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Mrs S Gaffiney
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Gaffiney

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Information and
Communication Technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during
my visit on 07 October to look at work in ICT.

As outlined in my 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 interviews with
staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work
and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are average.

- Attainment on entry in ICT is evaluated from pupils' performance against the early learning goals and is broadly average.
- Standards overall remain average as pupils move up through the school indicating satisfactory achievement.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities make satisfactory progress due to the effective support they receive from teaching assistants.
- Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and underachieve.

- Most pupils are aware of the need to keep themselves safe when online and are able to explain how to do so.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

- ICT was used effectively to improve learning in other subjects. In a mathematics lesson pupils' understanding of multiplication was reinforced by providing them with laptops and software designed to test and motivate them. In a history lesson a computer simulation was used well to enable pupils to experience what sending a telegram was like back in the 1950s compared to modern day 'texting'.
- Teachers use interactive whiteboards confidently to explain the lesson and are competent users of ICT themselves.
- Overall expectations of pupils are too low and there is a lack of challenging work for higher attaining pupils in particular. This is partly explained by the absence of assessment information until very recently which means that planning does not address the full range of different starting points of pupils.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- The topics planned for pupils ensure all aspects of the National Curriculum for ICT are adequately covered. There are satisfactory opportunities for example for pupils to record and edit digital video, to use data logging devices in science and to learn how to program using the 'logo' computer language.
- Satisfactory provision for teaching pupils about keeping themselves safe when online has recently been introduced.
- There is insufficient challenge in the work planned for pupils from year to year, especially for the more able.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- The school uses a national model for evaluating ICT provision. The most important strengths and weaknesses have been identified and the school is beginning to remedy some major deficiencies. A new assessment and tracking system has been introduced, there has been significant investment in laptops so that ICT is available in classrooms and renewed curriculum planning has taken place which integrates the use of ICT into a topic based approach.
- Monitoring of the quality of provision by senior leaders is not systematic and is insufficiently rigorous. Whilst monitoring has assured the school that the National Curriculum programme of study for ICT is covered, insufficient attention is paid to evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and the degree of challenge provided to pupils.

- Management of resources is satisfactory. The school follows national guidance in making decisions about ICT investments and ensures adequate value for money is obtained.

Use of Assessment

The use of assessment is now satisfactory.

- A new tracking system was introduced very recently which enables the school to monitor the progress of individual pupils on all aspects of the National Curriculum for ICT. It is too soon for information from this system to have had an impact on the quality of planning or on achievement.
- Prior to this, although teachers did grade individual pupils' work in ICT against National Curriculum levels, these grades were not collated and trends in attainment were not analysed. Consequently standards in ICT in comparison to national averages have not been monitored. The school is unable to say how well its pupils are doing and whether outcomes in ICT are good enough or not.
- Targets are not set for ICT. Most pupils spoken to were unclear about how well they were doing or what they needed to do to improve their work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- using assessment information to plan challenging work and particularly so for higher attaining pupils
- ensuring pupils have guidance on how to improve their work
- monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and overall achievement.

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

David Anstead
Her Majesty's Inspector