

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



30 December 2008

Mr A Murrell
Acting Headteacher
Blean Primary School
Whitstable Road
Blean
Canterbury
Kent
CT2 9FD

Dear Mr Murrell

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in promoting equality

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 23 September 2008 to look at work in promoting equality.

The visit provided valuable information that 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 made included: discussions with key staff, pupils, parents and carers, and observation of parts of four lessons.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is outstanding.

Features of good practice observed

- Achievement of vulnerable pupils is outstanding. It compares very well when compared to others because of the way that school leaders assess, monitor and track their achievement. This includes the maintenance of a 'soft' register to give early warning of pupils who are likely to become a risk and fall behind. In these instances support is immediately provided.
- Vulnerable pupils make excellent progress in their personal development because of the way the staff ensure they are fully included in lessons and in all aspects of the school. This includes the extensive range of lunchtime and after school clubs, trips and residential visits.
- The staff is a stable one, and under the leadership of teachers the strong team of teaching assistants support vulnerable pupils exceptionally well. They enjoy excellent relationships with pupils and

encourage them, whilst ensuring they develop good independent learning skills.

- Inclusion is outstanding. Staff work very hard to develop the confidence of vulnerable pupils and work with them to overcome their obstacles. As a result some are confident enough to take leading roles in school productions and in joint events with other schools.
- The specific skills and qualifications of the teaching assistants and the higher level teaching assistants are mapped and very well used. Through the performance management system they are encouraged to develop their interests and expertise to benefit vulnerable groups. This includes their work in support of pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder and with Hearing Impairment, as well as managing 'OASIS' (the social communication group).
- Teaching of vulnerable pupils is outstanding. Teachers plan their lessons to ensure that pupils are motivated to learn. As a result vulnerable pupils behave well, show positive attitudes and respond very positively in lessons and around the school. Teachers often do this by using computers, and by selecting topics that vulnerable pupils are interested in and relate to.
- The curriculum followed by vulnerable pupils is good. Teachers manage their day so that vulnerable pupils do not miss out because they are taking medication. Specific support is provided where needed including laptops, software and texts.
- The care, support and guidance for vulnerable pupils are outstanding. All staff are well trained and keep up to date in areas that impact on the learning of vulnerable pupils, including the teaching of phonetics and awareness of disability issues.
- Teachers use praise very well to encourage pupils. Each year they nominate a pupil for an 'overcoming adversity' award, often given to a vulnerable pupil. Also every week teachers award 'achievement cups' and a 'good citizen' certificate, again often to a vulnerable pupil, and these are much sought after and valued by pupils.
- The school makes excellent use of a professional counsellor, who supports vulnerable pupils on an individual basis, as and when necessary. This is significant in securing great improvement in pupils' social skills.
- Parents and carers speak highly of the excellent relationships and communications they enjoy with all school staff. They particularly appreciate the opportunity to 'text' staff and, where it is agreed as necessary, the daily use of home-school contact books.
- Leadership and management of this aspect of the school are outstanding. School managers lead by the tone they set and provision for the vulnerable pupils is ably managed on a day to day basis. Typically, there is a 'can do' approach in this area of the school's work, reflecting the priority given to it.

Areas for development

- Formally evaluate the outcomes of the many school-based training activities relating to equalities.
- Formalise the school's induction of teachers in line with that for the teaching assistants so that it routinely includes all issues relating to equalities.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to promote equalities in the school. As I explained previously, 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

Henry Moreton
Additional Inspector