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Mrs J Buckby  
Headteacher  
Weavers Close CofE Primary School  
Alexander Avenue  
Earl Shilton  
LE9 7AH

Dear Mrs Buckby

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: history

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 17 June 2010 to look at 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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with you, staff and pupils; a scrutiny of relevant documentation; an analysis of pupils' work; and the observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of history is good.

Achievement in history

Achievement in history is good.

- From relatively low starting points, pupils make good progress and attain standards that are broadly average. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, can place events in chronological order, and they can ask appropriate questions about the past. In Year 6, pupils have good knowledge and understanding of life in Ancient Greece.
- At all ages, pupils competently handle a range of historical sources. They are developing their enquiry skills well and they are curious about the past. They enjoy learning the subject and many, especially the higher attainers, undertake good independent research.
- Pupils' literacy skills are enhanced well through the use of extended writing in history. Higher attainers, in particular, write well for different audiences and purposes.

- Pupils work well in groups and with adults. They maintain their concentration on tasks and can discuss work sensibly. Behaviour is good.

### Quality of teaching in history

The quality of teaching in history is good.

- Pupils make good progress in lessons and over time because the activities are suitable and challenging for their needs.
- Lessons are characterised by a friendly and constructive learning environment. Pupils enjoy what they are learning and are motivated by the subject and the teaching. They are keen to undertake historical research by using books and other resources.
- Time is used efficiently, leading to a brisk pace in the learning.
- Teachers have a good understanding of the pupils' needs through the careful checking of their progress. Good oral feedback is routinely offered in lessons. Pupils' written work is marked regularly and useful comments on how to improve are made. Pupils said how much they valued this feedback.
- Support staff are used well to provide intensive help to different groups of pupils.

### Quality of the curriculum in history

The quality of the curriculum in history is good.

- The school has implemented a thematic approach to the curriculum within the last three years. History is explicitly identified within this approach.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets requirements. Pupils are offered good opportunities to develop their historical knowledge, understanding and skills. A good emphasis is placed on the use of historical sources and the reliability of different types of evidence.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by good links with local museums and other places of historical interest, such as museums in Leicester.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 use information and communication technology (ICT) regularly for research and other purposes. This aspect is less well developed at Key Stage 1.

### Effectiveness of leadership and management in history

The effectiveness of the leadership and management in history is good.

- The subject manager provides good leadership and manages the subject well.
- Along with you, she has a good understanding of teaching and learning through undertaking learning walks, analysing pupils' work and talking to them, and scrutinising teachers' planning. Such activities enable her to form a good view of the subject's strengths and weaknesses, and these

are communicated to staff. Appropriate action is then taken to improve provision and outcomes.

- Good action has been taken to monitor and evaluate pupils' progress in history across the school. Data on attainment and progress have been collected and analysed using computer software. Trends in progress are readily apparent and any underachievement can be identified and dealt with.
- No recent professional development has taken place for staff. This is a significant weakness that needs to be tackled.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving the use of ICT at Key Stage 1
- ensuring that staff update their knowledge and understanding in the subject through relevant professional development.

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

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website under the URN for your school. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Champak Chauhan  
Additional Inspector