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Mr J Green  
Headteacher  
Archbishop of York's CofE Voluntary  
Controlled Junior School  
Copmanthorpe Lane  
Bishopthorpe  
YO23 2QT

Dear Mr Green

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme:

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 3 March 2010 to look at work in science.

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 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science is good.

Achievement in science

Achievement in science is good.

- Changes in pupils' attainment since 2008 show improvement and the proportions of pupils attaining Level 4 and Level 5 were significantly above the national average in 2009.
- The progress made by pupils is good and is a consequence of the changes brought about by the science coordinator in collaboration with the senior leadership team.
- Rising standards are encouraged by greater involvement and enjoyment in science, not least because of the increased focus on pupils working as scientist and carrying out scientific enquiry and practical work.
- There are no significantly different outcomes for different groups of pupils. In class, teachers ensure that the work is accessible to all and includes all.

- Pupils are very well behaved and they show high levels of application in lessons. They show positive attitudes to science.

### Quality of teaching in science

The quality of teaching in science is good.

- Overall, teaching is good and teachers have good knowledge and understanding of science. They are supported by effective continual professional development.
- Teachers plan effectively and put detail into medium-term plans in collaboration with other teachers. The long-term plan is determined by the whole staff and ensures coverage of National Curriculum requirements.
- The learning activities teachers provide are engaging and well matched to the learning intentions. There is good use of information and communication technology that directly engages pupils.
- Teachers use question and answer techniques for a range of purposes, to engage pupils and to check on the progress individuals make.
- Assessment is well organised and carried out consistently. This forms the basis of an effective evaluation and monitoring system that has helped to raise standards. Pupils are engaged in self-assessment and peer review.
- Marking is of good quality. The written comments on pupils' work provide pupils with good feedback and show where improvements can be made.
- Throughout the visit, good relationships were seen between pupils and with teachers.

### Quality of the curriculum in science

The quality of the curriculum in science is good.

- The science work complies with the requirements of the National Curriculum but is sequenced as the school believes best suits their pupils' learning. The schemes of work are coherent because of the way they are developed collaboratively.
- A good balance is struck between the different areas of science ensuring that science skills are developed in a range of relevant contexts.
- Opportunities are taken to develop literacy and numeracy skills in the context of science. Links to other subject areas are made but not in a systematic way.
- There is good extra-curricular provision for science in the form of a science club that serves the needs of different year groups in succession.
- There are many good quality enrichment activities including visits to science-specific sites.

## Effectiveness of leadership and management in science

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

- Since your relatively recent appointment as headteacher, and the simultaneous appointment of the science coordinator, there have been significant improvements in science.
- The coordinator is very effective and has introduced a range of activities in collaboration with the senior leadership team to bring about improvement.
- Teachers have strong confidence in the leadership and management and have good access to relevant continuing professional development.
- Management is systematic and the routine of such activities as learning meetings is engaging staff and benefiting pupils.
- Improvements in monitoring of pupils' performance and the monitoring of standards including teaching are contributing to raising standards.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing differentiation strategies to ensure increased challenge, particularly for the most able pupils
- building on the work done on exploring science to promote consistent progress in skills of scientific enquiry.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop science in the school.

As I explained previously, 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

Ian Richardson  
Her Majesty's Inspector