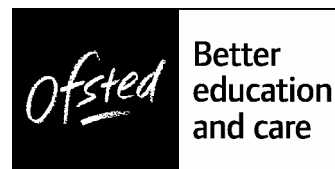


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13 March 2007

Mr Baskill
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Baskill

Ofsted survey inspection programme - English

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 02 March 2007 to inspect work in English.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subjects the visit had a particular focus on our current English survey theme: provision for poetry. 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, review of pupils' work, observation of parts of six lessons. The overall effectiveness of English was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in English are outstanding.

- Performance against national standards and in relation to other subjects and institutional targets is excellent. Standards have continued to rise from a strong initial position in 2001.
- In all lessons pupils' work was of a very high standard in oracy and reading. Writing was imaginative and well crafted.
- Books and folders were beautifully presented showing that pupils and staff take great care over detail, value neatness and have great pride in their work.
- School data shows that all pupils make consistent progress in their learning and reach or exceed challenging goals. Value added measures are significantly higher than the national average.

- The school is particularly effective in teaching writing. In the Key Stage 1 national tests, results for writing are as good as those for reading and are considerably better than nationally. Across the school boys write as well as girls.
- Pupils perform confidently and talk easily in class and in discussion groups. The development of effective oral communication skills underpins the high standards achieved in English.

Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning in English are outstanding.

- Lessons in English are vibrant and exciting. In all six sessions observed, the teaching was outstanding with an overwhelming sense of fun and adventure.
- Well qualified and extremely competent staff engage their pupils with carefully designed lessons that challenged and enthused them. Teachers make effective use of a wide range of teaching styles, skilful questioning and an excellent understanding of how children learn.
- Assessment is exceptionally good. Through rigorous monitoring of standards and the collective levelling of work, staff know the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and work tirelessly to improve provision. Marking has improved since the last inspection and is exemplary. Pupils are able to assess their own work accurately and know from effective oral and written feedback what to do next to improve.
- Phonics are taught in an engaging manner with young children eagerly using the interactive whiteboard.
- Drama lessons develop self confidence and self control and encourage pupils to listen carefully and express themselves effectively through movement and stillness.
- In all lessons the adults provided excellent role models for reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum in English is outstanding.

- The school has worked successfully to implement a relevant and creative curriculum in English.
- A wide range of visits and visitors enriches the work and provides opportunities for pupils to use their developing basic and social skills.
- Exceptional links to other subjects through the medium of role play bring teaching and learning to life, providing the pupils with vivid experiences to draw on when creating written accounts, poems or stories.
- The school enables pupils to tap into their feelings and through systematic teaching pupils are helped to structure their creativity and to improve their linguistic and writing skills.

- Links to home languages, popular TV characters and recent events serve to ground work in the children's own experiences.
- Pupils develop confidence through leading assemblies, drama, peer evaluation and the "can do" attitude that pervades the school.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- Team work is a great strength and staff are of one mind about the purpose of education.
- The leadership of the school is excellent and through a well developed distributive model it has a good capacity to maintain the high standards achieved and to continue to develop the curriculum for the benefit of its pupils.
- Strategic planning sets clear guidance for curriculum development and the school's philosophy is evident throughout the school.
- Resources are exceptionally well deployed to present the pupils with the very best learning environment and opportunities that can be achieved. The new library provides an exemplary resource.
- The subject leader has had a profound effect on the teaching of literacy. She is very well respected by the staff. Her evaluation is sharp, accurate, and provides a clear steer for continued improvement.
- Supported by excellent in-school training, teachers and teaching assistants have developed the skills and enthusiasm to deliver an exciting and challenging English curriculum.

Inclusion

Inclusion in English is outstanding.

- The school works assiduously to ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum.
- Learners are guided and supported exceptionally well as can be seen by the progress that they make.
- All groups of pupils achieve very well.

Poetry

Provision for poetry is outstanding.

- Poetry is very well represented in schemes of work across the school.
- Pupils' attitudes are most positive as a result of lively and effective teaching. All those spoken to could name several poets whose work they liked. Year 4 and 5 pupils were most enthusiastic about their current work. They particularly enjoyed the support given by audio

visual stimuli and the technique of mind mapping to write imaginatively and creatively in poetry lessons.

- Pupils have outstanding opportunities to write and perform their own poems and Key Stage 1 pupils did so with evident enjoyment in the assembly I observed.

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

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority/Local Learning Skills Council. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term and made available to the team for the next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Cathie Munt
Her Majesty's Inspector