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Mr Instone
Headteacher
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Shakespeare Drive
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Dear Mr Instone

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 25 September 2006 to look at work in science.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in science are good.

- Pupils perform at the expected levels and make good progress in science lessons.
- Pupils' progress is monitored carefully by teachers and they are set appropriate and challenging targets.
- Pupils enjoy science and work with interest and enthusiasm. This reflects the high priority given to science in the school and the teaching approaches used.

Quality of teaching and learning of science

The quality of teaching and learning in science is good.

- Teachers are enthusiastic about science and have a good teaching manner that leads to good relationships with their classes and with individual pupils. They show sensitivity to the needs of all pupils.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and they use this well to plan interesting lessons that have clear objectives.
- All lessons are prepared thoroughly and resources are used effectively.
- Extensive use is made of questioning to engage pupils and develop teaching points.
- Pupils enjoy the practical approach to science and they have many opportunities to develop and apply their practical skills.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- There is a very well planned scheme of work that provides a good basis for teachers' planning. This results in a balanced programme for learning that meets the needs of pupils and complies with National Curriculum requirements.
- There is good progression through the science topics.
- There is a particularly good emphasis on scientific enquiry.

Leadership and management of science

Leadership and management of science are good.

- Science is provided with a very clear direction and there is a well-established shared understanding of the teaching approaches used.
- All staff are supported well and good attention is given to professional development through observation and feedback and the modelling of good lessons.
- Good use is made of the links with the local authority science team.
- Monitoring is thorough and rigorous and leads to the identification of what is working well and those aspects that need to improve.
- The school has built up a very good range of science resources and these are managed extremely effectively.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- The school monitors the progress of individuals carefully, and uses this to provide appropriate interventions and support.
- Assessment data is used well to identify and deal with trends.
- Teachers demonstrate great sensitivity for the needs of individual pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- the feedback to teachers following observations of their teaching should focus more on the quality of pupils' learning to inform the evaluation of the teaching
- making use of a broader range of starting points for practical work
- encouraging pupils to think more scientifically, develop their scientific reasoning and promote greater independence
- the use of different styles and approaches when pupils are writing about their work in science.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop science 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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Jim Sage
Her Majesty's Inspector