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Mr M Christian  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Christian

### **Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: citizenship**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 22 and 23 June 2011 to look at work in citizenship.

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 students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of six lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of citizenship is satisfactory.

#### **Achievement in citizenship**

Achievement in citizenship is satisfactory.

- Students' attainment in 2010 in GCSE humanities, which includes a substantial citizenship element, was good. Results were well above course averages.
- Students' work in Key Stage 4 demonstrates satisfactory standards with good progress in some aspects, for example in an enquiry relating to changes in the law.
- In Key Stage 3, students were observed to achieve well in lessons. For example, students demonstrated good achievement in advocacy, making very effective presentations on behalf of a charitable organisation and considering the role of government in this respect. Overall, however, their achievement and progress in citizenship are patchy, reflecting the current

curriculum. There are particular gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the key aspects of government and politics.

- Students interviewed demonstrated good achievement in contributing to the broader life of the school and in representing their peers on school and house councils and as subject monitors.

### **Quality of teaching in citizenship**

The quality of teaching in citizenship is good.

- This judgement is based on the observation of lessons in which elements of citizenship were present to varying degrees, ranging from central citizenship concepts and processes, such as work on identity and diversity of the UK through to lessons where links to citizenship were more tangential, however worthwhile.
- The lessons observed in English, geography and history were all good or outstanding. These were characterised by very good planning of interesting activities, highly positive relationships with students, effective and varied tasks, very well-chosen resources and good use of information and communication technology.
- Teachers made appropriate links to citizenship; for example, by the use of references to current issues, which added to the relevance of their subjects and were interesting and motivating to students.
- Good practice was observed in assessment for learning in lessons and in marking students' work. At present in Key Stage 3, assessment in geography is used as a proxy for citizenship, moderated by humanities teachers, and thus citizenship is not assessed as it should be as a National Curriculum subject. In humanities GCSE, the assessment of work against examination criteria provides good evidence of progress and achievement.

### **Quality of the curriculum in citizenship**

The quality of the curriculum in citizenship is satisfactory.

- This judgement of satisfactory rests on the solid attention to citizenship in Key Stage 4 and the contribution made to citizenship by other subjects in Key Stage 3, where there is no core programme.
- Currently, the Key Stage 3 curriculum consists mainly of subject links in history, geography and English. Some of these, such as work on identity and diversity in geography, are tangible and directly meet citizenship objectives. Others are implicit. The citizenship processes, such as advocacy and campaigning, are planned for, but are exercised in other subject contexts rather than relating directly to the specified range and content of the citizenship National Curriculum.
- The curriculum is augmented by days when the timetable is suspended to pursue particular themes including the study of the holocaust, linked to understanding of human rights, which students commented on positively.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in citizenship is satisfactory.

- School leaders have evaluated citizenship provision to inform the approach being taken in the curriculum, moving from a personal, social, health, economic and citizenship model to one based within the humanities faculty. This has produced some benefits in sharpening approaches to the subject curricula, although there is not a full citizenship programme in Key Stage 3.
- There has been strong support for subject development within the humanities faculty as well as from other subjects such as English. However, there has been some discontinuity of subject leadership. I had the opportunity to discuss citizenship with the newly appointed subject leader, whose work begins in September.
- Complementing the school's monitoring programme, I observed several lessons jointly with a senior leader; our judgements on teaching and learning were in agreement.
- Citizenship does not have a high profile in the school, but successfully permeates the curriculum and school procedures. Evidence of the impact of work in developing citizenship at Key Stage 4, together with various subject links and pupil voice activities indicate good capacity to improve.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- reviewing the Key Stage 3 curriculum to establish a tangible core for citizenship to underpin students' learning and progression
- building on the school's approach to assessment in humanities to establish separate and rigorous assessment in citizenship
- ensuring that the newly appointed subject leader has the training, resources and support necessary to discharge her new role.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop citizenship in the school.

As I 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. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Scott Harrison**  
**Additional Inspector**