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Mr D Staveley
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Staveley

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in promoting equality

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 December 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: lesson observations, meetings or telephone interviews with pupils, parents, staff, health professionals, members of the management committee as well as reviewing relevant documentation.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is good

Features of good practice observed

- By using a range of formal and informal systems for assessment, at the start of any admission to the hospital and home education service, teachers successfully identify current levels of achievement. From this information individually designed programmes of learning meet the individual academic and social needs of pupils and progress made by most pupils is good.
- Nearly all pupils enjoy learning at the various bases including many who have not enjoyed their education in a previous setting. These pupils attend more frequently than previously and learn more.

- Pupils with long term, short term or recurring medical needs appreciate and benefit from having disruption to their education kept to a minimum. The service plays a significant role in liaising with home schools and ensuring work can be continued during stays in hospital or at home. This enables pupils to achieve in line with expectations or exceed them.
- Hospital and home education working together as one service provides good continuity for pupils and good opportunities for sharing expertise.
- There is good planning with health professionals for some pupils moving on to their next stage of education and / or health care. The individual plans are clear and provide pertinent information that will aid young people through transition.
- The group sessions for pupils who have previously been taught individually at home are successfully helping to improve pupils' social skills and their ability to engage and cooperate as part of a group.
- Staff have a good understanding of the medical needs of pupils and accommodate this while maintaining high expectations of achievement. Expectations of progress are wider than just academic achievement and include attendance, social development, participation and improvements in emotional well-being.
- Staff provide good role models and treat pupils sensitively and with respect. Planning for lessons is usually thorough and makes sure individual needs are met.
- Partnership work with relevant health professionals is well developed. Mutually supportive planning of education and treatment programmes for some groups of pupils is strong and helps pupils to sustain or improve progress.

Areas for development

- Collectively as a staff, identify the priority areas of progress for different groups of learners accessing the service. Then bring the wealth of information about individual progress and success in destinations together so that effectiveness and opportunities for different groups can be evaluated across the provision more easily.
- Make more use of the different expertise that exists in separate parts of the service to improve access for pupils and help develop the service as a whole.
- Raise the profile of the expertise in the service to help mainstream schools support pupils with medical needs more effectively.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop promoting equalities in Nottingham hospital and home education.

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

Janet Thompson
Her Majesty's Inspector