23 May 2008

Mrs A Wyld
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Dear Mrs Wyld

Ofsted survey inspection programme – ICT

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit with Keith Wilkinson on 20 May 2008 to look at work in ICT.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the quality of assessment.

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 discussions with staff and learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and joint observation of two part lessons. I note that the newly appointed ICT coordinator has been in post for only four weeks.

The overall effectiveness of ICT was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards in ICT

Achievement and standards in ICT are satisfactory overall.

- Pupils join the school in Year 3 with good standards of ICT skills and capabilities. They make satisfactory progress from Year 3 to Year 6 and by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are above average.
- Pupils enjoy using ICT and find the visual impact of images motivating and engaging; however, at times there is insufficient challenge for higher attainers.
- The infant and junior schools have started to work together more closely to help with the smooth transition from Year 2 to Year 3, but

there are limited systems in place to ensure good levels of progression in ICT.

- ICT is contributing well to the high standards the school achieves in English and mathematics, but pupils would welcome more opportunities to use ICT particularly to support their work in English.
- ICT is making a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being. This is because pupils of all abilities are proud of what they achieve and how well they are able to present work.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe when using the computer and accessing the internet, and the importance of not providing personal details.
- ICT is enhancing the citizenship curriculum. The school has developed a strong link with a school in the Gambia. By doing research about the country and liaising with pupils of a similar age, the pupils at All Saints have developed a good understanding and appreciation of what they have in common with their new friends in Gambia and the differences between the two cultures and ways of life.

Quality of teaching and learning of ICT

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- The use of ICT has become a frequent and natural part of teaching. Teachers make particularly good use of whiteboard technology to provide demonstrations and engage pupils.
- Although pupils benefit from having direct access to up to three computers in their classroom, they are currently disadvantaged by having to use the computers in other classrooms in order to undertake whole class ICT activities. This also reduces the level of guidance and support teachers are able to provide for their pupils.
- Where there are pockets of good practise in the school, teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and they have an accurate view of pupils' skills, capabilities and needs. In a good lesson in Year 6 pupils were encouraged to assess their work as well as the work of others. This enabled pupils to contribute effectively to their learning about how to evaluate and modify a presentation.
- Where teaching is less successful expectations are at times too low, the rate and pace of progress during lessons is too slow and there are limited strategies to ensure pupils are actively engaged in their learning.
- Although pupils are able to use ICT independently, they are not given sufficient opportunities to be creative or innovative. This is because even where teaching is good, lessons are too teacher directed.
- Teaching assistants have a good relationship with the pupils they support; however, they do not always know how to use the work that pupils do in ICT in a way that would help meet pupils' individual learning targets.
- Pupils would welcome a wider variety of work in ICT and greater access to ICT without feeling they are inconveniencing others.

Quality of the curriculum for ICT

Quality of the curriculum for ICT is satisfactory.

- Long and short-term planning promotes adequate levels of progression. These documents identify progression in skills and clarify how units of work can be used to meet the differing needs of pupils. However, these plans do not provide sufficient guidance for staff about how the work of higher attainers can be enriched and extended.
- The school has correctly identified that some aspects of the programmes of study are not being covered as well as they could be; this is particularly evident when it comes to the use of spreadsheets, data bases and control.
- The school has an adequate range of technology including cameras and video recorders as well as digital microscopes, but these resources are under used by some classes.

Leadership and management of ICT

Leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory and improving.

- You have correctly identified the need to raise standards in ICT and improve the quality of teaching and learning.
- You have developed with the staff a clear view of what needs to be improved and how this can be achieved.
- The school is becoming more focused on progress and learning, but this has yet to be formally included in lesson observations, improvement plans and evaluations.
- The staff who support ICT in the school are now working more effectively as a team.
- Training is improving following the audit of training needs undertaken by the ICT coordinator.
- There is a draft vision in place; this has yet to be agreed by governors.
- The school has a good structure in place upon which it can build and develop an effective virtual learning environment (VLE). However the VLE is in the early stages of development.

Use of Assessment

The quality of assessment in ICT is satisfactory.

- Teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' work and the progress they make is adequate.
- There are some good examples of the use of assessment to support and enhance learning during lessons.
- There are however, inconsistencies in the way pupils' work is assessed throughout the school. This is partly down to cumbersome systems, which are in the process of being changed, but is also due to a lack of teacher confidence about level descriptors and in some cases gaps in teachers' subject knowledge.

- Targets are set for pupils at the beginning of units of work, but the school does not set annual targets for every year group in ICT.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring good levels of progress from Year 3 to Year 6
- embedding newly devised systems of assessment so that the progress made by every pupil can be rigorously tracked and monitored
- providing additional training for support staff as well as teaching staff so as to ensure the different needs of pupils are consistently well met and all areas of the ICT curriculum are equally well taught
- ensuring that key documents and evaluations include a sharp focus on progress and outcomes for learners.

The school has correctly identified that a computer suite would allow whole class access to ICT and promote greater use of ICT across the curriculum.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop ICT 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

Gehane Gordelier
Her Majesty's Inspector