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10 November 2011

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Dear Mr Jackson

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 2 November 2011 to look at work in ICT.

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; a tour of the school with pupils; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of five lessons, including one observed jointly with a deputy headteacher.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is good.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is good.

■ Pupils enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with levels of attainment in ICT which are below national expectations. In these classes, children are extremely well supported and make rapid progress. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is good and, by Year 6, pupils leave with standards that are at national expectations in most strands of ICT. Pupils are especially confident in communication and presentation but weaker in data-logging and the use of sensors. This represents good progress.

■ Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given effective support by teachers and teaching assistants, and make the same good progress as other groups of pupils.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good. Lesson observations and discussions with pupils indicate that they are very positive about ICT and are enthusiastic users of ICT to support their learning.

- Pupils are supported to learn how to become responsible users of new technologies in lessons and through assemblies. They have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe and are able to assess risks when using new technologies at school and at home.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this to plan activities which engage and motivate pupils. They use an excellent range of resources to develop pupils' independent learning skills. For example, in a Reception class, ICT was used to support a range of guided tasks leading to pupils making excellent progress in the understanding of positional language.

- The relationships between staff and pupils are excellent and pupils enjoy using ICT. This is reflected in their support for each other in lessons and in their good behaviour when using ICT.

- The school has not developed an effective scheme to assess, monitor and track pupils' progress in ICT. Pupils are not involved in recording their achievements and so have no clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. The school is aware that this is an area for development.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is good.

- All pupils receive their entitlement to the statutory ICT National Curriculum. The curriculum has been recently reviewed and ICT is woven into schemes of work for all curriculum areas. There is a good emphasis on presenting information, communication and data-handling and a satisfactory emphasis on control and data-logging.

- Effective links are being developed between ICT, literacy, numeracy and foundation subjects. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement.

- The school has developed very effective links with sixth-form students from a local secondary school to support the teaching of numeracy to more able Year 6 pupils through the use of ICT.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is satisfactory.

- Senior leaders have a good overview of strengths and weaknesses in ICT within the school and effective plans to develop the subject are in place. However, these have not yet been shared throughout the school.

- The subject coordinator does not regularly monitor teaching, curriculum planning and pupils' work and this is limiting pupils' progress.
- Senior leaders have identified as a priority the need to design and embed assessment procedures to ensure greater accuracy of monitoring of the progress of all groups of pupils over time.
- Technical support is good and ensures that systems are reliable and available when needed.
- Staff have received training on how to keep pupils and themselves safe while using new technologies.
- Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing the role of the ICT coordinator in monitoring teaching and pupils' progress
- improving the quality of pupils' learning and their progress throughout the school by sharing best practice in teaching when using ICT
- improving the quality of pupils' learning and their progress by using assessment information to monitor, support and challenge all pupils
- ensuring that pupils are aware of their individual targets, so that they know what they need to do to improve.

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

As 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

David Brown
Additional Inspector