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Mr T Lacey  
Headteacher  
Arden Primary School  
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Dear Mr T Lacey

Ofsted 2010–11 subject 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 16 March 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 two whole lessons and parts of four other lessons; and a tour of the school with pupils.

The overall effectiveness of ICT is outstanding.

Achievement in ICT

Achievement in ICT is outstanding.

- Pupils enter school with levels of attainment in knowledge and understanding of the world, including ICT, and communication, language and literacy, which are well below the national average.
- A minority have little, or no, access to new technologies at home and are not familiar with hardware or software on entry. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children are very well supported and rapidly learn how to use a keyboard and mouse, the interactive whiteboard, digicams and digital microphones. They make good progress overall. Pupils enter Year 1 below expectations. They continue to make good progress. By Year 6 they

achieve levels that are in line with national expectations for ICT. Given their starting point, this represents excellent progress.

- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make similar progress to other groups. They are very well supported in ICT lessons.
- Classrooms and the hall are fitted with a sound induction system to enable those with hearing impairments to be fully included.
- Pupils at the early stages of English language acquisition are also well supported in ICT lessons and also make outstanding progress.
- Pupils enjoy ICT. Their behaviour in lessons is outstanding. They are courteous, and respect each other, teachers, teaching assistants and the equipment. They are eager to learn and willing to support each other.
- By Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe when using new technologies are good.

### Quality of teaching in ICT

The quality of teaching in ICT is outstanding.

- The quality of teaching is outstanding overall and never less than good.
- The subject leader teaches ICT regularly to all classes from Reception to Year 6. This ensures a consistency of approach to teaching throughout the school.
- The ICT teacher is very ably supported when teaching lessons in the suites by the network manager, the teacher of the class and teaching assistants. As a result, different groups of pupils are very well supported.
- This approach does not exclude teachers and teaching assistants from their responsibilities of teaching ICT. Teachers are fully involved in the planning and teaching of lessons, and sequence of lessons, within their classroom and also additional lessons in the suites.
- The success criteria for a lesson are shared with pupils, so that they can self- and peer-assess and set targets for their next stage of learning.
- Staff are fully informed of developments in ICT, through regular training.
- Newly developed assessment procedures are supporting teachers in their planning and tracking of pupils' progress. However, they do not fully match National Curriculum levels, and add complications to the tracking process.

### Quality of the curriculum in ICT

The quality of the curriculum in ICT is outstanding.

- The curriculum is well planned to meet the interests of all pupils.
- Excellent links are made between ICT and a range of subjects. These have a positive impact on pupils' standards and achievement, especially in literacy, numeracy and personal and social development.

- Pupils who do not have access to technology at home are able to use school facilities at lunchtimes.
- Good links have been made with the local secondary school to support the teaching of data-logging and to provide activities for more able pupils.
- Gifted and talented pupils attend activities organised by the Royal Shakespeare Company, which include writing and recording play scripts.
- The before-school mathematics club is very well attended and supports pupils' numeracy and ICT skills well and also their social development.

#### Effectiveness of leadership and management in ICT

Leadership and management in ICT are outstanding.

- The vision for ICT is very clear and understood by staff, pupils and governors.
- After shadowing the previous leader for a term, the present leader took over the post in September 2010. The change has been seamless and continues to build on the many strengths of ICT.
- The subject leader is given excellent support by the network manager.
- The governing body is very supportive of the subject and is actively involved in ensuring that ICT provides value for money.
- The strengths and areas for improvement are known and regularly reviewed. Self-evaluation is accurate.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- refining the newly introduced procedures for tracking pupils' progress so that the system has clarity and ease of use for all teachers and support staff and fully matches National Curriculum levels for ICT.

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