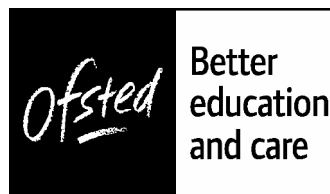


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07 December 2006

Mrs Eileen Carey
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Carey

Ofsted survey – Evaluation of Extended Services in Schools

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit of 20 November 2006 to evaluate the impact of your extended services provision. 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 staff, pupils, parents, service providers, a governor, scrutiny of documentation, observation of visits by providers and observation of pupils' activities.

The overall effectiveness of the extended services in your school was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Extended services are making a good impact on achievement and standards.

- Pupils are currently making good progress and their achievement improved during the period in which extended services expanded. All areas of the school's extended provision have a clear focus on developing positive attitudes to learning, and this has had a substantial effect on individuals, including some who are vulnerable or at risk of disaffection. The school has

evidence that wide participation in out of school hours' physical education has positively influenced attainment in PE.

- Extended services have a strong impact on pupils' personal development, especially their socialisation, health and enjoyment of school. A major contributory factor is the very high take-up of sports before and after school and during lunch times. For a significant minority, this is further helped by participation in local and regional competitions. Musical provision, especially the various choirs run by the school, also recruits large numbers and has opened the way to singing in church services and at prestigious venues such as the Royal Albert Hall and Birmingham's Symphony Hall. Pupils and staff confirm that this gives a huge boost to pupils' self-esteem, enjoyment of school and proficiency in music and literacy.
- The before-school events, such as table tennis and Gaelic Football, motivate pupils to be at school early and properly prepared for the day.
- The sessional nursery care, before and after school clubs school and homework club all contribute well to the confidence and skill of learners.

Quality of provision

The quality of the extended services is good.

- Provision does not yet match the core offer in terms of community access and parenting support but its range of sporting activities is first-rate, it offers very good musical opportunities and some good supporting services.
- Sports provision is exceptional. The great majority of Year 1 to Year 6 pupils are involved in voluntary, organised sporting activities throughout the week. Participation is very enthusiastic and inclusive. Table tennis, Gaelic football and Tag Rugby for example attract groups of 20-40 several times a week. Boys and girls both participate and the school offers an enviable staffing level by high quality coaches. These help able pupils enjoy remarkable success in local competitions; they have also opened up sport for many pupils who do not consider themselves talented, but who enjoy participation. Health and fitness across the school are strengths and teachers find pupils visibly more attentive in lessons if they have participated in sporting or other activities.
- The school liaises very well with external services and their work is greatly enhanced by a learning mentor and nurturing assistant on site. These two staff give vulnerable children very good social and learning support on an individual basis and also provide a lunch time facility for significant numbers of children who enjoy a high level of security. Where services for parents are on site, for example the "Inspire" programme, the impact is good.
- All the ECM areas are well promoted by extended services. Safety and health issues are clearly understood by pupils and the high level of enjoyment of school is a great strength.
- Child care is of good quality, though it operates in term time only.

Leadership and management of the Extended Services

The leadership and management of Extended Services provision are good.

- Though the full core offer is not entirely in place, the school's leadership has developed effective links with partners to provide an extensive range of high quality opportunities for pupils, and constantly seeks to develop its partnerships further.
- Current provision is very efficiently organised. The concern for quality is always present, so that monitoring is effective in identifying strengths and the school takes swift action to terminate contracts where provision is weaker. The school leaders are adept at developing new resources. For instance, the high staffing levels for many sports activities are partly achieved by creating placements for twelve secondary school students working for their Junior Sports Leadership Award.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is good.

- Provision attracts all pupils and offers benefits to the most vulnerable children and families and to the most advantaged. Several areas of extended provision, such as the learning mentors and nurturing assistant, focus exclusively on the most vulnerable pupils.
- While assessment arrangements do not allow the school to analyse its impact on particular pupils groups accurately, the school has anecdotal evidence of its impact on vulnerable pupils.

Areas for improvement

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

- modify assessment arrangements so that the benefits of extended services can be more accurately identified
- increase the range of support services and adult education on site for parents
- extend child care provision closer to the "wraparound" expectation in the core offer.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop your Extended Services.

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

Robert Drew
Additional Inspector