

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



18 October 2008

Mr B Walker
Headteacher
Blackburn Primary School
Baring Road
Blackburn
Rotherham
South Yorkshire

Dear Mr Walker

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 15 October 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: scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of parts of lessons and interviews with staff, pupils, governors and representatives of several other organisations who contribute to the promotion of equality throughout the school.

The quality of your provision to promote equalities is good.

Features of good practice observed

- The school quickly identifies, and effectively supports, those pupils who are most vulnerable to underachievement. Many of these are from homes with a greater than average degree of social and economic disadvantage.
- The school works closely and effectively with parents and carers, with a particularly strong focus on raising the aspirations of those living in the most disadvantaged area of the school's catchment area, this encourages parents and carers to communicate freely with the school and attend school events.
- Positive work is done to develop stronger relationships with the parents and carers of the most vulnerable pupils. The 'Dolphin Room' is an excellent initiative. Within it, parents are particularly strongly supported to help their children break out of a cycle of underachievement and low aspirations. Pupils benefit greatly by learning how to form stronger relationships with adults and their peers. Excellent attention is paid within

the facility to the monitoring of any positive changes in their attitudes and learning.

- Pupils respond well to the school's high expectation of good behaviour. They show good attitudes to learning and work hard in lessons. Playtimes are friendly, happy occasions, much looked forward to by all pupils. Pupils mix well, irrespectively of their backgrounds, and there are no social divides.
- Good leadership and management have resulted in the creation of a good staff, who share a good understanding of pupils, their families and their home circumstances. Regular training is provided according to carefully assessed need. Most recently this has focussed on raising awareness of the difficulties faced by a growing number of pupils displaying autistic spectrum disorders.

Areas for development

- The school records attendance at the many additional activities that are provided before and after school. All children are encouraged to attend activities that are of personal interest and provision is made to facilitate attendance. The school agrees that through closer monitoring and individual discussion with pupils, it could build up a better picture of the reasons why some pupils, in vulnerable groups, do not access the activities on offer in order to strengthen their attraction and contribute more to the personal development of all pupils.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop promoting equalities in your 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

Alastair Younger
Additional Inspector