

09 February 2007

Ms R Clench  
Headteacher  
Bridport Primary School  
St Andrew's Road  
Bridport  
Dorset  
DT6 3BJ

Dear Ms Clench

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Religious Education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 8 February 2007 to look at work in religious education (RE).

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 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of RE was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and Standards

Achievement and standards in RE are satisfactory.

- Attainment at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is broadly average. The progress made by most pupils in RE is satisfactory. Pupils do not demonstrate achievement in all strands of the attainment targets, and some pupils, notably the more able, are not challenged sufficiently.

- Pupil's attitudes towards RE are mostly positive. RE makes a satisfactory contribution to their personal development.

### Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in RE is satisfactory.

- Teaching overall in RE is satisfactory, although one lesson seen was good with some very good features. Some teachers make effective use of a range of strategies to engage pupils, including discussion and investigative work. In one lesson observed the teacher used her professional judgement well to set a more challenging task for the more able pupils.
- Some activities do not contribute so effectively to learning because they are not sufficiently challenging; and in one lesson observed the resources used were too difficult for the pupils and did not sufficiently exemplify the key concept in the lesson.
- Lessons and tasks are too dominated by the first two strands in Attainment Target 1, while other strands are rarely addressed.
- Assessment in RE is at an early stage of development but is satisfactory overall because teachers make good use of plenary and starter sessions to assess and build on what pupils have learnt. There is some very good implicit assessment through oral work, but it is not recorded or evaluated. Teachers sometimes mistakenly evaluate pupils' contributions to personal, social and health education and circle time work as evidence of achievement in Attainment Target 2.

### Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The school has recently changed its curriculum structure in order to consolidate links between areas of learning.
- RE is planned both in blocks of time and also as a contributing element to cross-subject work. The blocks are more transparent in the planning than the cross-subject elements. Some opportunities for useful cross-subject links have been overlooked; for example, clear linkage between religion and the wider topic on India.

### Leadership and Management

Leadership and management in RE are satisfactory overall.

- RE documentation is well organised and the implementation of the agreed syllabus in the framework of the school's new curriculum planning is rightly a priority. There is a good focus on raising standards.
- You encourage your staff to adopt a reflective and evaluative approach to subject provision. As a result teachers have become aware of the key challenges in the subject, such as the difficulties in raising the achievement of the highest attainers and the need to develop subject knowledge.
- A completed self-evaluation you have made sound judgements about the quality of provision.
- Monitoring of standards and provision in RE is not yet well established.

### Implementation of the Agreed Syllabus

There is a clear understanding of the main changes in the agreed syllabus as a result of attendance at a number of local authority training courses. This training has been disseminated to the staff and a careful analysis has been carried out of the impact of the new syllabus on the current provision for RE in the school.

### Inclusion

Most groups of pupils make satisfactory progress in RE. However, as already stated, some of the teaching does not extend the more able sufficiently.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that teaching and assessment reflect the breadth of the subject by focusing on all areas of knowledge, understanding and skills set out in the agreed syllabus
- recognising the breadth of pupils' achievement by recording and evaluating their oral contributions to lessons
- making the contribution of RE to the cross-subject elements of the curriculum more explicit
- monitoring the standards of pupils' work across the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority/SACRE and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Barbara Wintersgill  
Additional Inspector