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Mr C Ricketts  
Headteacher  
Curdworth Primary School  
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Dear Mr Ricketts

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: history

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 29 June 2010 to look at work in history.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of one lesson.

The overall effectiveness of history is good.

Achievement in history

Achievement in history is good.

- Attainment is above average by the end of Key Stage 2 and pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. Pupils undertake exciting independent learning activities, such as investigating Florence Nightingale's contribution to the development of nursing in the Crimean War.
- Teachers help pupils to ask relevant questions about the topics they are studying and encourage them to follow up their own lines of enquiry when producing written work.
- Pupils said they really enjoyed analysing the materials sent on a regular basis by the local library service. Work built around these resources helps to strengthen pupils' understanding of how to evaluate evidence most effectively.

- Pupils' personal development is excellent in history. Pupils say they think history is 'always interesting because the teachers make lessons fun and you get to research your own ideas'. They like learning about the Egyptians and the Tudors. They enjoy comparing the past with the present and finding out about how things have developed over time.
- Behaviour is excellent in lessons. Pupils communicate very clearly when they present their ideas to the rest of the class, and are confident when answering questions from other pupils.

#### Quality of teaching in history

The quality of teaching in history is good.

- Teachers develop good relationships with pupils. Lessons are planned very well to ensure that the needs of all pupils are taken into account and that all can engage in the activities. Teachers give pupils time to expand on their views and to write about them at length.
- Marking is good in pupils' books and helps them to improve their work. In lessons, teachers constantly communicate their expectations to pupils and give appropriate praise to those who meet their objectives. They do not yet monitor individual pupils' development of skills sufficiently rigorously. However, good plans are in place to tackle this and new methods, such as experiential learning, are being trialled with some groups.

#### Quality of the curriculum in history

The quality of the history curriculum is good.

- The curriculum has been planned effectively so that history topics retain their slot on the timetable while being linked sensibly with other subjects and wider thematic topics.
- The emphasis on developing pupils' history skills is satisfactory. The school is reviewing its curriculum so that more emphasis can be placed on skills development in the future.
- The school organises an excellent range of visits to places of historical importance locally, such as Selly Manor and the Viking Ring Fort at Canwell. Good use is also made of visiting speakers and parents who are keen to share their experiences of the past with pupils.

#### Effectiveness of leadership and management in history

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of history is good.

- The coordinator has been responsible for history for a year and has been well supported by other staff in the school. She has a good grasp of the place and importance of history in the school curriculum and has interesting plans for extending the contribution that history can make through other cross-curricular topics and themes.

- The school has good plans and policies for history but self-evaluation of the subject remains limited.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving the self-evaluation of history
- embedding the monitoring and evaluation of skills in history in all classes.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop history 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 URN for your school. It will also be available to the team for your next school inspection.

Yours sincerely

Peter Limm  
Her Majesty's Inspector