

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



11 June 2008

Mr K Storey
Headteacher
Brougham Primary School
Brougham Terrace
Hartlepool
TS24 8EY

Dear Mr Storey

Ofsted survey inspection programme – history

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 04 June 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 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 staff and pupils, a scrutiny of relevant documentation, an analysis of pupils' work and visits to two literacy lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards are average but pupils' achievement is good.

- Pupils are acquiring a good understanding of the topics they have studied and can talk knowledgeably and confidently about the individuals they have researched and the periods they have covered.
- Pupils' skills in asking questions, handling evidence and communicating what they have discovered, both orally and on paper, are being developed well. However, their abilities to make connections between topics and to work independently are underdeveloped.
- History makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils say that history is 'fun' and they are fascinated by learning what has happened in the past because it helps them to 'understand their world'. They particularly enjoy lessons which involve local history. Their behaviour is good and they take pride in their work.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons focus on key objectives, and a range of stimulating activities helps to engage pupils in their work and to maintain their interest. The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully considered but expectations of the most able pupils are not high enough because their needs are not sufficiently considered in the planning.
- Teachers have become more enthusiastic about teaching history since a revised curriculum was introduced two years ago and they are willing and keen to update their knowledge and skills.
- Pupils' work in history is regularly marked, comments are helpful and teachers give much praise. However, the comments do not relate often enough to history. As a result, pupils are not always clear about how to improve their work.
- The school has recently revised its systems for assessing pupils' progress in history according to National Curriculum levels. This work is in its early stages.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- For the last two years history has been taught within an integrated structure which links subjects to themes. The school is coming to the end of the first cycle of this rolling two-year curriculum and both teachers and pupils say how much they enjoy this approach. Plans are in place to review the history units covered to ensure that the statutory requirements are fully met and that the most appropriate topics are taught within each year group.
- Cross-curricular links are strong and help to support pupils' learning. Literacy, for example, is developed effectively in history in all year groups.
- Learning outside the classroom makes a significant contribution to the interest and engagement of pupils who have been on history visits. Year 4 pupils, for example, enthused about going to museums in Hartlepool and Beamish and this interest was reflected in the high standards of written work some pupils produced. However, the pupils do not benefit from an even spread of visits across all year groups. The school is aware of this and plans to review the timing and nature of these activities.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of history are good.

- The subject leader and the assistant headteacher have worked hard to develop the integrated curriculum and the revised assessment

procedures. Long term plans are thorough and the subject is extremely well organised.

- Record keeping is detailed and the digital photographs of historical activities help to provide the school with an accurate and fascinating record of pupils' learning. Resources are pooled and the communal topic boxes are a useful and effective resource facility for all teachers.
- The school has an accurate picture of the strengths and areas for development in history and appreciates, for example, that gifted history pupils require greater challenge. It is also aware that the role of the subject coordinator is underdeveloped, especially in relation to the monitoring of teaching and learning as a means of spreading good practice.

Subject issue: ICT

The use of ICT in history is good.

- Teachers use ICT regularly and pupils appreciate how this technology supports their learning.
- Pupils are developing their ICT skills well. They use computers for research, to produce assignments and to create their own multimedia presentations.

Subject issue: provision for gifted and talented history pupils

The provision for gifted history pupils is satisfactory.

- Although teachers adjust activities to meet the needs of different children, they do not indicate clearly what is expected of gifted history pupils. As a result, opportunities to challenge these pupils to attain even higher standards are missed.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving marking and written feedback to ensure that pupils are given precise advice on how they can improve their work in history
- improving the provision and support for gifted history pupils.

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

Michael Maddison
Her Majesty's Inspector
Ofsted's Specialist Adviser for History