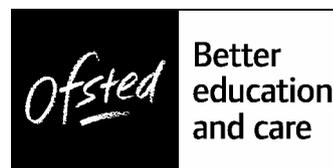


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19 October 2006

Ms Jessica Bailey
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Ms Bailey

Ofsted survey inspection programme – history

Thank you for making my visit on the 06 October so enjoyable and informative. As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at work in history, the visit had a particular focus on literacy in history.

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 documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four parts of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history in your school was judged to be good with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Standards in history are above average and pupils make good progress. Pupils are confident learners who enjoy their history lessons. The standard of

written work in Year 2 is above average, as is the quality of pupils' knowledge and understanding when they are interviewed.

- Written work is well presented, with older pupils beginning to write at length and in different forms. I was particularly impressed with the class books on various history topics that are written by the pupils. By Year 2, pupils show a growing understanding of change over time and about how to study history. All pupils show a good recall of earlier work and Year 2 learners are clearly well prepared for work at Key Stage 2.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Pupils enjoy learning because they have a lot of fun, excitement and practical activities in lessons. Group activities and open questioning engage the pupils effectively and ensure that they make good progress. Marking is good, because teachers show pupils exactly what they have done well and what they need to do to improve their work.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good with some outstanding features.

- The scheme of work is clear and the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Displays of pupils' work and other materials are good and enhance the quality of pupils' learning. There is a very good focus on developing pupils' writing skills and this is having a positive impact on standards in history.
- Excellent use is made of role play, visitors and other creative work to support the children in the learning of history. A particularly outstanding example of this creativity was seen during the inspection when a visiting dancer came in to demonstrate the Lindy Hop to pupils in Year 2 as part of Black History Month.
- We discussed ideas about how the curriculum might change to ensure that it remains relevant to pupils as citizens in 2006 and beyond. We talked about the possibility of establishing a bridging unit with the feeder junior school and about ways to embed the study of history more explicitly in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good.

- The new subject leader has made a good start to her new job but would benefit from further training in self evaluation.
- Resources have been very well developed and displays and the use of artefacts are enhancing learning well. The school has identified both the strengths and areas for development well.

Focus: Literacy in history

- This is good. There are very good opportunities for pupils to write at different lengths and for different purposes. I have already mentioned the class books written by pupils on topics such as Bessie Coleman and Victorian schools.
- Pupils clearly enjoy writing and are very proud of their efforts. Standards in writing are above average at the end of Year 2.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities, as well as those with English as an additional language, are well supported and the school has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. It encourages pupils to grow as individuals by ensuring that they take part in an exciting range of activities. The rich cultural diversity within the school is celebrated effectively in history lessons.

Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- further develop the already good curriculum through exploring the possibility of establishing a bridging unit with the feeder junior school
- embed history topics more explicitly in the Foundation Stage curriculum, particularly in the Nursery class
- provide further training for the new subject leader, particularly in monitoring and evaluation.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop history in your 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

Dr Lynn Bappa
Additional Inspector