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26 November 2010

Mrs J Bradley
Headteacher
Padiham St Leonard's CE Primary
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Dear Mrs Bradley

Ofsted 2010–11 best practice study: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 and 12 November 2010 to look at work in English.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about best practice in English. The publication will include case studies about individual providers. If your school is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment prior to publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: observation of the work of the school, including four lessons; examples of pupils' writing; and discussions with staff and pupils.

Features of best practice

- The school's exciting curriculum inspires pupils to make outstanding progress in English. Intriguing scenarios, visits and role play stimulate pupils to communicate powerfully. They speak and write for compelling purposes which they help to define. As a result, by the end of Key Stage 2 they use spoken and written language effectively and understand how reading and writing skills are relevant to their lives. Standards by the end of Key Stage 2 are at least average, although not quite as high in writing as in reading, and this represents outstanding progress from pupils' starting points.
- All staff work together to develop whole-school themes and activities, utilising their talents and interests and a wide range of visitors. The team of subject leaders helps to ensure that medium term plans build skills

progressively. These plans are flexible and, at class level, pupils play a key part in choosing what and how they will learn.

- The school recruits enthusiastic staff and invests in their skills. Adults working with pupils make a very effective contribution to group work in class as a result of training which has included leading activities which link sounds and letters, using ICT, and engaging pupils in creative work. Planning, delivery and evaluation in each class are done by teamwork. As a result, pupils are well known as individuals to all staff and their progress is well supported and monitored.
- Tasks and activities are matched carefully to pupils' needs and strengths and have a clearly defined purpose. Lively, responsive teaching successfully involves pupils in working out what counts as good writing or speaking and how they can achieve it. Pupils have specific and up-to-date targets. They are guided well to reflect thoughtfully on what they have learnt and what they should try next.

Areas for development

- Increasing the confidence of pupils to write independently at the highest levels.

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

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Susan Bowles
Her Majesty's Inspector