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Mrs D Collinson
Headteacher
Harrow Gate Primary School
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Dear Mrs Collinson

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 July 2008 to look at work in English.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: discussions with several members of staff and pupils from Year 5-6, and scrutiny of documentation and pupils' work.

Features of good practice observed

- The English curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and this is contributing to current very good rates of progress.
- Effective leadership is at the heart of the significant improvement in English over recent years. You have taken a key role in placing English at the centre of the school's work and creating an effective leadership team. The subject leader and the rest of the team are knowledgeable and passionate about the subject and committed to continuing improvement. This has led to a consistency of approach across the school and a shared sense of purpose.
- There are some significant strengths to the English curriculum. This includes a real emphasis on speaking and listening shown in the use of role play across all classes, good quality planning and effective teacher modelling. The school has also worked hard and successfully to develop pupils' interest in reading. The Reading Contract has had a positive effect on engaging both pupils and parents in promoting wide reading. Other effective features of practice include regular time taken listening to

children read and the use of class readers. Information and communication technology (ICT) also supports learning in English well.

- The school has an effective approach to marking and target setting. This helps pupils to understand what they need to do next. The policy involves very clear learning outcomes for pupils in all lessons against which their written work is closely marked. Teachers provide detailed feedback against pupils' progress in relation to their outcomes, identifying the strengths and weaknesses in their work. Clear learning targets are then agreed with pupils. Pupils understand the system well.

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

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Philip Jarrett HMI
Subject Adviser for English