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Mrs Eveleigh  
Headteacher  
Meare Village Primary School  
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Dear Mrs Eveleigh

**Ofsted survey inspection programme – Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) - three year longitudinal survey.**

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my recent visit to look at work in ESD.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with pupils, parents, teachers and other staff, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and an observation of two lessons.

The school is continuing to improve provision for learning for sustainability. Overall effectiveness continues to be outstanding.

**Achievement and standards**

Pupils make very good progress in their learning about sustainability relative to their ages and both standards and achievement are outstanding.

- Older pupils have traditionally had a very good grounding and grasp of sustainability and associated issues. These pupils have developed good research and communication skills. They are very knowledgeable, and are able to reason and articulate their opinions confidently. Most showed good depth to their thinking.

- Younger pupils appreciate the outdoor environment and have a keen interest in the natural world and the rich diversity they find around them. The work they are involved in with 'Forest Schools' is proving to be a very good catalyst to engage their interest and stimulate their learning about sustainability and the environment. This provides a good foundation for their enjoyment of the environment and what is built on elsewhere in the school.
- Relationships throughout the school are outstanding and exemplify the care ethos which is central to the work of the school. Pupils and adults work well together. There is a real sense of community.
- Outcomes for pupils' personal development are very strong. They respect each other and give time to others in their group to exercise their opinion or viewpoint.
- Pupils develop stewardship from an early age. They are expected to take responsibility. Pupils care, both for each other as well as for the environment.
- There is a willingness to join in. However, although the boys are prepared to help they tend, with a few exceptions, to leave the decision making and organisation to the girls.
- Pupils are visibly very healthy. Their active involvement in many outdoor opportunities and their very good understanding of the need to lead healthy lives supports this very well.
- Behaviour around the school is outstanding. Pupils are polite, have good social manners and are inquisitive. They enjoy interacting with each other and with adults. They show high levels of maturity.
- Pupils are becoming more influential in changing behaviour both in the school, at home and in the community. For example, they are so involved in the ethics of fair-trade that they have often changed purchasing habits at home. In this case 'pester power' has been used productively as is their attempt to improve road safety in the village.
- Pupils are familiar with nature, they enjoy nature and they see it as a resource to be valued. Many are actively involved in growing plants and vegetables back home in their own family gardens.

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

The quality of teaching and learning about sustainability is outstanding.

- Pupils particularly enjoy the many opportunities offered to them to be active learners. They make excellent use of the outdoor environment to support their learning and understanding of sustainability.
- Pupils are well organised and are familiar with how to work productively and collaboratively. They communicate and exchange ideas well.
- Pupils have many quality opportunities to develop their speaking, listening and writing skills while working within the context of sustainability. They are able to write in a wide variety of genres, including persuasive writing and reporting.

- Pupils are good at problem solving. For example the application of maths skills in their environment has become a stronger feature of their learning. This engages boys in particular and is helping to raise standards in mathematics.
- Their understanding of global issues is developing well, particularly through the increasingly well established links with Mudindi School in Kenya. There is a very good transfer of ideas and joint learning going on. Pupils have recognised that, in comparison to their friends in Kenya, they still have a long way to go to lead truly sustainable lives. They are able to challenge stereo-typical views of Africa.

### **Quality of curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum for ESD is outstanding.

- Previously the school was developing a sustainable curriculum, now it is embedding this firmly into the curriculum.
- There is now a clear recognition how sustainability can be integrated into the planning to enrich learning. Teachers are now planning to teach about sustainability with much greater clarity and confidence.
- Excellent use is being made of the outdoor classroom to support the curriculum, teaching and the opportunity for pupils to be healthy. Very good use is also made of outside visitors to enrich learning.
- The participation of the school and pupils in a wide range of high profile local, national and international events has opened up a whole new world for pupils. The children have proved to be good ambassadors for the school in Paris, London and further afield.
- The sustainability curriculum is enhanced very well through the very good use of displays and art work around the school to raise the profile of sustainability and celebrate achievement.
- Sustainability in the curriculum is being used to enhance learning. For example, the school has identified a weakness in achievement in mathematics and is addressing this very effectively not only through intervention strategies but also through 'Maths for Life'. Pupils are engaging better with the subject through real learning experiences. Boys, in particular, are beginning to see the relevance of a subject they previously may not have enjoyed.

### **Leadership and management of ESD**

Leadership and management of this area continue to be outstanding.

- Sustainability imbues the life of the school. It is not just dependant on one or two active individuals but is part of a well structured whole school approach. All teachers and staff, as well as governors, are actively supportive and involved.
- The school has built on the legacy left by the previous headteacher and there has been a steely determined to make what had been

started before become even stronger. The school is developing as a real hub of the community in which every child matters.

- The school council is becoming a very effective body. It is making informed decisions about what needs to be done to improve both the school and the learning environment.
- There is a stronger commitment from the children to lead on and take the message forward about the need to lead more sustainable lives. Pupil voice at several levels is very influential.
- Very good links with parents and the wider school community continue to be used effectively to promote learning for sustainability. The school is promoting community cohesion well.

## **Inclusion**

The provision for inclusion through sustainability is outstanding.

- The school is fully inclusive with everyone in the whole school community actively involved in learning about sustainability.
- Teachers are aware of individual interests and try to personalise activities to suit these. Pupils are empowered to engage in developing their particular talents whether these are in music, drama, art or dance. This boosts their self-confidence and self-esteem and develops a positive sense of worth. The self-esteem of pupils in the school is high.

## **Areas for Improvement**

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- continue to build on the growing partnership with link secondary schools to ensure that pupils' interest in sustainability continues and is developed
- continue to nurture the links with the local, as well as the global, community to enable the school to become a real hub for learning in how to lead a sustainable life.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop sustainability throughout 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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

**Leszek Iwaskow**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools**  
**Specialist Adviser for Geography and ESD**