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Mrs W Govan
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Dear Mrs Govan

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit with Angela Corbett AI on 26 June 2008 to look at work in ICT.

As outlined in the 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 discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two part lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement and standards in ICT are satisfactory.

- Children get a good introduction to ICT in the Foundation Stage. They learn how to use a mouse and begin to develop basic keyboard skills. They also benefit from using simple programmes which help them to develop hand eye coordination.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their ICT skills and capability from Years 1 to 6. However, they make better progress at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2 and there is insufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils.

- Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve as well as their peers; they enjoy using ICT because it helps them to work with increasing levels of independence and confidence.
- ICT is beginning to have an impact on raising standards in other subjects, but this is more evident in science than it is for English and mathematics.
- Pupils say they would welcome more challenge and access to programmes which test and help extend their learning in English and mathematics.
- ICT makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy using ICT and feel inspired by the visual stimulus of high quality images used in lessons and in assemblies. They have benefited from virtual tours of churches, mosques and synagogues, which enable them to develop a greater appreciation of other faiths.
- Pupils demonstrate an adequate understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using the internet, and when sending and receiving emails and texts.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning of ICT are satisfactory.

- Teachers speak enthusiastically about how ICT has helped to transform their teaching. They are able to demonstrate new learning with ease and in an interactive and more enjoyable way. This usually contributes to a brisk pace at the beginning of lessons.
- The whiteboards are also used well to help pupils to recall previous learning and examples of work quickly.
- Pupils benefit from having prompt sheets next to them when they are working at the computer. These help them to solve problems without additional support and to work more independently.
- Where teaching is effective, pupils understand what is expected of them; lessons are well structured allowing pupils sufficient time to apply their learning and skills. In a Year 1/2 lesson, pupils worked in pairs to write about the fire of London. They were able to log on, retrieve work from a previous lesson and insert an image of fire next to their writing. The prompt sheet helped most pupils to progress well with minimal support.
- Where there are weaknesses in teaching the pace of learning is too slow and expectations are too low; there is insufficient account taken of the varying needs of all learners. Lessons are at times too teacher directed, resulting in pupils sitting passively for too long.
- Where lessons include cross-curricular links teachers do not always make use of opportunities to help reinforce basic skills in other subjects, particularly in literacy.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The quality of the curriculum for ICT is satisfactory.

- The programme of work for ICT takes account of links with other subjects and takes account of national guidance. This helps to promote adequate progression from one year to the next.
- Pupils receive their entitlement for ICT and opportunities to use and apply their ICT skills in other subjects are increasing.
- The school has correctly identified that there are too few opportunities for pupils to be creative in their use of ICT. The school is planning to improve this situation when the curriculum for ICT is reviewed.
- There are some good examples of where ICT is used across the curriculum, for example in geography when pupils used ICT to contribute to a comparative study of different coastal areas. Nevertheless, ICT has yet to become firmly embedded across the curriculum and there are missed opportunities of using ICT as a tool to raise standards in other subjects.
- Pupils would welcome more diverse use of ICT.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory.

- The former ICT leader is now responsible for science. When she was ICT leader she made a good contribution to the leadership and management of the subject. You are currently managing the subject; this together with the staff's enthusiasm and commitment to develop ICT, has helped to maintain the momentum of progress and development of ICT in the school.
- All subject leaders have ICT included within their remit; however, they do not evaluate the impact of ICT in their respective areas of responsibility.
- Staff have benefited from training provided by the former ICT coordinator, which helped them to become confident and competent users of ICT.
- There is good technical support and this contributes to teachers' willingness to experiment with their use of ICT to support their teaching.
- Although ICT lessons have been observed these observations have not focussed sufficiently on progress and standards or the impact of teaching on learning to bring about improvement.
- The school recognises the need to develop a more rigorous process of self-review and a vision for ICT. However, you have an accurate view of the school strengths and areas in need of improvement.

The use of assessment in ICT

The use of assessment in ICT is inadequate.

- Teachers assess the work pupils have completed at the end of each term, the work is not levelled and pupils do not know the level at which they are working.
- The school tracks pupils' progress year on year and this helps to identify areas in need of improvement. For example, having identified

modelling and control as a weakness at Key Stage 1 last year this has now significantly improved.

- Data is not interrogated rigorously enough to inform teachers' planning or for the school to have a secure view of how well pupils are progressing and what skills they require to progress to the next level.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- providing sufficient challenge for higher attaining pupils and using ICT to help raise standards in English and mathematics
- increasing the amount of teaching in ICT which is good throughout the school and embedding the use of ICT across the curriculum
- ensuring there is a sharper focus on how teaching is impacting on learning in ICT
- developing the use of assessment data to inform teachers' planning to track and monitor pupils' progress and to help pupils know the level at which they are working, and how to progress to the next level.

As explained in the 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

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector