

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
Enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



07 April 2009

Mrs A Owen-Jones
Headteacher
St John The Baptist Primary School
Abshot Road
Titchfield Common
Fareham
Hampshire
PO14 4NH

Dear Mrs Owen-Jones

Ofsted survey inspection programme – history

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Tuesday 10 March 2009 to look at work in history.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on provision for gifted pupils and the use of information and communication technology (ICT).

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, a scrutiny of relevant documentation, an analysis of pupils' work and the observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing their historical understanding and skills, by researching information about the Egyptians and Nelson Mandela, generating good questions and planning how to answer them, both individually and in groups.
- Pupils' personal development is good in history. Pupils say they think history is 'very interesting and we have lots of time to touch old things and ask questions about them'. They like learning about the differences between now and past times and show a growing understanding about how important issues today may have grown out

of events in the past. Behaviour is good in lessons and pupils discuss topics well in small groups. They communicate their ideas clearly and enthusiastically and the quality of written work in books and folders is good.

- Pupils talk knowledgeably about the topics they have studied. They especially like the way teachers use videos and slides on the interactive whiteboards to demonstrate key points.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers develop good relationships with pupils. Lessons are planned well to ensure that the needs of individual pupils are taken into account and that all pupils can engage in stimulating activities. Class group work is lively and productive and, when giving feedback to the whole class, pupils communicate their ideas well.
- Assessment procedures are effective and enable teachers to support and guide pupils well. Teachers constantly communicate to pupils what they expect from different groups and praise those who meet their objectives well. They do not as yet fully share with individual pupils exactly how well they are doing in terms of national curriculum levels or expectations, but there are good plans to develop this aspect of their work.
- Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils with learning difficulties who are thus able to contribute fully to question and answer sessions and written work.
- Pupils' work is marked regularly and there are helpful written comments in most books.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced and has been reviewed rigorously to ensure that cross-curricular links are carefully planned, for example, with literacy, science, and design and technology.
- There is a good emphasis on the important skills of history and pupils are introduced effectively to key historical concepts, such as change over time, and to asking appropriate questions using evidence.
- There is good enrichment in the form of numerous visits to places of historical interest.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of history are good.

- The subject coordinator has been absent recently but his work has been carried on well by other humanities team teachers. He has a good grasp of the place of history in the school curriculum.
- History is reviewed rigorously each year. The coordinator has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and his

priorities for development are well focused on improving provision further.

Subject issue: provision for gifted history pupils

The provision for gifted history pupils is good.

- The school coordinator for gifted and talented provision is a history enthusiast and ensures that there are plenty of opportunities for able young history pupils to follow their interests and produce very interesting work. She is aware that practice across the school is variable and that not all able history pupils are supported as well as they are in the best lessons.
- There are good links with local schools, including a secondary school, to enable joint planning to support able pupils.

Subject issue: the use of ICT in history

The use of ICT in history is good.

- ICT is used well across the school in history lessons to extend and deepen pupils' understanding of history topics.
- Pupils regularly interrogate websites to acquire information and then use it in their writing. The school uses the Hampshire Learning Platform (Study Wiz) well to enable pupils to extend their ICT skills as well as to support their history work. Pupils say how much they enjoy these aspects of their lessons.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improve moderation of work in history so that that all teachers can confidently, accurately and consistently evaluate the different levels of work produced by pupils
- improve further the provision and support for gifted history pupils.

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

Peter Limm
Her Majesty's Inspector