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Mrs R Randall  
Headteacher  
Red Barn Community Primary School  
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PO16 8HJ

Dear Mrs Randall

**Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: The quality and impact of partnership provision in schools for children in service families**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 14 October 2010 to look at the school's contribution to the quality of provision and partnerships for children who are in families of service personnel.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of partnerships, including the quality of the partnerships between schools and agencies and between schools and parents, I looked at how effective the partnerships are in improving children's personal well-being and learning. I also considered the nature of the support given to these children, including those children in the most vulnerable circumstances, or those who have a particular special educational need and/or disability, and the arrangements to ensure the continuity of provision during children's move in and out of your 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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included meetings with senior leaders, pupils, parents, and a parent support adviser from the local authority. A range of documentation was scrutinised, including school policies and procedures, leaders' analysis of pupils' attainment and progress and a sample of pupils' records.

The school's contribution to the quality of provision and partnerships for children who are in families of service personnel is good.

## Key features

- The school's good emphasis on including pupils and treating them as individuals means pupils from service families, while a very small minority in the school, do not lose out. Pupils from the base attend a range of clubs, including some that occur after school. They are also represented on the school council and contribute to the school community through acting as buddies, road safety officers or eco-warriors.
- Each pupil's academic progress is monitored and reviewed regularly. This information is shared with parents so that they know how their children are achieving in relation to the expected levels for their age. Parents find this useful. The school examines the relative performance of different groups in the school, but pupils from service families have not, as yet, been an identified group. The school has rightly recognised that this group warrants inclusion in future analysis.
- The school's data show that the small numbers of pupils from service families who have been in the school for two years or more have made generally good progress in reading, writing and mathematics during this time. Numbers are too small, however, to make reliable comparisons between the attainment of all pupils by Year 6 and that of the few who come from service families.
- Parents are very pleased with the quality of communication from the school. They value its 'family feel' and the fact that every pupil is well known to staff. As a result, they report that pupils settle in quickly when they first arrive. The school's efforts to keep them informed through the texting service, for example, are also appreciated. Parents feel, however, that the school could do more to promote its work on the base. Its prospectus and website do not mention the school's role in serving local service families and parents moving to the area report that they mostly find out about the school through word of mouth.
- Parents praise the steps taken by staff to take individual family circumstances into account and to support pupils when they may be feeling unhappy or anxious, for example, when fathers are away on deployment or about to leave. The school is also sympathetic to the context of service families when it comes to authorising absence to coincide with pre-tour or post-tour leave. Parents who have moved schools several times appreciate the school's understanding and willingness to authorise absence in these circumstances, something they report they have not always found in previous schools. This policy has not had a detrimental effect on pupils' attendance; the attendance figures for pupils from service families were better last year than the school's overall attendance rate.
- There are currently no pupils from service families who have been identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, good systems are in place to support these pupils in the school as a

whole. They are supported in a flexible way; their needs are analysed carefully as a starting point and any intervention is regularly reviewed and adapted as necessary. This provision has a positive impact. There are examples of pupils receiving extra support and intervention for periods of time then, as a result, no longer requiring further support. Individual targets are set for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, as they are for all pupils, but these are aimed at satisfactory rather than good progress. Even though some pupils do make good progress, the school is missing an opportunity to set more challenging targets. This is especially important for the pupils who are working below the expectations for their age, to give them every opportunity to make good progress and leave school with average rather than below average attainment.

- The school has good arrangements for supporting pupils whose circumstances may make them particularly vulnerable. It has well-established procedures for working with other agencies, when necessary, to support pupils' well-being and safety and to organise additional specialist help should any parents be encountering challenging times.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop the work with children and their parents who are in families of service personnel.

As I explained in my 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

**Margaret Dickinson**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**