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10 June 2008

Mrs Reay  
Headteacher  
Valley Primary School and Nursery  
Whinlatter Road  
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Cumbria  
CA28 8DA

Dear Mrs Reay

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Information communication and technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 09 June 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 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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Standards are broadly in line with the national average. Achievement is satisfactory.

- Attainment on entry in ICT is variable. In some year groups attainment on entry is broadly average, in other year groups it is well below average.
- Year 6 have reached standards which are broadly average which means, given their starting points, they have made satisfactory progress during Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
- The pupils are well behaved in ICT lessons. They share the ICT resources and work well together to ensure they have fair access. The pupils are polite and work well with the staff.

- The work completed on budgeting using spreadsheets contributes satisfactorily to the pupils' future economic well-being.
- The pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities were able to make the same progress as their peers because of the support they received in the lessons.
- The pupils enjoy using ICT in all their lessons.

#### Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory.

- Lessons are well planned and organised.
- Staff have good subject knowledge and are confident in their use of ICT.
- In the lessons visited the progress of the pupils was satisfactory. This is because the pupils were able to confidently use the ICT equipment to complete the tasks set. However in some lessons, due to a reliance on commercial packages, all the pupils completed the same tasks and this limited the progress they made.
- The scrutiny of pupils' work showed the pupils use ICT regularly and are confident in their use of ICT.

#### Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- All the pupils receive their statutory entitlement to the National Curriculum for ICT.
- Pupils learn basic programming and control technology by controlling a 'turtle' on the computer screen. This basic knowledge and understanding in Year 4 is developed through specific teaching of control technology and data logging in Year 6.
- There is a well established link with the local secondary school whereby pupils from your school visit the secondary school to develop their ICT ability particularly in control technology.
- The curriculum is enhanced by the secondary school teachers coming to teach Year 6 pupils at your school before they transfer. This also develops the pupils' self esteem and confidence.
- Most staff are very reliant on commercial packages to deliver the ICT curriculum. This means that the curriculum and some lessons do not always meet the needs and interests of the pupils. You are aware of this and the need to develop the curriculum.

#### Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- There is a clear and comprehensive vision for ICT development in your school.
- Staff training needs are audited regularly and training is in place. This has impacted on the teaching and learning of ICT and the use of ICT in other

subjects. Staff are now more confident about using ICT in their lessons and this has improved the pace of the lessons and the behaviour of the pupils.

- You are also using ICT to monitor and track pupils' personal development in the school. This is enhancing the contact that you have with parents and has improved the pupils' behaviour.
- You are also aware of the need to develop links with the community and are offering basic ICT skills classes from September 2008 to the parents of pupils at the school.

## Use of Assessment

Assessment of ICT is inadequate.

- The marking of the work presented was variable. Some marking clearly explained what the pupils were able to do in ICT but some was based around developing the pupils' literacy knowledge and understanding rather than their ICT. Very little of the work had comments on it which informed the pupils what they needed to do to improve their ICT work.
- Many pupils were unable to say what they needed to do to improve their ICT work.
- The progress pupils are making is tracked by each teacher. It is monitored by the ICT co-ordinator. However because the tracking does not relate to the National Curriculum level the pupils are not aware of what level they are at in ICT.
- The pupils are not set individual targets for improvement in ICT.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing the curriculum to more accurately meet the need and interests of your pupils
- ensuring that the pupils are aware of the level they are working at in ICT and their target level for ICT
- ensuring that the pupils know and understand what they have to do to reach their target level.

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

Tanya Harber Stuart  
Her Majesty's Inspector