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06 July 2009

Mr D Sibley
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Dear Mr Sibley

Ofsted survey inspection programme – E-safety

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 3 July 2009 to look at work in e-safety.

As outlined in my initial letter, this visit looked at:
▪ the extent to which schools teach learners to adopt safe and responsible practices in using new technologies
▪ e-safety training for staff.

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, and an observation of a lesson.

The overall effectiveness of e-safety was judged to be good.

Outcomes for learners

The outcomes for pupils are good.

▪ Pupils are kept safe in the school as a result of the effective monitoring by staff of information and communication technology (ICT) usage, clear filtering systems, and the strong culture of responsible behaviour by pupils towards e-safety.
▪ Clear systems for managing the use of ICT mean that no instances of inappropriate ICT usage in school are apparent.

- Pupils are confident about using new technologies in school. They feel safe and in particular welcome that they know they can close down a screen if required using the 'dolphin' symbol.
- Years 1 to Year 6 demonstrate a good age related awareness of dangers in using new technology. All pupils show an understanding of e-safety as a result of teaching and guidance from staff. However, where pupils demonstrated a deeper knowledge and understanding, in particular around internet use, this information primarily came from older siblings or parents.
- Older pupils, mainly Year 4 and above, make extensive use of a wide variety of new technologies outside the school including the internet, mobile phones, web cams and gaming consoles with communication facilities. They demonstrated a good knowledge of risk and the ability to make safe choices in using this equipment.

Quality of provision

The quality of provision is good.

- All pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 receive guidance on e-safety as part of the formal curriculum. This is underpinned through the use of a signed contract at the start of the academic year and e-safety posters and notices around school.
- Schemes of work to incorporate e-safety are currently being revised in light of guidance from the local authority and the ICT co-ordinators group. As a result teaching around e-safety is more systematic and increasingly differentiated by age. Plans are also in place to bring this into Reception classes.
- Year 6 pupils recently completed an extensive 'personal challenge' designed to develop independent learning and research skills. This provided pupils with a good opportunity to conduct internet searches both in school and at home, whilst reinforcing guidance on the safe use of the internet.
- The social and emotional aspects of the learning programme are used effectively to provide pupils with good opportunities to discuss any areas of emotional or social concern, including their experiences of using new technologies. Good systems are in place to intervene if a child is found to be at risk.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of e-safety are good. Good leadership of ICT is assisting to instil young people with the right skills for life in terms of e-safety and the challenges of using new technologies.

- The e-safety policy sets out clearly what is acceptable behaviour. There is an e-safety strategy and this is being used to good effect to develop a coherent approach to ICT and safe use of new technology.

- The ICT development plan is in place and shows the next steps in further work on e-safety, including an assembly for children and parents in order to raise awareness at home.
- The anti-bullying and child protection policies have been revised and these now address issues of potential cyber bullying and e-safety.
- Senior staff have a good understanding of e-safety. A locked down filtered system is used for connectivity on the school's network, as a result this limits staff and pupils ability to access appropriate websites. However, staff are aware of the importance to prepare pupils for un-filtered internet access.
- Good personal support is provided to pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who use laptops as a communications aid and staff are aware that these pupils need to receive age related guidance on safe practices.
- Senior staff have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of its e-safety education. The school recognises its role in providing further information to parents on e-safety at home.

Quality of training

The quality of training is satisfactory.

- Procedures are in place to ensure all school staff receive safeguarding training; an element of this includes e-safety and anti-bullying guidance. As a result teachers demonstrate a good level of understanding of e-safety issues; however the knowledge across support staff is inconsistent.
- The school is aware that further training is required in order to ensure that all staff keep up with the changing nature of e-safety issues.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing an explicit programme of e-safety training, in particular to raise the awareness of support staff and to keep all staff updated of the risks inherent in new technology
- raising the awareness of parents in understanding issues around e-safety.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop e-safety 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

Paul Lowery
Additional Inspector