

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs B Dandy
Headteacher
Oakhill Primary School
Hawksworth
Glascote Heath
Tamworth
B77 2HH

Dear Mrs Dandy

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 July to look at work in information communication and technology (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 quality of assessment.

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 children, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement and standards are good.

- The Early Years staff visits all families at home before they start in the Nursery. This enables the school to survey the range of technology children have access to at home and what they are and are not able to use. This initial assessment shows that attainment on entry in ICT is well below average.
- Children make very good progress from the Nursery to the end of Key Stage 1 because teaching is good and teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge. At this point children are confident in

accessing their files on the network, editing text and in using digital cameras and floor robots.

- Children's progress levels off during Key Stage 2 due to past limitations in staff subject knowledge. Nevertheless, because children made such good progress at Key Stage 1 and considering their starting points, achievement overall from when children join the school to when they leave is good. Standards are broadly average.
- The majority of children spoken to are aware of the need not to reveal personal information about themselves when on online.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

Teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers plan thematic units of work bringing together skills from several different subjects including ICT. The school has deliberately ensured that not all ICT resources are located in the computer suites so that there are several computers and laptops available in every classroom. This accessibility of ICT means it is used frequently and widely, by children, to improve their learning when working in a range of subjects.
- A recent focus on staff training has improved teachers' subject knowledge and expertise. This is too recent to have impacted on children's standards at Key Stage 2.
- Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make the same good progress as other children because of the good extra support they receive from a teaching assistant.
- Sometimes higher attaining children are insufficiently challenged because the tasks they are given result in them rehearsing skills they have already mastered outside school.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- The statutory National Curriculum for ICT is provided although some aspects are better covered than others particularly at Key Stage 2.
- The Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1 curriculum is good. Children have a rich variety of technological experiences and teacher subject knowledge and expertise at this level is good.
- At Key Stage 2 there is good provision for children to develop their skills in using ICT for communicating and presenting their work. However, provision for controlling events and modelling is only satisfactory. This is partly because the school has had insufficient resources to teach these aspects of ICT well and partly because teachers lacked the knowledge required. These deficiencies are now being addressed.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management are good.

- You have made the development of ICT provision a high priority for the school. Use of a national ICT self-evaluation tool has given you a good grasp of the school's strengths and weaknesses. An ICT action plan, which is linked to the school development plan, sets out the priorities for improvement. The plan is sensible about what can be realistically achieved in the timescales and is carefully costed. You have sought and obtained additional funding to be able to implement some of the school's more costly aspirations. Developing children's ICT capability is given the same high importance as developing their literacy and numeracy skills.
- Children now have access to more ICT resources in their classrooms which they are increasingly using to improve their learning in other subjects. An audit of staff expertise has enabled targeted training to be provided and some teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in using some aspects of ICT has improved. Consequently the quality of teaching and learning is improving and teachers feel able to offer a more challenging ICT curriculum which is under preparation for delivery from September 2008.
- You regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of provision. Teachers' planning is checked and the quality of children's ICT work is evaluated to ensure provision is improving.

Use of Assessment

Assessment is good.

- Each unit of work has specific learning objectives for ICT which are shared with children when it is introduced. Children are clear about what they are expected to be able to do by the end of the unit. There are well established systems for children to evaluate their own progress and to show their teachers evidence of what they claim they can do.
- In Year 6 children are given time limited tasks to complete which are rigorously assessed against National Curriculum levels.
- Teachers record the range of ICT experiences children have accessed along with an evaluation of the skills they have acquired and those they have still to achieve. These assessments are monitored through the school's tracking system so that information about which children are meeting their targets and which are falling behind is readily available. Children are given further opportunities and extra support where they are identified as not meeting the learning objectives.
- Assessment of children's work is moderated and standardised at regular meetings within the school and at meetings with neighbouring primary schools. This ensures assessment information is consistent and reliable within the cluster of primary schools whose children go on to join the same secondary school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- maintaining the very good progress made by children in ICT at Key Stage 1 through into Key Stage 2
- improving the provision for children to learn about controlling events, modelling and handling data at Key Stage 2

- taking into account the skills children have acquired from outside school when planning challenging work for the higher attainers.

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.

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

Yours sincerely

David Anstead
Her Majesty's Inspector