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Mr M Gray
Headteacher
Waterloo Primary School
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Dear Mr Gray

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 the 05 November 2008, to look at work in promoting equality.

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 made included: observing lessons, scrutinising school documentation, discussions with parents, pupils, teachers, managers, governors and other professionals who provide additional support to the pupils in the school.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is good.

Features of good practice observed

- The leadership places a strong emphasis on valuing individual pupils. It says that 'every adult in school has an important role in knowing each child' and it has delegated staff well to support this vision. An Enhanced Learning Support Team, led by the Inclusion Manager, provides and monitors the good provision to ensure equality of opportunity for vulnerable pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. As a result, there is close collaboration between teachers, support assistants, parents and other external support services, enabling these pupils to achieve well.
- Excellent consideration is given by staff to the variety of 'at risk' categories of pupils. This has raised the profile of the differing needs of all pupils throughout the school. Over 20 groups of vulnerable pupils have been identified and well thought out provision is in place to support their

achievement. An extensive register of these pupils provides up to date information, showing the additional support each pupil receives annually. This is monitored regularly by the governing body.

- Pupils who are at risk of underachieving are identified early as part of the schools' thorough assessment procedures. Home visits form part of the induction into the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), supporting the good partnership between home and school. Systems to track pupils' individual progress throughout the school are improving and the leadership is making good use of the information this is starting to provide. For example, the identification of a large number of pupils' with well-below average skills in speaking and listening at the start of EYFS led to the leadership organising an effective programme of training to develop the staff's skills in talking and listening to children. As a result, pupil achievement improved in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2008.
- The care, guidance and support provided for vulnerable pupils is good. The school has a larger than average number of children who join the school at non-routine times of the year. They are given an Induction Mentor who supports the child and family to ensure that they settle well into school. Pupils and parents appreciate this level of care. The emotional and behavioural needs of vulnerable pupils are well supported by the Waterloo Emotional and Behaviour Support (WEBS) teaching assistants. They discuss well-being issues during lessons and daily after the lunch break. Pupils are given bookmarks with personal behaviour targets to help them remember what to do if they face difficulties. The WEBS staff are well trained and their effectiveness has led to a reduction in the number of behaviour incidents.
- Provision for equality of opportunity is good. It has a high profile in school and is monitored effectively by the senior leadership. Pupils from minority ethnic groups feel well supported and welcome in the school. Staff know the vulnerable pupils well. They are trained to skilfully identify pupil needs and actively encourage them to take part in all school activities. Governors make regular checks to ensure that pupils on the inclusion register are included in out of school visits. No pupil is excluded from taking part on financial grounds. Pupils identified as having a lack of support from home are helped by additional provision in school, for example in reading. Procedures to safeguard the health and safety and well-being of vulnerable pupils are well established.
- The school has a School Educational Resource Facility (SERF). This is an additionally funded unit provided for deaf pupils at Waterloo and in other local schools. The inclusion of these pupils into the main part of the school is outstanding. Many attend lessons in the main school as well as in the SERF. They make excellent progress. Pupils say they make good friends with the children who are deaf. The deaf children say they feel happy at school. They communicate well and are able to take part in the excellent range of activities the school offers, including the residential visits. Parents say their children have grown in confidence and enjoy school. Parents who are deaf also feel part of the school community and welcomed by staff and other parents.
- Interagency work for those students with significant mental health issues is good. School is involved in a new scheme, Emotional Wellbeing Inclusion Support Team (EWIST), to improve the speed at which support is provided for pupils in need. A multi-agency group of professionals now meet regularly

with the school special educational needs coordinator. Staff say that these meetings are useful and are already beginning to impact on the quality of support they are able to provide for the pupils.

Areas for development

- Improve the system for tracking individual pupil progress to ensure that all staff can identify pupils' starting points when they join the school and their potential levels of achievement.
- Ensure that monitoring the effectiveness of provision for vulnerable groups makes the link between the additional support provided and the impact on outcomes for pupils' year on year.
- Continue to improve the attendance of the most vulnerable pupils, by implementing the school's plan to encourage parents to support their children's learning.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop promoting equalities at Waterloo Primary.

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

Gill Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector