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Mr S Williams
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Williams

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 29 January 2009 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 yourself and your ICT subject co-ordinator, observation of a Year 2 and a Year 4 lesson, a 'learning walk' from Foundation Stage to Year 6 to observe a range of ICT activities throughout the school, discussion with Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and analysis of pupils' work.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Standards in ICT are above the national average by the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Achievement is good.

- Children enter school with ICT skills and capabilities that are generally in line with national expectations. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage they have made good progress. They confidently use a keyboard and mouse, program floor robots and direct radio controlled toys. They are developing a good awareness of how ICT is used throughout the home and in the wider community.

- Through Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above national averages, especially in presenting information and in communication.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and gifted and talented pupils make good progress.
- The use of ICT makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' personal development and enjoyment. Pupils work extremely well together and are happy to help their peers if they are in difficulty. Pupils are very proud of their achievements in ICT. They confidently discuss their work with each other, adults and visitors.
- By Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of the need to work safely when accessing the internet. They have a good understanding of the dangers of divulging their name and address over the internet and of using 'chat rooms'.
- ICT is having a very good impact on raising standards in many subjects. For example, good examples were observed during my visit of planned use of ICT to support literacy, speaking and listening, mathematics, science, history, geography, art, design technology and French.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers' subject knowledge, and confidence in using ICT for their own professional development, and to support teaching and learning, is good.
- Lessons are well planned and very well resourced, using a wide range of ICT equipment on a regular basis.
- Teachers confidently use interactive whiteboards, which adds impact to lessons and to pupils' interest and motivation. Throughout the school, pupils also use interactive whiteboards with confidence.
- Pupils are very motivated by the planned activities and consequently behaviour in lessons is outstanding.
- Well informed teaching assistants give good support for group and individual activities, both in the classroom and in the ICT suite.
- Teachers share the learning objectives of each lesson and guide pupils well in their learning. As a result, pupils make good progress within lessons, and over time, because they have a good understanding of what is being learnt and why.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The quality of the ICT curriculum is good.

- The programme of study is taught and planned for well, through the use of a national scheme. Very good links are also made between other subjects of the National Curriculum, which makes learning relevant and enjoyable for pupils.
- ICT is used well to enable pupils to develop their independent learning and creative thinking skills.

- Resources for the subject are very well organised and readily available for pupils to use.
- The school's web site is informative and supports teaching and learning well, not only in school but also at home. The site is also very informative for parents and carers.
- Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and gifted and talented pupils is good.
- The ICT club provides extra support for pupils with a specific interest or talent in the subject.
- As yet, limited extra provision is being made for the very few pupils who do not have access to ICT at home. However, you recognise this to be an area for development, as noted in your action plan.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are good.

- The ICT co-ordinator has made significant impact on the development of the subject, which is seeing standards rise throughout the school.
- Regular staff meetings are planned for staff training and the review and update of ICT hardware, software and latest initiatives.
- Formal monitoring of lessons, by yourself and your co-ordinator, with a focus on ICT, take place as part of subject cycles. Personal feedback related to the strengths and areas for development in the teaching of ICT is given to individual teachers as well as generic feedback to the whole staff. This gives good support for the development of the ICT and is improving teachers' skills and knowledge.
- The policy of "best value" is adhered to well. New equipment is bought on the basis of value for money and the impact is reviewed in relation to pupils' learning.
- The ICT development plan, along with the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) 'self review' is focused on raising standards.
- Parents, pupils and staff are well-informed about the safe use of the internet. Parents are also given a CD-Rom about internet safety.
- The policy for staff use of laptops and computers in school, and for the use of school laptops and memory sticks when taken off the premises and used at home, is comprehensive.

Use of Assessment

The use of assessment is satisfactory.

- Regular assessments are made against coverage of the curriculum and the skills demonstrated by pupils.
- However, assessment does not relate to National Curriculum levels in order to track pupils' progress and achievement.
- By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of what they need to do to improve their work. However, pupils do not know what level they are achieving in ICT, and what is required for them to move up a level.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that pupils are given the opportunity to self-assess their skills and/or knowledge of ICT at the end of a lesson or topic of work, so that they are clear about their next step for learning
- developing the assessment of pupils' ICT in order for pupils' achievement and progress to be more systematically tracked and evaluated
- continuing to develop, as stated in your action plan, support for pupils who do not have regular access to a computer and printer at home.

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

Anthony Green
Additional Inspector