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Mrs N Maycock
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Maycock

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 23 June 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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with key staff, pupils and a parent; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observations of 'Green Week' activities and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is outstanding.

Achievement in citizenship

Achievement and enjoyment of learning in citizenship are outstanding.

- Pupils demonstrate 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 consistently good teaching.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the principles of democracy are well developed through their elections for House Captains and various other opportunities to vote in school. These aspects are further developed through a strong curriculum emphasis.
- Pupils show particularly good understanding of environmental issues and the sustainability of resources. During this visit, all pupils were working very successfully in mixed-age groups on their 'Green Week' projects, gaining much enjoyment from the experience.

- Pupils' personal development through active citizenship is exemplary. The school's approach in allowing pupils to take the lead, make decisions and organise activities themselves is encouraging independence and creativity. For example, pupils decide how and when they might respond to charity events and how they might take action to improve their school grounds. The impressive work of Year 6 pupils in designing, planning, and preparing the training information for the use of the 'Trim Trail' by other pupils exemplifies this well.

Quality of teaching in citizenship

During this visit, pupils were engaged in 'Green Week' projects; therefore the teaching observed was within these activities. Here, the teaching observed was consistently good.

- The sessions observed were interesting, active and participatory; pupils thoroughly enjoyed their learning. Excellent relationships and high expectations were evident; these promoted pupils' personal development very well.
- Excellent team work is evident with teachers and teaching assistants working very well together to support pupils' learning.
- From the range of pupils' work seen, it is clear that teachers use a range of approaches to help pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills in citizenship. Teachers strongly encourage debate and provide good opportunities in lessons for pupils to give their opinions on controversial topics. Consequently, pupils contribute their ideas with confidence; for example, some good written work was seen regarding pupils' use of mobile telephones and the arguments for and against fox-hunting.
- The assessment of pupils' achievement in citizenship is good.

Quality of the curriculum in citizenship

The quality of the citizenship curriculum is outstanding.

- The school's thematic approach is highly successful in embedding citizenship learning across the curriculum.
- School assemblies are used very well to reflect on citizenship themes; for example, the assembly observed required pupils to reflect and respond on their thoughts about the difference and similarities between people while subtly challenging stereotypical views.
- Good coverage of topical and current issues is reinforced by consideration of local newspapers and events in the national and international news. Consequently, pupils' knowledge and understanding of current events are extensive and detailed.
- The curriculum is highly successful in ensuring that learning is relevant to pupils' lives. For example, work on charity in Victorian times was brought up to date by considering the role of charitable organisations today, such as Dr Barnados and Christian Aid.

- The school holds well-chosen events to extend pupils' understanding, such as the Mock Trial Contest for Year 5, an Evacuation Day for pupils to experience and empathise with conditions when studying the Second World War, and activities during Faith Week, when pupils visit different place of worship to deepen their understanding of different cultures and faiths as part of the school's work on identity and diversity.
- The school's engagement with the local community is exemplary. Pupils have opportunities to influence beyond the school and have successfully campaigned to improve the local area through the reduction of graffiti, improve local road safety measures and reduce litter in the neighbourhood. Opportunities are seized for pupils to contribute to local community events to strengthen community cohesion.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are outstanding.

- You and your staff team have established a strong vision for citizenship, and ensured its successful development across the curriculum. This is underpinned by a commitment for every child to have a voice in the school.
- Pupils feel part of a cohesive school community and develop the knowledge, understanding and decision-making skills required to become informed citizens of the future.
- Subject documentation clearly and accurately identifies how and where citizenship learning takes place across the curriculum.
- The school's approach to the use of the pupil voice is innovative and successful. For example, pupils were involved in the decision not to have a traditional school council to ensure that all children have a voice. A range of alternative suitable strategies is in place to ensure that pupils' views are heard and acted upon.

An area for improvement, which we discussed, includes:

- ensuring that liaison with secondary schools clearly identifies the skills and understanding that pupils have developed in citizenship, so that this might be built upon in the next stage of their education.

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

Yours sincerely

Judith Matharu
Her Majesty's Inspector