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21 February 2008

Ms J Corby  
Headteacher  
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Putney Common  
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Dear Ms Corby

Ofsted survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 12 February to look at work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject the visit had a particular focus on our current survey theme: provision for independent learning. 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.

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 three lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good. Standards are outstanding.

- Attainment on entry to the school is above average. Some pupils have high attainment.
- Progress is at least good, despite the impact of high mobility in years 2 to 5, when a significant number of pupils who attain highly enter the private sector.
- In 2007, standards were well above average at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, standards were also well above average at Level 4+ and significantly so at Level 5.
- Standards of speaking are very good and standards of listening are good. Pupils are confident, competent and clear speakers, engage in discussion readily and use a wide vocabulary. They listen to others

respectfully and well, although some pupils struggle with sustained listening.

- Writing demonstrates good vocabulary, but contains a range of common spelling errors.
- English makes an outstanding contribution to personal development, particularly through excellent collaborative work; during circle time and opportunities to philosophise; from active involvement in class councils; through responsibilities in school, and from talking partners and reading buddies.

### Quality of teaching and learning of English

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and some is outstanding.

- Lessons are interesting, stimulating and enjoyable. They are planned and resourced very well, carefully differentiated, appropriately challenging and meet the needs of all learners.
- Skills are very carefully and thoroughly taught and effective questioning, explanations and discussion are used well to further learning.
- Teachers have high expectations, good subject knowledge and use a wide range of strategies that promote independent learning.
- Individual targets, highly supportive and usually formative marking and self and peer assessment ensure pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are enthusiastic about work in English, keen to learn and motivated to improve.
- Teaching assistants contribute significantly to learning.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- The curriculum is carefully structured for breadth, balance and progression and includes good opportunities for ICT, drama, media, creativity and cultural provision.
- Skills are systematically mapped, cross-curricular links are made well and reinforce literacy, and very good opportunities for speaking and listening and good enrichment activities enhance and develop learning.
- Well planned and well delivered interventions show at least good gains in learning for targeted pupils and higher attaining pupils are challenged well.

### Leadership and management of English

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- The school demonstrates very strong commitment to ensuring that all pupils make significant progress.
- Very good leadership, judicious investment in professional development for teachers and support staff, good guidance for parents and productive partnerships with other schools ensure consistently high quality provision and contribute to outstanding standards.
- There is a very clear sense of direction for English, an accurate understanding of strengths and weaknesses, clear priorities, precisely targeted planning for improving achievement and attainment further, and very good arrangements for monitoring and evaluation.
- Performance data are analysed and used very well to inform continuous improvement and prompt action addresses underachievement.

### Provision for independent learning

Provision for independent learning is outstanding.

- The school works very hard to develop independent attitudes. Provision is built into planning for lessons, homework tasks and assessment for learning. Some classrooms provide an excellent interactive environment for independent learning of literacy.
- Pupils enjoy English, gain significantly in confidence and apply what they have been taught effectively.
- ICT provides good opportunities for individual work and research.
- The school promotes, monitors and challenges pupils' independent reading very well.
- Teachers provide very good support with writing for those who need it, while others write with increasing independence across a range of genres.
- Very good provision for speaking and listening enables pupils to speak openly and very well. They enjoy discussion and are confident and articulate in identifying the positive impact of English on their learning and development.

### Inclusion

Inclusion is outstanding.

- The school is very responsive to the needs of individual pupils and supports and celebrates their achievements in English very well.
- Progress is tracked very carefully and prompt, well targeted interventions and personalised support successfully closes gaps in learning and extends provision for higher achieving pupils.
- Outstanding relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves contribute significantly to the very positive ethos for learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to improve achievement as identified by the school, with particular reference to spelling.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop English in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term and made available to the team for the next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Rosemary Matthews  
Her Majesty's Inspector