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Mr J Hanley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hanley

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils during my visit on 27 September 2010 to look at work in English.

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; observation of three lessons and short visits to a further three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is good.

Achievement in English

Achievement in English is good.

- Pupils make at least good progress in all aspects of English and their attainment overall in the subject is above average by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Attainment is above average in reading and in speaking and listening but is average in writing.
- Boys' attainment is closer to that of girls than is typical nationally.
- Pupils' learning is aided by their good behaviour and application to work in lessons. They respond particularly well to challenging, pacy lessons in which teachers show genuine enthusiasm for the subject.

Quality of teaching in English

The quality of teaching in English is good.

- The bulk of the teaching observed was of a good quality and evidence of pupils' progress confirms that this is typical.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are very positive and behaviour is managed well so lessons run smoothly.
- In the most effective lessons, teachers expected a lot of the pupils and had clear objectives for the learning. Pupils knew how they could judge their progress. These lessons moved along at a brisk pace and pupils were fully involved in productive question and answer sessions and discussions with their classmates. This meant that pupils had to work hard to keep up and they achieved a great deal.
- Occasionally, when the pace of teaching was slower, some pupils did not sustain full attention.
- Teachers use information and communication technology effectively as an integral part of lessons.
- Phonics are taught very well in the Early Years Foundation Stage and the children are making rapid progress. Staff teach precisely and provide a good range of well-considered activities to help the children consolidate new learning.

Quality of the curriculum in English

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- The curriculum covers all national requirements and matches pupils' needs. Appropriate attention is given to drama, poetry and media.
- The curriculum is adjusted thoughtfully to take account of the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance. Initiatives, such as the recent increased focus on speaking and listening, spelling and handwriting, are implemented consistently across the school.
- Pupils have a good range of opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills and to perform.
- The range of activities provided to enrich the curriculum, such as extra-curricular clubs, visits and visitors, is satisfactory but has scope for improvement.
- A good range of additional support utilises resources within and beyond the school for pupils who need extra help.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in English

Leadership and management in English are good.

- Teamwork is strong. You and the subject leader work in close partnership to keep close track of pupils' progress and the quality of provision and to

identify areas in need of further development. Your evaluation of the subject is accurate and planning for the future is sound.

- A number of well-considered developments in recent years have improved the quality of provision in the subject and show signs of raising achievement.
- Staff are receptive to new ideas and they benefit from a good amount of helpful guidance on new developments from the subject leader; this promotes consistency of provision and progression.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising attainment in writing
- strengthening the provision of additional activities to enrich the English curriculum.

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

Pat Kime
Her Majesty's Inspector