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Mr Peter Hadfield  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Hadfield

### **Ofsted survey inspection programme - History**

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 29 October 2007 to inspect work in history.

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, and a review of a sample of pupils' work.

The overall effectiveness of history was judged to be good.

### **Achievement and standards**

Standards vary from below average to well above but overall they are average. Given their relatively low starting points, pupils make good progress.

- Pupils pose questions, research answers, make judgements and communicate them effectively. The good progress in history is very evident; for example, the difference between the halting responses to questions in a Year 1 class compared with the confident responses in later Years. There is clear progression in historical skills but it is 'informal' and will benefit from the planned linking of assessment to National Curriculum levels.
- Pupils' personal development is good. They work well together very well and are confident to 'have a go' even if their answers may be

wrong. They hold moral standpoints; for example, when Year 5 pupils were interviewed on aspects of World War II.

### **Quality of teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives which are shared with pupils and which are recorded by pupils in their exercise books.
- Marking is regular with frequent comment made about how well the objectives have been achieved.
- Pupils respond well to the teaching. They are attentive, interested and behaviour is excellent. Pupils want to learn and the result is good quality listening, discussion, responding to questions, writing and drawing in exercise books.
- There is an assessment system which works well. It enables teachers to set work of varying difficulty and to deploy teaching assistants effectively. The school's plans to formalise assessment more in terms of National Curriculum levels are likely to provide teachers with sharper information on which to support their teaching.

### **Quality of curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- The current curriculum closely follows a fairly literal interpretation of the QCA schemes of work. The result is a curriculum content which is not joined together well even though the individual units within it such as the programme inspired by links with Chelsea FC are excellent, interesting and fun.
- However, the coordinator is well aware of encouragement from the Strategy and from elsewhere to take a more creative approach to the curriculum. I note the school's interest in building the National Curriculum into a school history programme that is relevant to pupils, helps them understand the present and links well with other subjects.

### **Leadership and management**

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- Your new coordinator has correctly identified current strengths in the subject and areas for further development. The subject self-evaluation is of good quality, illustrating the coordinator's awareness. Development plans are good.

- The coordinator monitors the subject well and undertakes other aspects of management successfully. She consults regularly with other staff; for example, in deciding which units best suit a class.
- The school's management as a whole has developed very good links with the community providing excellent resources which the school uses to very good effect to support teaching and learning.

### **The subject's response to Every Child Matters**

The school has considered Every Child Matters and has undertaken a succinct evaluation of how history supports the policy. The focus of the evaluation has been on the 'five outcomes'. As indicated earlier in the curriculum section, the school is now considering a broader approach to Every Child Matters by adjusting the history curriculum more generally to make it more coherent, progressive and relevant to the needs of pupils.

### **Inclusion**

Inclusion is outstanding.

- There is no apparent difference in performance of girls and boys. Nor are there significant differences in performance between different ethnic and other groups.
- The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well served. Teaching Assistants are very well deployed.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:**

- clearer definition of progression in history knowledge and skills
- further improvement of the assessment system including marking
- further development of the curriculum to make it even more responsive to pupils' needs.

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

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority. 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

**Paul Armitage HMI**  
**Ofsted Specialist Adviser for History**