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06 June 2008

Mrs A Clayton
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Dear Mrs Clayton

Ofsted survey inspection programme – history

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

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on information and communication technology (ICT) in history and on the provision for gifted and talented history pupils.

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 you, some staff and pupils, a scrutiny of relevant documentation, an analysis of pupils' work, the observation of two discussions with pupils led by their teachers and the observation of one lesson.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Pupils of all ages are making good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the various programmes of study.
- Pupils in Year 2, for example, know the salient features of the life of Florence Nightingale and understand how she improved the nursing care of soldiers in the Crimean war. Pupils in Year 4 are knowledgeable about aspects of the Second World War, while those in Year 5 have an in-depth understanding of the effects of the plague on the Derbyshire village of Eyam. Some have good knowledge and understanding of life

in Ancient Egypt. Pupils in Year 6 know about the lives of Native Americans, both before and after the coming of the Europeans.

- Pupils understand the importance of using historical sources and can identify some of these, for example primary and secondary sources. Many know that sources need to be treated with care and are aware of bias. However, their historical skills need broader development.
- Those pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well known to the teachers. Six pupils have statements of special educational needs and they are well supported by additional staff.
- Other pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are routinely identified and appropriate activities are planned for them in their day-to-day learning.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are keen to ask and answer questions in whole-class discussions. They work well with each other and with the adults. They maintain their concentration on the tasks set. They thoroughly enjoy learning history.

Quality of teaching and learning of history

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Pupils make good progress over time and enjoy learning the subject.
- The pupils' work is regularly marked and assessed. Levels of attainment are routinely identified and targets for improvement set. Pupils find these useful and say that it helps them to improve their work.
- Teaching assistants work intensively with identified pupils and offer them good support. The pupils make good progress as a result.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- The school is using a topic based approach to cover the requirements of the programmes of study and some good links have been developed with English, for example, to improve pupils' literacy skills. The topic-based approach, however, has been planned in isolation from secondary schools and the requirements at Key Stage 3 which could lead to duplication in coverage.
- The curriculum is enriched by regular visits to places of historical interest, for instance to the Peak District and to Shugborough Hall. As a result of such visits, pupils are developing a good understanding of local history.
- In addition, the school invites external visitors who broaden the pupils' experiences, for example inviting people pretending to be Vikings. The pupils say how much they enjoy the visits and meeting such visitors.

Leadership and management of history

The leadership and management of history are good.

- You manage the subject in this small school and you do this extremely well. You have a good overview of provision across the school through a regular scrutiny of the pupils' work and the examination of pupils' levels of attainment in history which are regularly identified by the teachers.
- You have good knowledge and understanding of strengths in the subject and areas that need further development.

Subject issue: ICT

- The use of ICT is good with outstanding features.
- Pupils of all ages regularly use the Internet for research purposes and they are developing their ICT skills extremely well. They can use Clipart, can competently create presentations about historical topics using digital photography and can make video presentations. They thoroughly enjoy using this technology and say it makes learning fun for them.

Subject issue: provision for gifted and talented pupils in history

- The school has a register for gifted and talented pupils but no pupil yet is identified as such for history. However, the needs of the higher attainers generally are met well through the range of varied activities that are set in the subject, for example through research-based work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included the need to:

- broaden and strengthen pupils' skills in history
- ensure there is greater curriculum continuity and progression between Key Stages 2 and 3.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop history 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

Champak Chauhan
Her Majesty's Inspector