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Mr D Roll
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Roll

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit, with Judith Matharu HMI, on 9 February 2010 to look at work in citizenship. Please give particular thanks to the head girl and head boy for looking after us so well.

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, the leadership team, key staff, the school council and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is outstanding.

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship are outstanding.

- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the key areas of citizenship and outstanding personal development. This is the result of an excellent Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum and good teaching.
- The pupils' voice is strong through the work of the school council. They confidently express their views and readily listen to the opinions of others. They feel their contribution makes a difference.
- The personal development of pupils through active participation is exemplary. Pupils readily assume responsibility, make decisions and

organise their own activities. They grow in confidence and enthusiastically take responsible action, for example acting as playground mediators and representing the school at a neighbourhood forum.

- Their knowledge and understanding of diversity are outstanding. They show a sensitive awareness of differences in culture and ethnicity and of the need to have respect for others.
- Pupils show good understanding of environmental issues and the sustainability of the world's resources. From the excellent opportunities offered in the Early Years Foundation Stage outdoor Forest School upwards, they demonstrate a growing awareness of conserving natural resources.
- Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of democracy through the elections for the school council and the appointment of head boy and girl; they have a satisfactory understanding of how local democracy affects their lives.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- Teachers value pupils' opinions, strongly encourage debate and create a positive climate for learning. There are good opportunities in lessons for pupils to give their opinions on controversial issues. Consequently, pupils contribute their ideas enthusiastically; for example on the moral issues related to fox-hunting and animals in captivity.
- Interactive whiteboard technology is used to very good effect; access to web pages in lessons brings topical issues into the classroom. Pupils' learning is further enhanced by homework that links well to the topics and encourages pupils to use information and communication technology to conduct their own research.
- Teachers use a range of effective approaches including whole-class discussion, pair and team work. Pupils demonstrate their enjoyment and enthusiasm in lessons and actively participate in their learning.
- Lessons are planned effectively to meet the very wide range of abilities and needs. Staff are skilled in including and supporting all pupils in their learning.
- Teachers assess pupils' achievement in citizenship effectively in lessons; verbal feedback to pupils in lessons successfully reinforces the personal skills that are developed through the subject. However, there is further scope to record the rate at which pupils are developing knowledge, skills and understanding of aspects of citizenship as they move through the school.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is outstanding.

- Citizenship themes are planned effectively within the PSHCE curriculum as part of the school's successful approach to pupils' personal development. Learning across a range of subjects such as literacy, geography history and religious education is planned thoughtfully. Good attention is given to developing pupils' understanding of key areas such as diversity, culture, and rights and responsibilities through lessons and a range of extra-curricular visits, visitors and cultural events. Other aspects, such as the role of parliament and local democracy, are given less attention.
- There are well-planned opportunities for pupils to develop a good understanding of sustainability in the environment. Their enthusiastic involvement in the school's travel plan and the innovative alternatives they devised for travelling to school resulted in the school winning an award.
- The school integrates knowledge, skills and understanding well through the development of pupils' debating and writing skills. All pupils have opportunities to play an active role as citizens, contributing well to the school and the wider community.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- Key staff work very effectively together to plan citizenship across all areas of the school. You and your deputy have established a strong whole-school commitment to active and responsible citizenship in the school. There is a strong drive to help all pupils feel part of a cohesive school community and develop the knowledge, understanding and decision-making skills required to make a positive contribution.
- The learning mentor and extended school's coordinator work with inclusion staff to promote pupils' development and learning in the subject. The strategic planning by key members of staff is a strength of the subject leadership.
- The school has an accurate understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses in the subject and a clear view of the place of citizenship within the revised curriculum.
- Resources to support learning in citizenship are good and the learning environment is used very effectively to display work in the subject; for example photographs of pupils learning to be a good junior citizen.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving the assessment of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in citizenship so that their progress is monitored as they move from year to year.

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

Pat Walsh
Her Majesty's Inspector