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Mr M Mountcastle  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Mountcastle

Ofsted 2007-08 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 9 June 2008 to look at work in citizenship.

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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of six lessons and assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be good with outstanding features.

#### Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Pupils are articulate and confident and express their views well.
- The contribution of citizenship to pupils' personal development is outstanding.
- The pupils are interested in their local and wider communities and keen to make a contribution to their area. The Lowry style mural, 'Going to Church' which decorates one wall of the school hall is a fitting celebration of the strong sense of community in school.
- Pupils engage in a wide range of fund-raising activities and understand the importance of the work of different charities. For example, every year the school supports the 'Send a Cow to Africa' initiative.
- Pupils have a good understanding of important issues such as democracy, the need to conserve the environment and the sensible use of resources.

- The school encourages discussion and debate and the pupils are good at expressing their views and listening to the views of others.
- Pupils use information technology well to research ideas and present their findings.
- Pupils have a reasonable understanding of the different faiths practised in Britain today and the many diverse cultural backgrounds of British citizens.
- The democratically elected School Council is effective in voicing the views of pupils and is rightly proud of its achievements.

## Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers plan lessons which encourage pupils to participate and discuss topical matters.
- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use a range of interesting and stimulating resources including a wide range of information communication technology (ICT) resources.
- Teachers deal well with sensitive and controversial issues. They make sure that all discussions are well balanced and that pupils understand that there can be two sides to an argument.
- Good relationships across the school ensure that pupils learn in a friendly, safe and stimulating environment which they clearly enjoy.
- Assessment is good. As well as teacher assessments, pupils assess their own and each others' work.
- Good support is offered to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Just occasionally the pace slows if pupils are not given sufficient challenge.

## Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- Citizenship aims and objectives underpin all lesson planning and the school takes very seriously its responsibility to prepare pupils to play their part as active citizens.
- The school is developing a cross-curricular approach through themed work to allow teachers and pupils to investigate topics in greater breadth and depth. Sometimes, however, pupils are not made aware of the citizenship dimension and they cannot say how well they are doing in citizenship-related work.
- The curriculum uses many local issues as topics for discussion so that pupils feel that they are fully involved in the development of their area and that their voice is heard.
- The curriculum provides an outstanding range of opportunities for pupils to participate in active citizenship within school and beyond it.
- The school is actively promoting links with France, Italy, Japan and Eritrea.

## Leadership and management

The leadership and management of citizenship are good.

- The school ethos puts Christian values of fairness and justice at the heart of its vision.
- All leaders ensure that the school fulfils the ideals of the Every Child Matters agenda and develop in pupils and staff a keen sense of responsibility.
- You manage this curriculum area well, working with other senior managers to monitor teaching, learning and outcomes in citizenship and constantly seeking to improve it.
- Self-evaluation is strong and there is good capacity for further improvement.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- to ensure that pupils are aware of how well they are doing in specific citizenship topics.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop citizenship 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

Judith Straw  
Additional Inspector