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12 November 2008

Mr N McDermott  
St Mary's Catholic Primary School  
Broadgate Lane  
Horsforth  
Leeds  
West Yorkshire  
LS18 5AB

Dear Mr McDermott

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 11 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: scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of parts of four lessons and interviews with staff, pupils and two governors. Two parents were spoken with shortly prior to the visit.

The school serves an area of very favourable socio-economic circumstances. A small number of pupils are entitled to free school meals or come from homes where English is not the main language spoken; all are competent English speakers. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) is about a third of the national average. There are no refugees, asylum seekers or traveller children.

The quality of your provision to promote equalities is good.

Features of good practice observed

- The breakfast club has been a very successful initiative. It was founded as a study support facility to support pupils who were recognised as being potentially vulnerable to underachievement. In most instances this is related to issues relating to punctuality, behaviour or emotional vulnerability. As a result of involvement in the club, many of the

targeted pupils have improved their punctuality and are happier and more settled in school.

- Although there are very few pupils from groups recognised as typically vulnerable the school is ever vigilant to spot changes in pupils' moods, behaviour and progress, which could suggest a pupil is having difficulties. Signs are identified by staff and pupils. The school is particularly good at following up concerns. There is a very good awareness that every pupil can face problems at certain periods in their lives; these are addressed as quickly as possible before the well-being of the pupil is adversely affected.
- Vulnerable pupils are well supported at times of change. Special attention is given to children and their parents who are perceived to need extra help and information about transfer from pre-school settings. This means that the transitions are successful and these pupils make good progress. The 'Ambassadors Club' is an excellent initiative through which more vulnerable pupils spearhead a well-prepared programme of arrangements for transfer to secondary school. By making the first visits to these schools they gain a head start, and they also gain status amongst their peers which is good for their personal development.
- Pupils with LDD are well taught. Teachers pay expert attention to their additional needs and provide a good level of challenge. As a result, pupils with LDD achieve equally well with all other pupils in relation to their personal circumstances.

#### Area for development

- In each class at Key Stage 2, pupils are generally taught in groups which reflect their ability. In literacy and numeracy lessons in particular there are not enough opportunities for lower attaining pupils to work alongside higher attaining peers.

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