

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 0207 421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



07 October 2008

Ms A Horwood
Headteacher
Fulham Primary School
Halford Road
London
SW6 1JU

Dear Ms Horwood

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Geography

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 22 September 2008 to look at work in geography.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a focus on how effectively geography teaching and the curriculum promotes community cohesion.

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 three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of geography is good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards are in line with national expectations.

- At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand geography to be about the study of the world, places and people. They have a good idea of the range of different cultures.
- Pupils can name the countries that make up the United Kingdom and their capital cities. They have a good knowledge of basic facts about a range of other countries.

- Through the study of their local environment, pupils are aware of the main local landmarks and can talk about their route to school. They are aware of different types of transport and when these are used.
- Pupils are able to analyse photographs and describe what they can see, can describe how to undertake basic fieldwork activities and draw simple maps.
- By Year 6, through studying aspects of geography, such as the weather and water, pupils have a sound understanding of certain physical processes and have a developing understanding of how latitude and other factors affect the weather.
- They have a good understanding of the meaning of key geographical vocabulary and are able to apply this accurately in their work.
- Pupils are able to use a range of resources including atlases and satellite images to identify distinguishing geographical features of different places.
- Through lessons and school enrichment activities, pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of their place in the world both locally and globally. They are very tolerant of different cultures and beliefs.
- Pupils enjoy geography and are keen to be involved in lessons. The behaviour of the overwhelming majority of pupils is good and they listen carefully to their peers and teachers.

Quality of teaching and learning of geography

The quality of teaching is good.

- Teachers plan lessons in detail including clear learning outcomes that are shared with the pupils. They have realistic but challenging expectations of the pupils.
- A broad range of learning activities is planned for use both within and across a series of lessons. Teachers ensure that the varying needs of pupils are met through incorporating different strategies in lessons, as well as the targeted use of learning assistants.
- Lessons are well organised and the clear structure helps pupils make progress in small steps and also reinforces their learning.
- Teachers organise pupils in different groupings depending on the activities and encourage them to talk about the geography they are learning.
- Good pace was a feature of the lessons observed. Activities were planned with a specific time in mind and teachers were clear when to recap learning and move on to the next task.
- Teachers used both closed and open questioning to good effect and targeted questions to include a wide range of pupils. They demonstrated good subject knowledge and were enthusiastic about the content they were teaching.
- A range of resources, including information communication technology (ICT) to support whole-class teaching, were used to good effect.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The two year cycle allows for a broad and balanced approach ensuring coverage of the key areas of the National Curriculum. Sufficient time is provided to allow for the teaching of each unit.
- Published units of work form the basis of the curriculum but these are adapted by staff to meet the needs of the pupils. The curriculum is flexible allowing teachers to make appropriate links with other subjects.
- Progression in key skills and enquiry is mapped across the curriculum.
- There are good opportunities for fieldwork across the school, both in the local environment and visits to contrasting localities for pupils of different ages.

Leadership and management of geography

Leadership and management of geography are good.

- The team leader for geography is enthusiastic and has a good grasp of the quality of the work in the subject. She, along with the deputy headteacher, know which areas require improving and have prioritised these. There is a planned programme of subject specific professional development to support and improve provision in geography.
- The annual monitoring of the quality of pupils' work identifies both areas of strength and those requiring improvement.
- There is a good geography policy that has clear aims and identifies the main teaching and learning intentions in each key stage. It also includes a clear rationale for planning and identifies links with other subjects.
- The portfolio of pupils' work provides good examples of work, in particular, from Years 1–4. These are marked thoroughly to demonstrate what the pupils know and understand.
- There is a good summative annual report for each pupil in geography and this refers to the level of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in the subject.
- The resources available for geography are variable. There are good sets of atlases and globes in the classrooms and teachers make very good use of websites to support pupils' learning.
- The capacity to ensure the subject continues to improve is good.

Subject issue

The effectiveness of geography teaching and the curriculum in promoting community cohesion is good.

- One of the aims of the school's geography curriculum is to foster a sense of global citizenship amongst the pupils.
- Through the focus on the local environment and the study of distant, contrasting places, geography makes a good contribution to developing pupils' understanding of different places and their place in the world.
- Geography makes a good contribution to whole school enrichment activities which have a focus on community cohesion. These activities effectively promote global citizenship and help strengthen community cohesion.
- The focus on global citizenship and community cohesion has resulted in pupils who empathise with and understand the wide range of cultures present in the school.

Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- develop the summative programme of assessment across the geography curriculum so that all the key concepts and skills are assessed
- use the outcomes of the assessment programme to enhance the portfolio of exemplar work through assessing new pieces of work against the National Curriculum levels for each year group.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for the next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Dowgill
Additional Inspector