15 December 2009

Mrs A Abrahams
Headteacher
St Clements Danes CE Primary School
Drury Lane
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Dear Mrs Abrahams

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: information and communication technology (ICT)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 3 December 2009 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 use of ICT to support learning across the school.

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 included interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of two lessons and a tour of the school led by two Year 6 pupils.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is outstanding.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is outstanding.

- Pupils enter the school with ICT skills well below the national expectations. By the end of Year 6, they have made excellent progress and leave school with standards that are above national expectations.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and pupils who speak English as an additional language are given excellent support in lessons by well-informed teaching assistants.

- Pupils are extremely well behaved when using ICT equipment in class and in the ICT suite. They respect equipment and use it with care. They are proud of their work and support each other very well in lessons.

- Pupils have a very good knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe when they are using new technologies.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching in ICT is outstanding.

- The subject knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants is excellent.

- Planning is very thorough. The learning intentions, success criteria and the planned activities are designed to meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, gifted and talented pupils and those who speak English as an additional language.

- Well-planned lessons and engaging teaching result in pupils being very motivated. As a result, behaviour is outstanding.

- Regular and systematic assessments, to inform planning, are made against the skills pupils demonstrate. Pupils are involved in self- and peer-assessments. By Year 6, they have a good awareness of the levels that they are achieving in ICT and what they need to do to move up a level. Year 2 pupils enjoy self-assessment activities as an opportunity to display their skills and knowledge.

- Assessing pupils' progress (APP) in ICT is being trialled, with the view to being fully implemented in 2010.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is outstanding.

- The curriculum is comprehensively planned and resourced. Pupils have the opportunity to use digital cameras, dictaphones, search-engines, spreadsheets, databases and data loggers in a wide range of subjects. The 'sustainable monitoring' equipment gives pupils a 'real life' opportunity to monitor and use data to support a variety of subjects and the eco-credentials of the school.

- Information around the school, and on the plasma screen in the playground, provides an ongoing reminder to parents, carers and pupils of e-safety and different aspects of the school's curriculum.

Effectiveness of leadership and management: outstanding

- The leadership and management of ICT have had a significant impact on the development of the subject, and in a relatively short period of time. There is a very clear vision for the subject, understood by all staff.

- Governors are very supportive of the development of ICT and of the considerable financial investment involved.

- The school is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of ICT. This is because of an ongoing, comprehensive and systematic review. The ICT development plan and self-review are focused clearly on raising standards and achievement.

- Continuous professional development for all staff is very effective. Teachers and teaching assistants use ICT resources with confidence.

- There is a comprehensive policy for safe use of the internet, understood by staff, pupils, parents and carers.

- The school ensures that it obtains value for money by, for example, trialling new initiatives and evaluating the impact before full implementation.

The use of ICT across the curriculum

The use of ICT across the curriculum is outstanding.

- ICT is used very effectively to support other curriculum subjects.

- The virtual learning environment (VLE) is being trialled and developed to enable teachers, pupils, parents and carers to access work and information at home to support pupils' work in school.

- The use of ICT in the wider-world is understood very well by pupils through, for example, their involvement in a film 'installation', which was displayed at Tate Modern.

- Excellent links are made with local businesses and theatres to support the development of ICT.

- ICT links are being established with schools in Thailand and South Africa.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- continuing to trial and embed APP

- continuing to evolve the already outstanding ICT curriculum in the light of ever-changing curriculum developments

- continuing to trial and embed the VLE in preparation for whole-school use in 2010.

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

Anthony Green
Additional Inspector