

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



04 October 2007

Mrs D Kane
Headteacher
Springwell Junior School
Vicarage Farm Road
Heston
Hounslow
Middlesex
TW5 0AG

Dear Mrs Kane

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Science

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 24 September 2007 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 6 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of science was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- Overall standards are high and pupils achieve scores above the national average in Key Stage 2 tests. Pupils' scores for English and mathematics are significantly above the national average. However, their scores for science are at the average.
- Pupils make very good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and attain SAT test scores above that predicted by their prior attainment.
- The quality of work observed in lessons is good and pupils answer questions with confidence.
- Their behaviour is excellent and they work effectively in groups, collaborating well in practical activities.
- Their interest and enthusiasm for science is obvious and they achieve good standards when they report on their investigations.

Quality of teaching and learning of science

The quality of teaching and learning in science is good.

- Lesson planning is well developed and is a key strength of teaching and learning. Sound lesson plans and schemes of work provide a good framework for teachers to develop their own ideas in order to engage the interest of their pupils.
- Well organised science lessons with a variety of activities and individual responsibilities allow the pupils to learn and make sense of the science concepts in different ways.
- Practical work and individual investigations are effectively carried out. Pupils are clear as to the aims of their investigations and use an appropriate range of scientific resources. Fair tests and careful planning by the pupils lead to safe investigations and considerable enthusiasm for practical activity.
- Classrooms are good learning environments and relevant scientific vocabulary is prominently displayed to help pupils express themselves in the appropriate scientific terms.
- Teachers make good use of directed questions to encourage discussion of scientific ideas and to build the confidence of their pupils in expressing themselves to others. Teachers leave space for pupils to think before responding. The pupils' responses to questions and discussion are encouraging and they offer sensible ideas and explanations from their daily lives.
- Assessment is good. Pupils' work is well marked and their progress well tracked. Assessment for learning is developing but will need further development to make a significant impact on overall monitoring of progress.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the science curriculum in meeting the needs of the pupils is good.

- Science topics are well sequenced and there is a broad and balanced curriculum throughout Key Stage 2. Scientific enquiry (SC1) is well integrated into work involving the other attainment targets in science.
- Science teaching and learning are not artificially constrained by timetabling arrangements and teachers can use afternoon lessons to extend science activities if appropriate. This flexibility allows teachers to extend pupils' learning and to complete discussion and writing.
- The range of extra curricular activities is good, and the activities contribute to the breadth of scientific experiences that pupils benefit from.

Leadership and management of subject/aspect

Leadership and management in science are good.

- The school's self evaluation of the science provision is accurate and judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in science are

sound. The science co-ordinator is well organised and brings enthusiasm and a sense of the importance of science to her role.

- Planning is a strength across the school, and the recently constituted science curriculum group has brought more consistency of assessment and staff development to the management of science. Teachers have been motivated and enthused by the opportunities for greater participation afforded by the formation of curriculum teams.
- The assessment of pupils' investigations and the contribution the assessments make to tracking progress is beginning to be developed.
- Science is well resourced and specialist equipment in good supply. However, data logging equipment is not often used, although other ICT is well used in science lessons.
- Teachers are well qualified and one has a specialist science qualification. Recent staff development has not focused on science but on other priorities for the school such as literacy and numeracy.
- The school has not used the regional science learning centre for staff development but has used local west London arrangements.
- Transition arrangements from Key Stage 2 to 3 are well organised and pupils are well prepared for the move to secondary education.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good and is a key strength of the school.

- Teachers are well aware of the additional learning needs of their pupils and make sure that they are all included in science activities at an appropriate level.
- There is well targeted one to one intervention for those for whom it is appropriate.
- Classroom learning assistants are well used in a variety of ways to help pupils make secure progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- further development of assessment for learning
- making more use of data loggers in science practical work
- investigating the suitability of science staff development opportunities from a range of sources including the regional science learning centre.

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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Alex Falconer
Her Majesty's Inspector

