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Mrs M Davey
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Davey

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 30 June 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, your ICT subject co-ordinator and a brief discussion with your Early Years Foundation Stage Leader, observation of a Year 1 and a Year 6 lesson in your computer suite, observation of digital photography with your Early Years Foundation Stage children, observation of Key Stage 2 animation work, observation of 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, although this varies significantly as some pupils arrive from nursery settings with good skills and others

arrive with below average skills. By the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage children have made good progress. They confidently use a keyboard and mouse, program floor robots and direct radio controlled toys. Pupils were observed taking digital photographs of each other, as part of their work on 'friends', with assurance.

- 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.
- 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. Key Stage 2 pupils are especially proud of their animations and of the time and effort it took to produce a short animated film.
- 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 social networking sites or of sending inappropriate texts.
- ICT is having a good impact on raising standards in many subjects. For example, planned use of ICT was observed supporting literacy, mathematics, science, history, geography, art and Religious Education.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers' subject knowledge, and confidence in using ICT to support teaching and learning is good.
- Lessons are very well planned and very well resourced. Activities are differentiated well to meet the needs of the different ability groups within a class.
- Teachers confidently use interactive whiteboards (IWB) in classrooms and in the suite, which motivates and interests pupils. However, because of the high positioning of the IWB in the main suite, and the lack of purpose-built steps in front of the IWB, younger pupils are not able to reach the board. This restricts opportunities for them to use IWBs other than in classrooms.
- Pupils are very motivated by the planned activities and consequently behaviour in lessons is outstanding.
- Well informed learning support assistants, volunteer helpers and secondary aged students give good support for group and individual activities in the classroom, the ICT suite and the mini-suite. They not only support lower-attaining pupils but also above-average pupils, to ensure all groups within a lesson make the same good progress.
- Teachers share the learning objectives of each lesson, which are recapped at the end of the lesson so that pupils can self-assess their progress.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

The quality of the ICT curriculum is good.

- Your Ofsted inspection of February 2008 made 'the wider use of computers as an aid to learning in all subjects' the only issue for improvement. This has been achieved well.
- The programme of study is taught and planned for well. Good links are made between other subjects of the National Curriculum, which makes learning relevant and enjoyable for pupils. Year 6 pupils confirmed that they find ICT 'helpful' and 'useful' in a range of subjects, and that it also makes subjects more 'enjoyable' and 'fun'.
- Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and gifted and talented pupils is good. They are given good support in lessons and extension activities ensure that able pupils are appropriately challenged. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, higher-attaining pupils were set the task of programming an on-screen turtle to move around a difficult zig-zag path. Pupils not only found the task challenging but also enjoyed the extra challenge. One said: 'It's hard but good fun and I managed to do it'.
- Gifted and talented Year 6 pupils are given the opportunity to attend an ICT summer school. Gifted and talented Year 5 pupils attend media studies classes at a local secondary school.
- The ICT club provides extra support for pupils with a specific interest or talent in the subject or for those who do not have access to computers and/or the internet at home.
- The school's web site is very well produced, informative and supports learning well. The site is also informative for parents and carers.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are good.

- Your ICT coordinator manages the subject well, which is seeing standards rise throughout the school.
- Termly staff meetings include staff training and the review and update of ICT initiatives.
- Formal monitoring of lessons, by yourself and your coordinator, with a focus on ICT, take place as part of annual subject review cycles. This gives good support for the development of ICT and is improving teachers' skills and knowledge.
- The policy of 'best value' is adhered to well. New equipment, such as the proposed purchase of laptops and trolleys, are bought on the basis of value for money.
- The ICT development plan contains measurable targets, which are costed and reviewed.
- The policy for e-safety is informative, especially with regard to the use of ICT by pupils and adults in school.
- At present you are waiting for staff training on your managed learning environment (MLE), which you are aiming to introduce initially to Year 6, by Christmas 2009.

Use of Assessment

The use of assessment is satisfactory.

- Regular assessments are made against coverage of the curriculum and the skills demonstrated by pupils. You have started to level and sub-level pupils' skills and knowledge in ICT. However, this is in its infancy and is only now beginning to provide information to rigorously track standards and achievement.
- Although Key Stage 2 pupils have a copy of their assessments and levels in the front of their ICT books, few are able to recall the level they are achieving or know what they need to do to improve and move up a level.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continuing to develop, as stated in your action plan, the assessment of pupils' ICT in order for pupils' achievement and progress to be more systematically tracked and evaluated
- ensuring that pupils are aware of their levels and what they need to do to move up a level
- continuing to introduce and develop, as stated in your action plan, your Managed Learning Environment.

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