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Mrs D Forshaw  
Headteacher  
Wellfield Methodist and Anglican Church School  
Wellfield Drive  
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Lancashire  
BB12 0JD

Dear Mrs Forshaw

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 November 2008 to look at work in science.

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 analysis of data, interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards are above average.

- At Key Stage 2, all pupils achieved at least the expected Level 4 in science in the national tests in 2007 and an above average proportion of pupils achieved above the expected level. In 2008 un-validated data shows a similar picture.
- Data which take account of pupils' prior attainment and contextual factors show that pupils make good progress during Key Stage 2.
- In the lessons observed pupils made good progress and many reached above average standards.
- While there is variation in the quality of pupils' work in different year groups, overall it is of above average standard.
- Behaviour observed in lessons was very good and indicated that personal development of pupils is good.

## Quality of teaching and learning of science

Teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers are lively and enthusiastic and have good relationships with their pupils.
- Lessons include a good range of activities to engage interest and motivate pupils including practical work, and a game in one lesson observed that pupils particularly enjoyed.
- In the lessons observed there were good opportunities for pupils to develop skills such as observation, using their senses of smell and touch, data presentation and interpretation, and scientific literacy.
- Lessons are well planned to build on pupils prior learning in appropriate steps.
- Some appropriate differentiation of work for groups of pupils of different abilities was observed in lessons.
- Teachers' explanations are clear, and scientific terminology is used and reinforced well.
- Teachers have good rapport with their pupils and some effective use of question and answer was observed. Teachers listen carefully to pupils' responses and allow them time to think and work things out for themselves.
- Pupils have opportunities to carry out some investigative work.
- Although teaching and learning are good overall, this is not consistently the case across all year groups.

## Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum in science is good.

- There is a good range of trips and visits relevant to science, including visits to museums with opportunities for plenty of hands-on activities.
- Other activities which enhance science include clubs such as the gardening club. There are plans to introduce a Key Stage 1 science club.
- There are limited opportunities for independent investigative work at present, but the school recognises this as an area for further development.
- In the Foundation Stage pupils have suitable experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world.
- Appropriate use is made of a highly experienced local volunteer to enhance pupils' experiences of science.

## Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management of science are good.

- Day to day management is effective.
- In addition to being the headteacher you are also the science coordinator. Under your leadership there have been positive developments in the assessment and progress tracking in science.
- Data from assessment and progress tracking are now being used to develop strategies to raise achievement further, for example through interventions with underachievers.

- Development and action plans for science are appropriately focused on issues including challenge in lessons, how science works, learning styles and raising achievement.
- Some analysis of pupils' answers to test questions is carried out, and used to identify areas for development in teaching and learning.
- There has been some external professional development for teachers, and the headteacher, as a science specialist, is also leading in-house staff development.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- offering more opportunities for independent investigative work
- sharing good practice in the teaching of science to ensure that it is consistent across all year groups.

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

Ruth James  
Her Majesty's Inspector