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Dear Mrs Short

Ofsted 2009–10 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 29 January 2010 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 use of ICT to support learning in other subjects.

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 you, your ICT leader and Year 6 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; observation of Year 4 and Year 6 lessons; and a tour of the school, with a focus on ICT, given by four pupils representing each year group.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

- Pupils enter school with ICT capabilities that are in line with expectations. They make satisfactory progress and by Year 6 the attainment of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or learning difficulties, is in line with expectations.

- In the lessons observed, pupils were extremely eager to do well and to support each other to overcome difficulties and new challenges. Attitudes

and behaviour are good. When work is very well-matched to pupils' attainment and interest, attitudes and behaviour are outstanding.

- By Year 6 pupils have an excellent understanding of the need to work safely and appropriately when using new technologies.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how ICT supports their work in other subjects of the curriculum.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory.

- Satisfactory teaching results in pupils making satisfactory progress in lessons and over time. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning, and the joint observations during my visit, show that teaching ranges from satisfactory to outstanding. Learning is now being accelerated, though not consistently, throughout the school.

- The subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants is satisfactory overall. However, it ranges from satisfactory to outstanding.

- Questions are used effectively in lessons to assess and develop pupils' understanding of the tasks or the skills being learnt.

- The 'Independent Integrated Tasks', whereby pupils are set a topic of their choice which integrates ICT with other subjects, is used well to assess pupils' ICT capabilities and set targets for the future. However, although targets are discussed, they are not written down for pupils to refer to, so that they can track and assess their own progress.

- Lessons are well planned and result in different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, making similar progress.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is satisfactory.

- All aspects of the National Curriculum for ICT are covered. However, you recognise that, prior to this school year, the planning and use of data-logging and control have not been as effective as other aspects of the ICT curriculum. This is now being tackled.

- Good use is made of ICT through a number of extra-curricular clubs, to support pupils' learning in mathematics and also for homework.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in ICT is good.

- The leadership and management of ICT have had a good impact on the development of the subject. Improvements are beginning in teaching and learning and the achievement and attainment of pupils.

- Because the school was given intensive support for literacy and numeracy for the two years prior to this academic year, ICT has not been a priority. However, with the appointment of a new subject leader and a specific focus on ICT since September 2009, the subject is now beginning to develop.

- Good links have been made with parents and carers. The 'Home Access Grant' initiative is giving parents and carers the opportunity to have access to laptops and broadband at home.

Subject issue: the use of ICT to support learning in other subjects

The use of ICT to support learning in other subjects is good.

- ICT is having a good impact on raising standards in other subjects. Good examples were observed of ICT being used to support English, mathematics, science, geography and history. ICT also gives good support to develop pupils' personal and social skills.

- Pupils take pride in their work and recognise that when ICT is used in other subjects it makes them more interesting and relevant.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising achievement and attainment in ICT by raising the quality of teaching to good or better

- embedding the use of data-logging and control

- ensuring that pupils have written, as well as oral, confirmation of their targets for improvement, so that they can self-assess their progress.

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