

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)



24 March 2009

Mrs L Harris  
Headteacher  
Weoley Castle Nursery School  
121 Weoley Castle Road  
Weoley Castle  
Birmingham  
B29 5QD

Dear Mrs Harris

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 19 March 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 and lunchtime activities, discussions with children, staff and parents, and scrutiny of documentation.

Features of good practice observed

- The school's vision to create: 'a safe, forward thinking, welcoming and nurturing place where emotional well-being is a high priority', is firmly reflected in every aspect of its work in developing children's voice.
- Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, the highly skilled team of committed staff regularly reviews and adapts its approach to children's voice. The impact of this rigorous approach can be seen across the whole school, where children's skills in all areas of learning are very well developed.
- At the heart of this development is the High/Scope approach and its emphasis on establishing a strong partnership between children, teachers and family. This approach is highly effective in enabling the children to be co-operative, make choices, present opinions and be reflective.
- The inclusive nature of the school is very successful in ensuring that the children's needs are clearly identified. Planning is well informed by the staff's excellent knowledge of each child. This is seen to particularly good effect in the nurture

group where the use of very specific profiling has enabled that group to make significant improvements with their social skills in line with their peers.

- The strong emphasis on the development of literacy and oracy skills and continual focus on personalised learning, ensure that children use their well-developed skills to make their own plans, develop their independence and to explain their reasoning.
- The school's excellent partnership with parents, supported by surveys and drop-in sessions, enables children to continue to develop these skills at home. Parents say that this has resulted in their children having a very good awareness of the need to take turns, how to articulate their views clearly, how to make choices and how to plan.
- The use of information communication technology offers good opportunities for the children to extend their learning, for example through the use of interactive whiteboards and playstation pods which support pupils in making choices and recording activities.

#### Area for Improvement

- To explore how High/Scope interaction strategies impact on children's creative voice.

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

David King  
Additional Inspector