

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



16 July 2008

Mrs E Holdsworth and Mr N Tildsley
Headteachers
John Donne Primary School
Woods Road
London
SE15 2SW

Dear Mrs Holdsworth and Mr Tildsley

Ofsted survey inspection programme – citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 14 July 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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of parts of three lessons, the family lunch service in the nursery and a whole school assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- You rightly describe the school council as 'flourishing'. Pupils make presentations to seek election to the council and, through this, understand the meaning of democracy. They take their responsibilities seriously and much has been done in response to the council's suggestions.
- Is it a valuable experience for some Years 5 and 6 pupils to participate in the local authority's annual pupil voice survey.
- Pupils have a strong sense of responsibilities being linked to rights, for example Year 6 pupils are expected to 'earn' their 'right' to go on an end-of-year trip. Pupils respond well when given responsible positions, for example as reading buddies or looking after animals.
- Pupils are generous raising funds for charities such as Sports Relief and Comic relief. They petition the Prime Minister and run stalls to raise funds for the Make Poverty History Campaign.

- Your carnival was hugely successful and enjoyable and a good vehicle for pupils to extend their knowledge about other countries.
- Pupils discuss their backgrounds and whether they feel British or not with confidence and without embarrassment. They value the diversity of the school community. They discuss issues of racism in circle time and assemblies and learn to say good morning in many different languages.
- You are working towards an ECO award and pupils have a basic awareness of environmental and sustainability issues. More could be done to extend pupils' understanding of these issues.
- Year 6 pupils have a simple understanding of how individuals volunteer to help others. They write thank you letters to staff from a local company who come in to hear them read.

Quality of teaching and learning of citizenship

Teaching and learning in citizenship are good.

- In a Year 5 lesson, pupils discussed the qualities of good leadership very sensibly and enjoyed considering what they would do if they were Queen for a day.
- In a good Year 4 drama lesson, pupils worked well in pairs planning presentations on anti-social behaviour, for example graffiti and litter.
- Teachers plan imaginative ideas to develop pupils' persuasive writing. Older pupils discuss bias in the press. Recently they wrote convincing letters to the Secretary of State voicing their concerns about primary school pupils being tested too much!
- Year 5 pupils have written letters to a school in Kenya. This link is at an early stage but it is already contributing to pupils' knowledge of less economically developed countries.
- A significant strength of the lessons observed during the visit was the excellent rapport and mutual respect between pupils and teachers.
- Pupils remember many words and citizenship messages from the songs they sing, for example 'Stand up for your rights'. You use music and movement very well to generate enjoyment and to help pupils to feel ready to learn.
- Close to the informative school council notice board, the UN convention on the Rights of the Child is displayed well in one of the halls, with questions to stimulate pupils' thinking about their rights.
- Young pupils are introduced to the concept of conflict by voting for which side they take after reading stories raising different views.
- Reception pupils learned to empathise with others by considering interesting experiences, such as visiting Pakistan for a wedding.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- In every year, the strongest work in citizenship emerges from the school's Power of Reading project; all the books studied relate to issues that make an impact on pupils' lives, such as apartheid and migration. Pupils visited a local museum to support their understanding of the issues raised by migration.

- One of the six, whole-school themes during the year, 'Stand up for Your Rights', generates thoughtful creative writing in Year 6, for example, on the peasant's revolt in history or homelessness.
- The local metropolitan police run an annual citizenship project with Year 6.
- Pupils develop respect for different faiths in religious education lessons and visit a mosque, synagogue and Southwark and St Paul's cathedrals.
- Younger pupils discuss local history, and the local environment in geography; they are involved in discussions about how the local park should be improved.
- Year 6 pupils are aware of the US 2008 presidential elections but pupils in other years do not discuss topical events so often.

Leadership and management of citizenship

Leadership and management are good.

- You both value the impact that citizenship can have on pupils' preparation for their future lives. You put into practice your belief that the school must model the values that pupils need to be thoughtful citizens.
- The co-ordinator for pupils' personal, social, health, emotional and citizenship has been in post for a few weeks. She is enthusiastically preparing for the autumn term when pupils will have one hour a week on this important programme. You and the co-ordinator appreciate that pupils in Years 1 to 5 do not discuss topical events often enough.
- Many non-teaching staff provide excellent guidance for pupils on how to resolve differences by looking at alternatives. Pupils learn to respect each other's views. You support pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities very well and expect pupils to do the same.
- You help pupils to value the range of ethnic identities in the United Kingdom by ensuring the harmonious integration of pupils from different backgrounds, by and by successfully working with parents to nurture community cohesion.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- encourage teachers to discuss topical items in the news more often, particularly in Years 1 to 5
- strengthen pupils' knowledge and understanding of issues related to the environment and sustainability.

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 inspection.

Yours sincerely

Clare Gillies
Additional Inspector