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Mrs Fiona Morgan
Headteacher
Sheringdale Primary School
Standen Road
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Dear Mrs Morgan

Ofsted survey inspection programme – citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 08 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, pupils and a governor, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of parts of five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Pupils fully understand the need for rules and have a strong sense of right and wrong. Most classes write their own classroom rules.
- Recent, continuing improvements to the school grounds and to developing sustainable ways of operating have made all pupils very aware of how their actions impact on the environment.
- Many older pupils act as playground buddies and help younger pupils with their work. They take on roles of responsibility seriously.
- The school recently attained Healthy Schools status. The displays about healthy eating in the entrance area are magnificent; pupils have a good knowledge of how to lead healthy lives.
- The green 'eco' group, working towards Silver Eco Award status, is by far the most active sub-group of the school council. The main council, consisting of pupils in Years 5 and 6, does not meet so often. Older pupils

are elected to positions of responsibility but in some younger forms pupils names are pulled out from a hat. This does not foster an understanding of democratic processes although pupils discuss what democracy means in Year 4.

- Pupils are generous raising funds for local and overseas charities. Their understanding of different types of voluntary organisations is limited.
- Occasionally, but not often enough, pupils discuss topical issues.

Quality of teaching and learning of citizenship

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Religious education lessons nurture pupils' respect for different faiths. A lesson on Judaism was brought to life by photographs of the key features of a synagogue displayed on the interactive whiteboard.
- Teachers encourage pupils to respect different ethnic backgrounds and languages. Those who do not speak English as their mother tongue gain confidence reading stories in their first language to other children.
- Pupils who need support developing their social skills or self esteem receive good teaching and guidance. This helps them to gain confidence and develop positive relationships in the school community.
- Occasionally pupils sit on the carpet for too long and sometimes find it hard to read the interactive whiteboards.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- Pupils consider the diversity of society in history and religious education and sustainable issues in geography. They examine other cultures through art and music.
- The personal, social, health education programme, incorporating development of pupils' emotional development, covers citizenship issues such as responsibilities, rights and respect, very well.
- To support pupils who learn French, the school has links with a French school in London and pupils visit the country.
- Assemblies cover topics such as team work, respect and, occasionally, items in the news.
- In Year 5, pupils attend a citizenship day at a local secondary school. This focuses on a wide range of topics.

Leadership and management of citizenship

Leadership and management are good.

- You and your staff value citizenship as a subject that prepares young people to play an active role in society. You foster understanding and celebration of your pupils' different ethnic and faith backgrounds.
- You are aware that further work is needed to make the school council a democratically elected body of pupils from all classes.

- Your audit of the personal, social, health and emotional education programmes is accurate so you know which citizenship topics are not covered in enough detail and have plans to develop them.
- You have many strong links with the local community.
- The co-ordinator who is developing your creative curriculum is alert to how citizenship can be incorporated into this approach. The EMAG co-ordinator ensures that pupils from other countries, and their parents, are welcomed into, and valued as members of the school community.
- Governors are fully involved in the life of the school, for example supporting the school's 'Green Day' and generating the sustainable plan for the school grounds.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- helping pupils to discuss topical events more often and, when relevant, to research such issues
- using fund-raising for charity as a way to explore the different types of voluntary organisations that exist in the local, UK and world communities
- strengthening the role of the school council and electing all members.

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