9 February 2011

Mr T Wright
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Wright

Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 28 January 2011 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; observation of three lessons and a tour of the school with pupils.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is satisfactory.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is satisfactory.

■ The number of pupils in each cohort varies considerably from year to year. There is also higher than average mobility from the school. This impacts on the overall attainment on entry, though this is generally in line with expectations, and on the overall attainment when pupils leave at the end of Year 6.

■ Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress. They confidently use basic technologies such as floor robots, computers and CD players. By the time they enter Year 1, they are achieving the expected standard. Progress from Year 1 to Year 6 is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, pupils leave with levels of attainment that are average.

■ Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress against their individual targets.

- Pupils' behaviour in lessons is good overall. However, it ranges from satisfactory to outstanding, depending on the task set and how well it is matched to their interests and capabilities.

- By Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to stay safe when using new technologies.

Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is satisfactory.

- Teaching overall is satisfactory but ranges from inadequate to good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are confident users of ICT.

- Teachers share the objectives of a lesson with pupils and review them at the end of a lesson, so that pupils can self-assess. Where teaching is good, pupils are also encouraged to use 'I can' statements, to assess themselves and their peers against the subject objectives. Pupils are also encouraged to set personal targets for their next stage of learning. However, these strategies are not used consistently throughout the school.

- Due to the much smaller than average size of the school, pupils are of mixed-age groups in each class. Work set is similar for all pupils in the class and is not fully differentiated by age or ability. This is recognised as an area for development in the ICT development plan.

- Newly introduced assessment procedures are beginning to support teachers' planning for individuals and groups but are not yet firmly established.

Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is satisfactory.

- All strands of the National Curriculum for ICT are covered, with an emphasis on communication and presentation.

- Satisfactory links are made between ICT and other curriculum subjects.

- The annual Years 5 and 6 residential visit gives pupils the opportunity to put ICT into real-life contexts, for example by using data-logging equipment to monitor temperature, light and sound.

- Pupils identified as gifted and talented in ICT visit a larger, local primary school for ICT days linked to a range of curriculum subjects.

- Pupils who have limited access to new technologies outside school are able to use school facilities two lunchtimes a week.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

Leadership and management in ICT are satisfactory.

- The leadership and management of ICT are shared by a full- and a part-time member of staff.

- Leaders have a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the school's ICT.

- They monitor teachers' planning and pupils' work.

- However, since ICT has not been a priority for the school in recent years, subject leaders have not had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in classrooms.

- The two subject leaders have attended training for the virtual learning environment (VLE). They recognise that the VLE needs to be developed, so that staff, pupils and parents can fully access its potential.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising the achievement of pupils by:
    - embedding the newly developed assessment procedures to help inform planning, so that work is closely matched to the needs of all groups of pupils in mixed-age classes
    - involving pupils in self- and peer-assessment so that they know how well they are progressing against their targets and how they can achieve their next level in their ICT work

- developing the role of the subject leaders, especially in the monitoring of teaching and learning, so as to have a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in ICT and to improve the quality of teaching and learning

- developing the VLE to enable teachers, pupils and parents to access information from home, to support work in school.

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

Anthony Green
Additional Inspector