

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



31 December 2008

Mr P Hickey
Headteacher
Brimington Junior School
Springvale Road
Chesterfield
Derbyshire
S43 1HF

Dear Mr Hickey

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 19 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 discussions with key members of staff, pupils, parents and carers, and the observation of parts of four lessons.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is outstanding.

Features of good practice observed

- Progress of vulnerable pupils who join the school is good because the Year 3 pupils are made to feel welcome beforehand and settle very quickly. The 'Welcome to Brimington' unit of work at the start of the year helps their transition.
- Similarly, vulnerable pupils in Year 6 make a smooth move into secondary schools because of the very effective support work in the months leading up to transfer.
- Because of the school's strong commitment to supporting pupils who face challenging circumstances it ensures that none are left behind. As a result of the close monitoring of pupils' progress, including through the 'learning logs', those pupils who need extra support promptly get it. Any additional support is usually provided in class so these pupils do not feel excluded.
- For those pupils who are in need of additional support, the school has good links with the relevant agencies on a case-by-case basis.

- Links with parents and carers are excellent and they are seeing the very positive impact of developments on their children out of school, particularly with regard to motivation and enjoyment. As one put it, 'my boy is now brimming with what he is doing...he does not shut up about it!' They report that their children 'are desperate to get to school now'.
- A marked improvement in attendance, and improving results, reflects pupils' enjoyment of school as a result of the innovative curriculum and personalised approach to learning.
- Pupils respond maturely to the responsibility they have for their own learning. They like the way they may challenge themselves in one lesson, while consolidating in another, and so they move forward more confidently.
- The personal development of vulnerable pupils is excellent. Because they are asked 'what' and 'how' they want to learn, and know their views are taken very seriously and acted upon, their self-esteem improves considerably.
- Pupils who need help to develop some social and life skills benefit greatly from the excellent opportunities to develop these through working in teams, exercising personal choice and taking responsibility for their learning.
- Pupils have a great sense of ownership of developments because teachers ask them how they can best address their learning needs. For example, pupils like to 'do stuff', work 'with someone smart' and 'help others', and teachers build these into learning. This means that pupils who might otherwise be at risk of disengagement show considerable commitment to their learning.
- Extra curricular events such as the 'imagineering' and 'baking' clubs provide exciting opportunities for pupils of all abilities and aptitudes. This provides specific support for pupils with a range of needs and contributes to a sense of a learning culture for all.
- The well-being of those pupils who need additional support is greatly enhanced by the way the teams of teachers in each year, ably supported by the teaching assistants, work very closely together to plan and teach. Key staff have clear responsibilities for pupils' emotional and economic well-being and this supports very well the needs of different groups of pupils.
- The learning observed during the visit was outstanding because of pupils' excellent attitudes, behaviour and commitment. For example, in their discussion about whether the local soccer club and supermarket should be relocated on a former industrial site, every pupil immersed themselves in their role, dressing the part. The 'young mum' even had a toddler in tow.
- Staff reward positive effort. Pupils welcome the chance to win a trip to the cinema for good work and behaviour. They like the 'Golden Time' on Friday afternoons, and those who do not finish all their work think this is a 'fair' way of doing things. Outside play areas are used to provide 'positive playtimes' so that pupils remain engaged and motivated to learn.

- The school is active and successful in sharing its developments with others. This benefits pupils because they are proud to show their work, and it increases vulnerable pupils' self esteem.

Areas for development

- Drive forward the strategic partnerships.

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