

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



2 December 2011

Mr W Branney  
Headteacher  
Stuart Bathurst Catholic High School  
College of Performing Arts  
Wood Green Lane  
Wednesbury  
WS10 9QS

Dear Mr Branney

**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 23 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**

- The school has a strong positive family ethos based on your belief in 'seeing the goodness in the child before you see anything else' and on the values of which the school's faith is paramount. Very clear expectations of the way in which all members of the community should behave towards each other are encapsulated in the motto 'Respect for a person's person; Respect for a person's property' which is highly visible on walls in the school and echoed by many staff and students.
- Mutual respect between staff and students ensures that they 'get along with each other'. Students behaved calmly and sensibly during break times, lunchtimes and when moving between lessons. Highly visible staff and prefects greatly supported students' feeling of safety and security at these times; several students commenting that 'there is always a teacher around'.
- Well-written policies guide all members of staff in promoting a positive school atmosphere and reducing any bullying incidents, and procedures identify clearly the sanctions taken if bullying occurs. This includes the use

of The Good Shepherd Unit which allows students a 'cooling off' period while continuing with their studies. The school recognises that a review of these sanctions would be beneficial in ensuring that the fullest possible support is given to the student who has bullied and the victim of the bullying.

- The school's motto is fully reflected in the carefully planned curriculum and students have many opportunities to cover issues such as tolerance and valuing diversity. The Catholic ethos provides the foundation for students' social, moral and cultural development delivered through the Catholic values programme. The weekly lesson incorporates all aspects of personal, social and health education and meets the students' needs. Schemes of work include themes explored in assemblies and are linked with the weekly lesson. The work builds on students' knowledge and understanding and covers a wide variety of issues. For example, students cover the themes of diversity in the workplace when studying the unit on the world of work. Other subjects are used to expand the programme as in English and the performing arts.
- Staff share a collective understanding of what action to take to tackle bullying and to ensure that pupils feel safe. They comment on the much improved communication system which enables all to know about any issues arising and take consistent action resulting in students who feel they are treated fairly.
- The majority of students say that they feel safe in school and know the action to take if they have worries. They have faith in the staff to help them if they are worried or upset and confident that problems will be resolved.
- The induction process for Year 7 students helped to alleviate any worries about joining a new school. The newly introduced 'summer school', during which they met older students, contributed well to Year 7 students settling quickly and understanding how they were expected to behave towards others. Similarly, older students became fully integrated into the life of the school through being matched to a 'buddy'.

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

- providing parents and carers with information that will help them to identify if their child is acting as a bully so that support can be given to change behaviours
- reviewing the use of sanctions to ensure that students are more fully supported in changing their behaviour patterns
- making the role of the governors more overt in ensuring support for the student who has bullied and the victim of the bullying.

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**