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Dear Miss Jones

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement and standards in ICT are good

- Attainment on entry is below average.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with the national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 1 display good levels of confidence and competence when using ICT. They use a range of software and can control programmable toys to carry out simple sequences of moves. Junior pupils show confidence in the use of a wide range of applications. They clearly enjoy their work in ICT and collaborate well, showing sensitivity when peer assessing one another's work.

- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) are well supported with their independent work in ICT and make similarly good progress to all other pupils.
- ICT is regularly used to support work in other subjects and has a positive impact on standards throughout the school.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Pupils behave very well because of good teaching and motivating learning experiences. They clearly enjoy ICT learning activities and apply considerable effort in their work.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge of ICT. Interactive whiteboards are used routinely in most classes to structure lessons with presentations and to enhance teaching and learning.
- Planning meets the needs of most pupils well. Those with LDD are well supported by teaching assistants and a range of differentiated learning resources.
- Teachers regularly plan effectively the use ICT to support work in subjects across the curriculum.
- Feedback to pupils about how to improve their work is good. Pupils' progress is regularly assessed by teachers and peer reviews are common.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Thoughtfully modified national units of work are used well to cover all the strands of the ICT programme of study.
- The ICT curriculum is easy to access for all groups of learners including those with special educational needs.
- A good balance of presentation, information handling, modelling and control activities are provided for most pupils.
- At Key Stage 2 there are insufficient opportunities for the use of analogue sensors to monitor external events.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are good.

- There is a shared vision to provide high quality ICT experiences for all pupils at the school. ICT is given a high priority within the school improvement plan and its budget allocation.
- Resources at the school are modern, flexible and reliable. Systems are regularly evaluated and developed to meet changing needs.
- Good use is made of a shared technician system to keep the burden of maintenance away from teachers.
- The subject leader has good specialist knowledge and disseminates this well to colleagues, providing much useful ICT professional development 'in-house'.

- Summative assessment procedures are currently insufficiently well developed to provide a clear picture of ICT attainment across the years.

Impact of ICT on whole-school improvement

- The professional development needs of teachers are well met enabling high quality use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum, raising standards.
- High quality ICT resources support enrichment of the curriculum through a variety of innovative projects including liaisons between pupils in a partner school in Malawi. Pupils clearly enjoy their work with ICT and are very well motivated by it.
- Management information and pupil tracking systems support the work of the school effectively. These systems are regularly reviewed and improved and upgrades to both have taken place recently. This enables early identification of any under-achievement and effective intervention and support for pupils.
- Electronic home / school liaison is currently limited by the out of date web site and the lack of home access to school based learning resources on the network.

Inclusion

- Pupils with LDD use self evaluating software which has had a positive impact on their literacy levels.
- ICT learning activities are very well planned and differentiated to meet the needs of the learners.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- assessing the standards attained in ICT by pupils to National Curriculum levels
- developing the use of data logging at Key Stage 2 to enable pupils to use analogue sensors in experiments
- improving communication systems and the organisation of learning resources by updating the school web site and implementing a VLE.

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

Ralph Lilley
Additional Inspector