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29 April 2010

Miss L Robbins
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Robbins

Ofsted 2010-11 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 21 April 2010 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 you, key staff, the school council and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is good with some outstanding features.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment in citizenship are good with outstanding elements.

- Pupils display good understanding of many of the key aspects of citizenship. In particular, they have a strong sense of fairness and demonstrate respect for each other. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities within the school and wider community.
- Pupils have particularly good knowledge and understanding of rights and responsibilities, how to care for the environment, and issues around sustainability. The work of the eco group is a key feature.
- Good attention is paid to understanding local and national issues through the use of the 'Current Events' board, which highlights issues in the news and invites pupils to write and justify their own views.

- The use of the pupils' voice is highly effective through the work of the school and eco councils. Pupils confidently participate in decision-making about real issues affecting the school and local community, and are proud of their impact. They are developing a good understanding of the democratic process and the responsibilities of representatives. The work on the forthcoming general election and preparation for a mock election in school is reinforcing their understanding of how democracy works.
- The personal development of pupils through active participation is outstanding. They demonstrate respect for others and the environment; their excellent behaviour and support for each other exemplify this. They readily assume responsibility, make decisions and organise their own activities. Pupils readily take responsible action, for example acting as buddies, peer-supporters, organising their gardening activities and agreeing their own responses to charity appeals. There are many varied opportunities for pupils to lead, take action and make a difference in the school community and beyond. The strength of this work lies in the ownership evident from pupils' initial decision-making to realising the outcomes of their actions.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of diversity and cultural awareness are satisfactory. They have a growing awareness of global diversity through the well-developed links with schools in South Africa and France. The opportunities for links with culturally diverse communities within the UK are less well developed.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- The climate in lessons is positive and encouraging. The use of the 'Philosophy for Children' approach provides a useful framework for pupils to reflect on issues and contribute their ideas. Consequently, pupils are happy and confident in expressing their views and listening to those of others.
- Lessons are planned effectively and learning objectives for citizenship are clearly identified. Teachers are confident in encouraging discussion and debate. A range of approaches, including whole-class discussion, pair and group work, is used effectively. Good opportunities exist for developing team-working and cooperative activities. Consequently, pupils enjoy their learning and are eager contributors in lessons.
- Lessons are planned effectively to meet the range of abilities and needs. Staff are skilled in including and supporting all pupils. Careful attention is paid to supporting individuals with acute needs so that they can develop confidence and the necessary social and emotional literacy skills to be able to participate in discussions.
- The use of verbal feedback to pupils in lessons is effective; more formal assessment in the subject is at a developmental stage. This issue is recognised by the school.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is good with outstanding features.

- Identified citizenship units are planned effectively within the curriculum as part of the school's successful approach to pupils' personal development. Planning takes account of the need to build depth and progression as pupils move through the school.
- The quality of work in citizenship, evident across the school, is excellent. In particular, the prominence of high-quality displays in classrooms adds to the learning environment and reinforces citizenship learning well.
- The contribution made to community cohesion is outstanding. Excellent use is made of extensive links with community groups and organisations; these are used most effectively for learning purposes. For example, the community gardening project underway at Land Rover is enriching pupils' understanding of the roles they can play as local citizens. Another example is the work carried out in examining the parish plan, and identifying and planning the actions pupils might take to support this. Learning is relevant to local issues, concerns and celebrations; this places the school at the heart of the community.
- The curriculum covers most of the aspects of citizenship. However, few opportunities are planned for pupils to develop a wider perspective across some strands of citizenship; for example, the cultural diversity within the UK and the role of voluntary groups and organisations.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- You and your key staff have a clear vision for the subject. There is clarity about the significance and value of citizenship and importantly, of pupils participating and taking responsible action. In addition to the formal curriculum, there is a clear commitment to ensure that the wider ethos and atmosphere of the school support the principles of active citizenship.
- Resources to support learning in citizenship are good and the learning environment is used very effectively to enhance learning.
- Subject leadership is strong. The subject leader is energetic and enthusiastic in her role and there is evidence of creativity and a forward-thinking approach to the subject. Excellent support from yourself and your governors is fostering an atmosphere in which citizenship is flourishing.
- The school has correctly identified the assessment of progress in citizenship as an area for development. Your evaluation of your work in citizenship is largely accurate, if modest.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing assessment in citizenship so that pupils' progress across the school can be monitored more clearly

- ensuring that those aspects of the curriculum that are currently covered in less detail are developed further.

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 under the unique reference number for your school. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Judith Matharu
Her Majesty's Inspector