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Mr G Jones  
Headteacher  
Cummersdale School  
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Carlisle  
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Dear Mr Jones

**Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 10 May 2012 to look at work in ICT.

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 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory.

**Achievement in ICT**

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

- Pupils enter Reception with ICT capabilities that are around national expectations. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school and, by the end of Year 6, leave with standards that are similar to national averages.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given good support by teachers and teaching assistants, and make the same satisfactory progress as other groups of pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour when using ICT is good overall. They respect equipment, use it carefully, and are very enthusiastic about the subject. They can discuss a range of opportunities they have to use new technologies in a variety of curriculum areas.

## **Quality of teaching in ICT**

The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory.

- Teachers and teaching assistants display good subject knowledge and are confident users of ICT. They use this to good effect when delivering their lessons to the whole class or to a year group.
- Teachers' skills in using technology are good when they use the computers or interactive whiteboards and they answer pupils' questions accurately. In general, though, questioning is closed and does not provide opportunities for pupils to extend their speaking skills and develop their use of technical vocabulary. Some excellent use of ICT was observed, for example, in a mathematics lesson on Venn diagrams where the interest and understanding of pupils was raised through the effective use of the interactive whiteboard. The mathematical concepts would have been more difficult to teach without using ICT.
- The use of assessment data does not always ensure that tasks are well matched to all pupils, especially the more able. Monitoring and tracking in ICT are at the early stages of development. Pupils are not involved in recording their achievements and so have no clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. The school recognises that this is an area for development.
- The use of ICT to support learning across the school is satisfactory and improving. Pupils have good access to ICT and it is used appropriately in many lessons to develop their learning.

## **Quality of the curriculum in ICT**

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is good.

- The programme of study for ICT is broad and balanced and ensures that all pupils receive their entitlement to the statutory ICT curriculum. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by links with a local secondary school to support computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM) technology and with a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) centre to support the understanding of robotics.
- The ICT curriculum gives good support to pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Pupils have opportunities to engage with others through video conferencing and in work with a local radio station.
- Pupils are supported to learn how to become responsible users of new technologies through ICT lessons and assemblies; discussions with pupils confirm that they have a very clear understanding of how to keep themselves safe. The school regularly informs and updates staff and parents of e-safety issues.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT is good.

- Senior leaders have a clear vision for the development of ICT, which is understood by all staff. Access to ICT equipment in the school is good and the school makes highly effective use of partnerships with local primary schools to support the development of the subject.
- The governing body is very supportive of developments in ICT and the financial investment involved.
- Technical support is good and ensures that systems are reliable and available when needed.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- raising the achievement of pupils by:
  - improving the quality of teaching and learning by providing more opportunities for discussion of key concepts and vocabulary, focusing on pupils' common errors and misconceptions
  - further embedding the use of assessment so that the progress of all of pupils can be regularly and accurately monitored
  - ensuring that pupils are aware of what they need to do to improve and can act on the targets set.

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

As 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**David Brown**  
**Additional Inspector**