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Mrs Gillian Passola, Head of School
Mrs Liz Bird, Executive Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Pasola & Mrs Bird

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on Tuesday 24 April 2012 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; analysis of pupils' work; a tour of the school with pupils; and observation of three lessons including one observed jointly with the head of school and one observed jointly with the executive headteacher.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory and is improving.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

- Children begin the Early Years Foundation Stage with skills in ICT that are below those expected for their age. They make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Pupils in the current Year 6 class are predicted to attain in line with expected ICT levels at the end of the current academic year. This would indicate good progress from their starting points. However, the progress of pupils in other year groups over time has been too inconsistent. This means that they are still catching up on prior underachievement in ICT. Recent improvements in the quality of teaching are raising pupils' achievement in ICT.

- Those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given effective support by teachers and teaching assistants and make at least expected levels of progress over time.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory.

- During the inspection, good ICT teaching was observed. Teachers used day-to-day assessment well to ensure appropriate challenge for different groups of pupils and pupils were observed enjoying learning. This supported their good behaviour in ICT lessons. However, pupils' satisfactory progress over time in ICT means that the quality of teaching over time is also satisfactory.
- Teachers communicate what it is that pupils are learning in each lesson effectively. However, pupils do not always understand why they are learning particular skills. This means that their understanding of the purpose and value of ICT is not as well developed as it could be.
- Teachers frequently mark pupils' work in ICT and provide feedback about the quality of their work. However, teachers' comments do not always clearly outline the next steps of learning that pupils need to take to improve, or communicate individual ICT targets.
- ICT is used effectively to support other areas of learning across the school and teachers plan work creatively to support learning in different subjects.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is satisfactory.

- All pupils receive their entitlement to the statutory ICT National Curriculum. However, some elements of ICT are weaker than others, particularly the areas of control and data-logging.
- The school curriculum has been reviewed and pupils now cover a range of learning themes linked to different subject areas. A good range of ICT resources is available to pupils. These factors support the school's good use of ICT across the curriculum.
- Extra-curricular opportunities support pupils' learning in ICT effectively, including daily lunchtime ICT clubs, which are well attended. The school acknowledges that more work could be done to engage parents and carers in learning alongside and supporting their child's learning, to ensure increased consistency in expectations of achievement and a deeper understanding of how to stay safe on the internet.
- Pupils are supported to learn how to become responsible users of new technologies in lessons and through assemblies. This means that by Year 6, pupils have a clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe when using new technologies at school and at home.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is good.

- Although the quality of teaching, the curriculum and pupils' achievement in ICT are satisfactory, they are improving quickly. This is because leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's current position and have effectively identified areas of weakness.
- Leaders ensure that ICT resources are well managed and maintained.
- Action plans to support improvement in ICT are of good quality. However, opportunities for representatives of the governing body to monitor the impact of specific actions are not always clearly identified.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- accelerating pupils' progress in ICT by improving the quality of marking and feedback in ICT and introducing individual pupil targets, so that pupils more clearly understand the next steps of learning they need to take to improve
- improving pupils' understanding of ICT and its best usage and purpose in the local community and in the wider world
- improving the quality of the ICT curriculum by increasing pupils' opportunities to use data-logging and control technology
- introducing more opportunities for parents and carers to learn alongside their children in ICT, to ensure consistency in expectations of achievement and to share good practice in staying safe when using technology.

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

Jeremy Spencer
Her Majesty's Inspector