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Mr Wretham
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Wretham

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 13 March 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 interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievements and standards in ICT are good.

- By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards of attainment in ICT are above average. This represents good achievement. Pupils make excellent progress with their ICT communication skills. They import graphics and video clips into their presentations which are of a high standard. Younger pupils are confident users of video cameras and photo-editing software.
- Pupils make effective use of the internet to research topics. More able pupils summarise their findings whilst lower attaining pupils tend to

download chunks of information and paste directly into their work without editing.

- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of data logging techniques is broadly average. They have few opportunities to discover how these systems are used.
- Pupils' personal development is excellent. Through the ICT 'buddies' scheme, older pupils support younger pupils. They help younger pupils to investigate some of the more advanced features of the software applications.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and make good provision for pupils of differing capabilities. Full account is taken of the range of learning needs and all pupils are expected, helped and encouraged to do their best.
- Teachers sometimes provide pupils with clear guidance and helpful checklists of the key features of a piece of work. However, assessment practice is not consistent between teachers. This means pupils are not sufficiently clear how well they have done or what could be improved.
- Good use is made of the interactive white boards. Pupils engage in activities that encourage them to illustrate key ICT concepts to other pupils.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Well planned links between ICT and other subjects from across the curriculum are enabling pupils to gain a wider knowledge of how ICT impacts on commerce and industry. In design and technology, pupils use ICT to record, edit and produce a presentation based on the production of bread.
- A clear focus on improving pupils' literacy skills through ICT activities is paying dividends. Pupils enjoy using communication software that enables them to tell a story using animation techniques.
- Gifted and talented pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to really excel and reach the very highest levels.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to investigate and use data logging techniques.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management are good.

- The self evaluation process is very effective. Two years ago you realised that the school was falling behind other schools with ICT developments. There is now a coherent and well co-ordinated strategy for improvement.

- ICT is a central pillar of senior leaders' drive to improve standards of attainment across the school. To this end, leaders continue to be successful.
- ICT resources are much improved. Arrangements for staff training and development are good.

Impact of ICT on whole school improvement

ICT is being used very effectively to improve pupils' standards in a whole range of subjects. Art benefits from pupils' being able use the internet to support their studies on the styles of various artists. Pupils are improving their literacy skills through drafting and redrafting of their work using word processors.

Inclusion

The subject's contribution to the inclusion of pupils is good. Pupils with learning difficulties have good access to ICT resources. Specialist software applications support pupils effectively. Teaching assistants help pupils to use ICT effectively. The curriculum is well matched to the needs of these pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- providing gifted and talented pupils with more opportunities to excel and reach the very highest levels
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use and investigate data logging techniques
- ensuring a more consistent approach to the assessment of pupils' ICT capabilities.

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

David Cox
Additional Inspector