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Mrs R White  
Headteacher  
Bishopthorpe Infant School  
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Dear Mrs White

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit to your school on 6 May to look at work in science.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of science, the visit had a particular focus on transition within and between phases; the range of learning experiences; the status and use of SC1.

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 and the science subject leader, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of parts of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards are higher than the national average. Achievement is good.

- Standards are significantly higher than the national average for reading, writing and mathematics and have been so for three years in succession.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work showed standards to be well above national average expected for each year group.
- In lessons pupils are seen to be making good progress and to be working above expected levels.
- In all lessons seen pupils' behaviour was good and they were applying themselves well to the work.

- Pupils are making good progress in personal development, taking on different roles and working well in collaboration with others.
- Pupils responded confidently and articulately to my questions.

### Quality of teaching and learning of science

The quality of teaching and learning are good.

- The teaching and learning observed were good overall.
- Teachers have clear objectives and focus on the needs of individuals in the class.
- There is a secure and systematic assessment strategy that is well recorded and the data gathered is used both for reporting on performance and form planning teaching.
- Arrangements for transition are good and evidence of performance is well organised and moderated effectively.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.
- Much of the science has a good emphasis on science process and skills.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about the work and promote good understanding through effective questioning.

### Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum provided is good.

- The planning covers the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- The pupils are provided with a good range of activities and learning experiences, many of them relating well to everyday life.
- There are good enrichment activities, visits out of the classroom to a range of sites including the local environment.
- There are good links made between science and other curriculum areas.
- Currently there are no extra-curricular activities for science.

### Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management of science are outstanding.

- You combine the role of science co-ordinator with that of headteacher very effectively.
- The documentation for science is detailed and supportive and based on a very good understanding of science and how pupils learn.
- You are well supported by the governing body and the chair who acts as the link governor to science.
- The climate of review and self-evaluation is strong and underpins a rational approach to development planning.
- The organisation and deployment of teaching assistants is very effective and their taking on a specialist area such as science is a strength.
- Planning recognises links between subjects that are beneficial. While your long term planning secures the coverage of the National

Curriculum, the collaborative planning at medium term and individual class teacher planning at the short term promote innovation.

## Inclusion

Inclusion in the school is good.

- Teachers show good practice in the inclusion of pupils in work, with no disadvantage to particular groups being evident.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work shows that all groups of pupils are making similar progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- sharing planning between teachers of different classes to share good practice and secure continuity
- developing some extra-curricular provision for science.

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

Ian Richardson  
Her Majesty's Inspector