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Mrs C Atkins
Headteacher
Lypiatt Primary School
Services Cotswold Centre
Lypiatt Road
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Dear Mrs Atkins

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 20 and 21 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 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 when children move in or 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 discussions with: school leaders; pupils and their parents from service families; the Chair of the Governing Body; two headteachers of local primary schools that work closely with the school; a representative from Corsham Children's Centre; the former Community Development Worker from the Services Cotswold Centre in which the school is situated; the Commandant and Deputy Commandant of the Services Cotswold Centre; the senior educational welfare officer for Wiltshire; the health visitor for the area who is also a member of the governing body; and a representative from Relate. I also evaluated school documentation including the school development plan, tracking and assessment data for the pupils and school policies.

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

Key features

- This unique school provides an excellent quality of care and education. The school serves Armed Forces' families who need temporary accommodation for a variety of reasons, including discharge from the services, family separation and bereavement. Families frequently arrive at short notice, with no certainty about their future and often in vulnerable circumstances. The duration of their stay is often unpredictable. The school meets the challenge of providing stability and provision for children's personal development extremely well. It also ensures that the pupils' education is not disrupted, by assessing their needs promptly and tailoring the curriculum and teaching to ensure that their learning is brisk, purposeful and enjoyable.
- Pupils settle very quickly into the school because of the excellent care and welcome from the moment they arrive. As one recently arrived pupil said: 'When you come to the school, you settle in straight away.' Pupils describe the school as 'brilliant,' and 'fantastic.' They quickly get involved with activities in which the learning is active, fun and well directed. Parents and carers report that their children often show much more interest in their learning than previously and that they make markedly better progress.
- The fact that pupils are transient does not slow the school's attempts to ensure that their time at the school is spent productively. The flexible curriculum and brisk learning are underpinned by meticulous ongoing assessment of their personal and social development and their academic achievement. Pupils fully appreciate the wide range of trips and visits. All activities, formal and informal, in lessons and at play time, are determined by the school's commitment to learning and personal development being enjoyable and that pupils' progress should be rapid and secure. Pupils are enthusiastic learners, eager to share their knowledge and skills. They report that the school trusts them, gives them responsibility and helps them to grow up.
- Crucial to the school's success is the excellent way in which it works in partnership with other agencies to ensure that families and children are healthy, happy and able to learn. The school has excellent relationships with the local authority, which ensures that those who need extra support receive it swiftly. It also works very productively with the visiting health worker from the local primary care trust and with Relate, which provides family counselling and support. Relationships with Army Welfare Services are also superb, and the work of the school is fully integrated with that of the Services Cotswold Centre, ensuring that pupils and their families are prepared well for the next stage in their journey. Pupils often have complex problems that require urgent solutions. The school is imaginative, and sometimes ingenious, in swiftly ensuring that they receive the support that they need.

- The school has excellent relationships with other local primary schools. Pupils from Lypiatt participate in sporting activities at a local school which has also visited Lypiatt for events, such as performances by visiting theatre companies. Lypiatt also participates in shared training and development for staff organised with other schools locally.
- Procedures for safeguarding are rigorous and effective; the school works well with agencies in the United Kingdom and abroad. Pupils' attendance is good and the school is rigorous in following up any absences.
- Your leadership has been quickly and effectively established, so continuing the school's strong ethos and trend of improvement. A notable feature of the school is that the adults share common goals, enjoy their work and are justifiably proud of the successful services that they provide.
- Although this is a unique institution, many aspects of its excellent work demonstrate exemplary practice from which all could learn: timely and accurate assessment of pupils' personal and learning needs; excellent work with other agencies; a focus on improving social skills, building self-esteem and ensuring good progress in learning from the first day of entry.

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

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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Harrett
Her Majesty's Inspector