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Mrs M Strawbridge
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Strawbridge

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 13 March 2008 to look at work in citizenship.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, 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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of assembly and four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are outstanding.

- Pupils have a very good understanding of many aspects of the citizenship curriculum, particularly concerning environmental matters and what it means to be a responsible citizen.
- Pupils are happy and willing to contribute to discussions and debates and work together co-operatively and effectively. They take every opportunity to reflect upon their work and strive to make it the best it can be.

- Pupils are articulate, confident and respectful.
- Pupils use the internet well and produce fine examples of extended writing following their discussions and research.
- Older pupils make an excellent contribution to the school community in numerous ways such as by serving on the School Council or the ECO committee, becoming play leaders or buddies and being paired readers with pupils in Year 1.
- The democratically elected school council provides an effective voice for pupils who feel valued and consulted. Minutes of their meetings reflect full and thoughtful discussions.
- Pupils take part in many fun-raising activities and support charities such as wateraid in Africa and the local St John's Ambulance brigade.

Quality of teaching and learning of citizenship

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

- Personal, social, health and citizenship aims are included in all lesson planning. Specific citizenship lesson planning responds instantly to local and wider topical issues.
- Teaching is stimulating, engages the pupils through a wide range of strategies and provides plenty of opportunities for reflection and discussion.
- Pupils are challenged to become independent learners with a strong emphasis on investigation work.
- Excellent relationships, praise and encouragement ensure that pupils are confident and secure in offering their opinions in lessons.
- Assessment is good. Pupils know how well they are doing and how to improve their work. Teachers identify pupils who need extra support and ensure that it is provided.
- Parents are kept informed about their children's progress and activities in citizenship.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding.

- The promotion of pupils' personal development and preparing them for a future role as active citizens is at the heart of all the school's work.
- Displays around school are vibrant and exciting with local and international elements and a strong focus on concern for the environment.
- The citizenship curriculum starts in the Foundation stage. Children learn to answer the register in French and Spanish and learn songs in these languages. Visits from different professionals such as a radiographer and environmental health officer open the eyes of the youngest children to other cultures and the wider world.
- Pre-school children are linked with pupils in Year 5 and engage in many activities together. These partnerships continue into Reception and Year 6 and benefit younger and older pupils.
- The curriculum is planned to allow for re-visiting topics and progression.

- The curriculum is planned to ensure that pupils use information and communication technology as often as possible.
- The school has excellent links with other organisations so that there are many opportunities for pupils to contribute to the local community. These include, for example, care homes and bi-annual visits to meet the mayor and other members of the local council. Many visitors come into school to share their experiences and expertise.

Leadership and management of citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- The emphasis on the importance of citizenship pervades the entire work of the school and is very well led by you, the deputy head and governors.
- Termly reports on achievements and progress in every subject are made to the governors including personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- The subject co-ordinator's file is a model of good practice. There is skilful blending of provision for pupils' personal development, total compliance with the Every Child Matters agenda and a curriculum designed to prepare pupils for their lives as active citizens and to develop a keen sense of responsibility.
- Senior managers monitor provision, teaching, learning and outcomes in citizenship and constantly seek to improve it.
- Staff training is provided at all levels. The subject is well-funded so that the school has built up a good range of resources.

Subject issue: teaching and learning about Britain's diversity

There is no planned programme to educate pupils about Britain's ethnic diversity, although the school seeks constantly to broaden pupils' horizons through the study of other cultures. There are projects on African and Aboriginal art and pupils have the opportunity to learn French. In religious education pupils study Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam in addition to Christianity. Pupils say they would like more opportunities to meet representatives from other faiths and ethnic groups within the United Kingdom.

Inclusion

Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support. Every pupil is known and valued as an individual. Work is planned to take account of pupils' different levels of ability to allow every child to do their best. Pupils do projects on their local area and have a strong identity within the local community.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- explore opportunities for pupils to meet and talk with representatives from other faiths and ethnic groups.

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

Judith Straw
Additional Inspector