

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



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Mr S Madden
Headteacher
St Matthew's CofE Primary School
Poplar Road
Stretford
L32 9AN

Dear Mr Madden

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 7 December 2009 to look at work in citizenship.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of six lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is good.

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship are good.

- Pupils have a particularly good understanding of rights and responsibilities, the environment, sustainability and cultural diversity. Their understanding of the role of MPs, councillors and parliament, the law and the media is more limited.
- Pupils enjoy citizenship lessons and engage well with the learning. They have opportunities to take responsibility, to work independently and exercise initiative in lessons and through citizenship activities, such as the ECO group.
- Those on the school council participate well in decision-making affecting the school and local community. The council reflects democratic processes which pupils fully understand.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching is good.

- Most teachers demonstrate expert knowledge, although there is a need for better understanding of how to deal with some sensitive and controversial issues.
- Teachers use a good range of interesting and participative approaches. For example, in an outstanding Year 5 lesson on animal welfare, pupils debated with enthusiasm, taking on the roles of animal activist and zoo-keeper.
- Teachers use questioning well to develop pupils' communication and thinking skills. They use a wide range of approaches, including good use of information and communication technology (ICT). There are appropriate levels of expectation for different groups of pupils. Support from teaching assistants is effective and all pupils participate well.
- Recording and reporting to parents do not make sufficient reference to citizenship knowledge, understanding and progression.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Aspects of the programme, such as rights, responsibilities, diversity and culture are successfully covered throughout the curriculum and through a range of extra-curricular visits, visitors, cultural events and assemblies. These topics are revisited in both key stages to build a deeper understanding. Other topics, such as the role of parliament and the media, are given too little attention and some issues, such as immigration and asylum, are not covered in sufficient depth to prevent misunderstandings.
- The curriculum programme integrates knowledge, skills and understanding well through the development of pupils' debating, research and writing skills.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are good.

- The school has a strong vision for citizenship which accords well with the wider ethos of the school. Citizenship is well resourced. All classrooms have interactive whiteboards which teachers use to good effect.
- The subject leader has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the department and has produced a detailed action plan for improvement. However, because citizenship is taught across the curriculum in lessons such as literacy, there is limited monitoring and evaluation of teaching specifically in citizenship.

- The school's evaluation shows that the involvement of parents, carers and members of the school community in the review and planning of citizenship is at an early stage.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- teaching and learning about local and national democratic institutions, the law and the media
- training on the teaching of controversial issues in citizenship
- referring to knowledge and understanding of citizenship when reporting to parents and carers
- improving the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in citizenship.

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

Janet Palmer
Her Majesty's Inspector