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Mr P Gittins  
Headteacher  
Newsome High School and Sports College  
Castle Avenue  
Newsome  
Huddersfield  
HD4 6JN

Dear Mr Gittins

### **Ofsted 2011–12 survey inspection programme: a review of anti-bullying practice in schools**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 9 November 2011 as part of our survey of schools' work to create a positive school culture and prevent and tackle bullying.

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.

This letter briefly summarises our discussion at the end of the visit.

#### **Strengths of this aspect of the school's work**

- You have successfully communicated your vision to the senior leadership team, staff and students resulting in a school environment which echoes the motto of 'smiles and laughter'. Through improved communication systems, on every level, there is a consistent approach to creating a positive, supportive school culture and prevent and tackle bullying. The atmosphere is welcoming and staff and students acknowledged inspectors with a smile, a nod or a 'good morning', reflecting their pride in the attractive, well-kept surroundings.
- The well-written policies for behaviour and anti-bullying reflect the values that the school promotes and concisely set out the expectations of how all members of the school community will treat each other. Policies are adopted consistently and underpin the confidence that staff and students have in dealing with unacceptable behaviour. Procedures for tackling unacceptable behaviour or bullying are unambiguous and students talked easily about the four levels of consequences and what action is taken at each stage.

- Relationships based on mutual respect provide the basis for the high expectations that you have of yourself, the staff and the students. As a result, students grow in maturity and in their understanding of appropriate behaviour as they move through the school and have faith in the staff to deal with unacceptable behaviour fairly. The strong and successful emphasis on using talking strategies and restorative justice provide a valuable framework for staff.
- Staff convey the values of the school through the way in which they relate to each other and act as positive role models for the students. Many visual prompts are displayed on the walls around the school including the 'thought for the week' which reinforces the message explored in the assembly at the start of the week. In the playground, at lunchtimes, and around the school, inspectors observed the students behaving calmly and sensibly.
- The curriculum is planned well to support students' social and moral development and is very well-matched to students' needs. Designated time is allocated to the delivery of personal, social, health, citizenship, and economic education (PSHCE) and social and emotional aspects of learning. This is supplemented by a weekly session of religious education. The 'SNAP' programme, which is progressive, covers aspects such as disability, relationships and attendance. Other aspects are taught through subjects, for example, citizenship is taught through history and religious education. Assemblies are integral to the PSHCE curriculum and are used flexibly to address any emerging issues.
- The school has carried out an analysis of students' views and experiences of bullying and leaders have started to use this information to educate and support students in this area. Incidents and action taken are recorded thoroughly and the impact of the action is monitored.
- The majority of students feel safe in school and are very confident of the systems to care for them and prevent unacceptable behaviour from escalating. Several students commented on the huge improvement in behaviour over the last five years. A few older students stated maturely that without the support of you and the staff, their behaviour would have prevented them taking examinations and looking forward to a future career.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- sharpening the monitoring and evaluation of the delivery and effectiveness of personal, social, health and citizenship education.

I hope that this visit has been useful in the further development of this aspect of the school's work.

As 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

**Eileen Mulgrew**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**