

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



21 December 2009

Mrs J Martin and Mr D Barrs  
Co-Headteachers  
Anglo-European School  
Willow Green  
Ingatestone  
Essex  
CM4 0DJ

Dear Mrs Martin and Mr Barrs

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 7 and 8 December 2009 to look at work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the teaching of spelling and handwriting.

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 students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of eight lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is satisfactory and improving.

Achievement in English

Achievement in English is satisfactory and improving.

- Attainment in the sixth form is above average in both A-level and International Baccalaureate courses.
- At GCSE level, attainment is consistently above average and improved in 2009, with over 80% of Year 11 students achieving grades A\* to C. The proportion achieving a grade A or A\* was in line with the average. Boys' attainment compared well to that found nationally.
- Year 11 students made satisfactory progress from their starting points. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities made similar

progress to their peers. Students who speak English as an additional language also make at least satisfactory progress.

- In lessons, most students settle to work quickly and concentrate well. They work together effectively and most are eager to express their views. However, a few are slow to start tasks and sometimes lose concentration.

### Quality of teaching in English

Teaching in English is satisfactory with good features.

- Teaching observed ranged from very good to satisfactory.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons thoroughly with clear learning objectives. These are often expressed specifically for students with different attainment and targets.
- Teachers use a good range of activities including regular pair and group work which involve students effectively in discussion.
- Generally teachers' expectations are high. However, there is some variation in the effectiveness of teachers' approaches because some are less confident in their use of group work and assessment criteria with students. As a result, students' progress is satisfactory overall.
- Teachers' marking is usually detailed and comments relate to learning objectives. However, there is inconsistency and some marking does not give sufficient guidance to students on how to improve their work. Increasingly, teachers use the criteria for assessing work in lessons to help students understand what they need to do to be successful.

### Quality of the curriculum in English

The curriculum in English is good.

- The curriculum is broad and well-balanced. There are regular opportunities which cover all the key skills, including speaking and listening. Students engage in a good range of written activities and almost all achieve GCSE grades in English and English Literature.
- The English team have revised schemes of work for Year 7 effectively to match the new national framework and to provide clarity in relation to the key skills in each unit. Assessment opportunities are planned well.
- Sixth-form students are very positive about their courses and a majority study English as part of their programme. The International Baccalaureate successfully extends the range of choice available.
- There is a broad range of trips and events for students. Younger students are all expected to present poetry in the school's Eisteddfod.

### Effectiveness of leadership and management in English

Leadership and management are good.

- The head of English and key staff have a clear understanding of the priorities for improvement with a strong focus on raising attainment further.
- There are clear expectations of teachers in relation to planning and assessment. Increasingly, teachers are expected to use assessment criteria with students. However, currently, this approach has varying success.
- The subject development plan is well focused and action is effective, for example in the revision of schemes of work at Key Stage 3.
- The head of English and key staff monitor provision regularly. Analysis and monitoring of students' progress leads to effective identification of those needing support and specific aspects for improvement. As a result, standards and participation in the sixth form remain high, and results at GCSE level have improved.

Subject issue: the teaching of spelling and handwriting

- Students with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities receive effective support in improving spelling through withdrawal classes. Where relevant, they also follow handwriting programmes.
- Teachers identify key spelling issues in their marking of students' work and there is some very good practice in advising them how to remedy their mistakes. However, this is not consistent across the department.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising further the proportion of students achieving higher grades, especially A\* and A, at GCSE by:
  - using the differentiated learning objectives in teachers' lesson plans more effectively to inform the level of challenge and questioning for higher achieving students in all years
  - ensuring that the review of schemes of work at Key Stage 3 provides appropriate opportunities for students to develop higher level skills
- improving the consistency of teaching and assessment by:
  - providing opportunities for teachers to share their best practice and successful approaches with each other
  - ensuring that all teachers set clear and constructive targets for students to help them understand exactly how to improve their work.

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

Martin Cragg  
Her Majesty's Inspector