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Mr S Chynoweth
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Chynoweth

Ofsted survey inspection programme: Innovative Curriculum

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 23 November 2006 to look at work in developing an innovative curriculum.

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, pupils and scrutiny of relevant documentation, and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the curriculum is outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Standards are high and pupils achieve very well.

- Attainment measured by average point scores rose steadily between 2003 and 2005 in Key Stage 2.
- Standards in mathematics are higher than in English reflecting the greater expertise of staff in this area of curriculum.

Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching is very good and pupils learn very effectively.

- Teachers are well prepared and confident and have high expectations of their pupils. Planned activities interest the pupils and link coherently to provide an holistic experience.
- Teachers maintain a good pace in discussions and because activities link carefully to previous lessons, pupils are able to work productively whether it is independently, in pairs or small groups.
- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They cooperate effectively, respect each others' point of view and value the contributions of all group members. As a result learning is very good.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- It is broad, relevant and enjoyable.
- Pupils enjoy the thematic approach and make very good progress personally and academically. In recent years there has been a steady development in the way the curriculum is planned, focussing particularly on a clear progression of skills. It is aspirational in the way it endeavours to help pupils reach expected levels of attainment in foundation subjects well before they leave the school.
- There are very good links between subjects. This enhances learning, for example in one lesson the writing relating to a history project was at the expected levels for English as well as history. This approach gives pupils the confidence to develop their key literacy skills in a wide range of subjects.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the school are excellent.

- You and your deputy have a clear view of where the school is heading and this is underpinned by high quality monitoring and evaluation. These are supported by an ethos of team work, partnerships, shared expertise and formal monitoring.
- The curriculum is planned effectively and driven forward with significant energy. The curriculum initiative is well researched and focussed. Nonetheless, it is open to change when monitoring activities suggest that this is necessary.
- Flexible and creative approaches to curriculum planning are underpinned by clear non-negotiable principles which secure the high standards of preparation, teaching, learning and attainment.
- The very important role of ICT is clear. It not only enhances pupils' experiences and skills but it is fundamental in the efficient implementation of the development plan, monitoring and evaluation.

Inclusion

The curriculum is made accessible to all.

- Planning ensures that activities are matched well to pupils' abilities. Additional support for vulnerable pupils, for example the smaller social development groups, helps to ensure that pupils are emotionally better equipped to learn in large class settings.
- Individual and small group support from teaching assistants is good.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure that the focus on the full introduction of the new curriculum arrangements do not detract from rigorous monitoring of overall standards especially in English
- check carefully the pupils' development of spelling throughout the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the curriculum 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

Daniel Towl
Her Majesty's Inspector