils know the level at which they are working and what they need to do to progress to the next level of the ICT curriculum
- embedding the use of assessment to support learning during the course of a lesson and ensure there is sufficient challenge for the most able pupils
- ensuring teaching takes full advantage of the opportunities within ICT to meet the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language, especially for those who are in the early stages of fluency.

We also discussed the benefits of the school allocating a link governor to ICT.

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

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector