

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



02 February 2009

Mr M Bragg
Headteacher
Hardwicke Parochial Primary School
Poplar Way
Hardwicke
Gloucester
GL2 4QG

Dear Mr Bragg

Ofsted survey: good practice in capturing the user voice

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 26 January 2009 to look at work on capturing the user voice.

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: observations of lessons, a pupil focus group and lunchtime activities, discussions with children and staff, and scrutiny of documentation.

Features of good practice observed

- The strategic vision for the user voice, presented as a discrete strand within the school development plan, is well led by senior managers and shared by staff. The school's management team reviews and adapts its approach to user voice as needed, for example the recent introduction of focus groups to provide pupil feedback on specific topics.
- The inclusive ethos encourages children of all ages to express their views, take responsibility and contribute to decision-making. They are well supported in developing listening and discussion skills to support these activities, for example through circle time.
- A range of formal and informal strategies engage children well and ensure that their voice is heard. These include the established school council which is led and managed by pupils, and focus groups on specific topics, such as the review of the sex and relationships education programme and collective worship.
- Children are confident to express their views and give critical feedback on their experiences.
- Mentoring support targeted at more vulnerable children impacts positively on their personal development and educational achievement.

- Older pupils are supported well in developing leadership skills, for example in setting an example to their peers, as sports leaders and as infant helpers.
- There are several examples of the involvement of children in strategic decision-making, for example the appointment of staff.
- Children are supported in planning and evaluating their learning and progress, This is particularly marked at the Foundation Stage where they set their goals and targets for learning, choose activities and keep a record of their 'learning journey'.

Areas for development

- Ensure that children receive feedback on action taken in response to their inputs.
- Consider how the governing body can engage directly with children in order to hear their voice at first hand.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the user voice in the centre.

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

Mary Ryan
Her Majesty's Inspector