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12 June 2008

Mrs J Arrowsmith  
Headteacher  
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PO18 8DR

Dear Mrs Arrowsmith

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 9 June to look at work in science.

As I outlined, 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, the science subject leader, other teachers, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of parts of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards in science are in line with the national average. Achievement is good.

- The overall attainment of pupils entering the school is just above the national average.
- By the end of Year 6, pupils who have been in the school from Foundation stage show good attainment with almost all reaching at nationally expected levels or higher.

- In recent years several pupils have left and others come into the school. This movement has impacted on the standards pupils reach.
- Overall progress made by pupils in science is good.
- The scrutiny of pupils' work shows that by Year 6 their work is completed, well presented and gives evidence of a good range of activity in science.
- Science makes an important contribution to developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to keep safe and live a healthy lifestyle.
- Pupils enjoy science. Their behaviour in lessons is good and they demonstrate good attitudes to learning.
- The work in science which is well contextualised is contributing satisfactorily to pupils' future economic well-being.

### Quality of teaching and learning of science

The quality of teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are enthusiastic about science.
- There are good, positive relationships between teachers and pupils in lessons.
- Lessons are well planned and provide a suitable range of learning opportunities and there is a good emphasis on teaching through practical activities although the learning intentions that underpin practical work are not always clearly linked to the associated investigative skills.
- Opportunities are sometimes missed for turning ordinary practical activities into real investigations that could excite and engage the pupils.
- Pupils' work is thoroughly marked although techniques for formative assessment to help learning in science are underdeveloped. There were good examples of teachers' interventions helping pupils to understand.

### Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum in science is satisfactory.

- The science curriculum is organised using QCA schemes of work adapted to the needs of the school. Planning is thorough and covers all aspects of the content of the National Curriculum.
- Planning for scientific enquiry is not as detailed and there is no clear overview of progression in development of scientific skills.
- The school's environmental area provides a wealth of opportunities for scientific activities, particularly those associated with life and living processes.
- In the Foundation Stage pupils are given many good opportunities for developing knowledge and understanding through exploration and play.

- The school organises two science days each year. These provide very good opportunities for extending different aspects of science and including outside visits, visitors and activities.

#### Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management of science are good.

- The science coordinator has a clear view of the subject-specific strengths and areas for development, thus maintaining an overview of the curriculum across the school.
- Individual teachers track pupils' progress in science through the use of teacher assessments and tests. However, central collection of pupils' assessment data and passing them from one year to the next as they move through the school is at an early stage of development.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- linking all practical activities to attainment targets for scientific enquiry so that progress in this areas can be easily tracked
- developing investigative science so that pupils are given more opportunities develop the full range of investigative skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones  
Her Majesty's Inspector