

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



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Ms V Swaida  
Headteacher  
Harrow High School & Sports College  
Gayton Road  
Harrow  
Middlesex  
HA1 2JG

Dear Ms Swaida

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in promoting equality

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff at Harrow High School and Sports College, during our visit on 26 January 2009 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 meetings with:

- Yourself, the Head of Minority Ethnic Achievement & Senior Strategic Leaders
- Key Pastoral staff
- NLE Linked Headteacher & the National Challenge Assistant Headteacher
- The Art Therapist
- External Partners: Harrow Tuition Service; Kingsley High School
- Parents
- Various Learner Focus Groups

In addition, brief observations were made of the Inclusion Panel and a number of lessons which included: EAL, English, SMSC and Life Skills coaching at the Basketball Academy. A short review of school documentation was also carried out.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is outstanding.

Features of good practice observed

- The very strong strategic vision of 'Excellence for All' underpins the very good achievement of vulnerable students. This strategic vision and the emphasis on the individual pupil and high aspirations for all learners is clearly evident in all aspects of the school's work: the teaching and learning approaches used, curriculum planning and personalisation, workforce deployment, the management structures and the emphasis on continuing professional development for all staff.

- High quality individual pupil data which is reviewed regularly supports early identification and assessment of needs and also allows the school to be very responsive to changing needs. Examples of this excellent work include that done with the many pupils with EAL who are admitted during the school year and the targeted work with groups identified by the school for example, black boys who are 'key marginals' for reaching 5 A\* - C.
- The strong focus on excellent teaching and learning is combined with a range of high quality innovative and creative interventions for example, life skills coaching through the Basketball Academy and improving English skills through the educational movie club. This increases pupils' engagement with learning and has contributed well to good and sometimes outstanding outcomes for vulnerable pupils.
- Timetabling throughout the school is flexible so that individual or group work can take place without compromising the broad and balanced curriculum. This maximises progress for those pupils with EAL and those who may need additional work to reach academic objectives.
- The school has developed a strong personalised curriculum, a range of different pathways and alternative programmes at KS4 to meet the differing needs of vulnerable pupils, for example those who are disaffected with school and want or need the challenge of work or college. The outcome of this is that the vast majority of young people continue into education, employment or training.
- Excellent use is made of external partners and their expertise through the Inclusion Panel which by meeting regularly and coordinating and monitoring the outcomes of interventions, assists the school's work in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable pupils.
- The school's commitment to involving young people through the many 'Learner Voice' groups means that they are central to the learning process and integral to improving provision in the school. Pupils consider that the school listens and responds to their views. Through their work with the groups, pupils are enabled to become peer mentors and Sports Ambassadors, participate in charity work and make a positive contribution to the community. This develops the confidence of vulnerable pupils and supports the oral and representational skills in pupils with EAL. It also ensures the implementation of the Every Child Matters Agenda.

#### Areas for development

- Continue to develop strategies to address the needs of the white working class group which remains vulnerable to underachievement.

We hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop and promote equalities in Harrow High School and Sports College.

As we 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.

Ofsted gathers information on the immediate and longer-term impact of survey inspections, both on the institutions themselves, and with a view to improving its own processes. To this end, we should be grateful if you would complete the attached questionnaire and return it within the next ten days. We have also just sent a copy of the questionnaire by email. Please return your completed questionnaire to either the email or postal address on the form, not to us. We may also contact some schools by telephone after several months in order for us to gain a picture of longer-term impact. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Morag Bowden, Stephen McShane  
Her Majesty's Inspectors