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Mrs G Zaidi
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Zaidi

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Healthy eating in schools

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, pupils and parents, during my visit with my colleague from the School Food Trust on 13 October 2009, to look at your work on healthier eating and school food provision.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our evaluation and reporting. Any published report is likely to list the names of the institutions visited but we would not identify individual institutions within the report itself.

The evidence base used to inform the judgements made included interviews with you, a governor, parents, staff and pupils; scrutiny of school documentation; analysis of pupils' work and parents' questionnaire; observation of two lessons; and a brief visit to all classes to see related work.

I undertook to provide a brief written version of the main points made in our feedback at the end of the visit, to support development in healthier eating and school meals.

The quality of provision to promote healthy eating

The quality of provision to promote healthy eating is good with numerous outstanding features.

Compliance with the Department for Children, Schools and Families' (DCSF) food-based and nutrient-based standards for school food

Compliance with the DCSF food-based and nutrient-based standards for school food is good.

- The lunch time provision is compliant with the final food-based and 14 nutrient-based standards.
- The food and drink provided at the breakfast club and Friday tuck shop were not fully compliant with the food-based standards for all school food other than lunches.

The quality of the dining experience

The quality of the dining experience is outstanding.

- Pupils enjoy sitting with friends. They are supported well by lunch time staff so they can eat calmly despite the numbers that have to be served. Pupils try new items and they enjoy the salad bar.
- Queuing is kept to a minimum and behaviour is excellent. Pupils' own work on healthy eating is displayed well in the dining room and it adds substantially to the light, bright and very pleasant atmosphere.

Helping pupils and parents to make healthier choices

Strategies for helping pupils and parents to make healthier choices are outstanding.

- Parents spoke very positively about the guidance the school provides for healthy eating and said it had a good impact on their children's choices. They found the school's advice for packed lunches helpful and would welcome copies of menus and a chance to taste new school lunch dishes.

Development of pupils' knowledge and personal skills

Development of pupils' knowledge and personal skills are outstanding.

- Pupils have a very wide range of opportunities to cook; they often use fresh ingredients grown in the school's garden.
- Younger pupils make good use of the integral kitchen in their classroom. Older pupils learn to make a variety of bread and others designed and made healthy sandwiches for a competition. They visited a commercial kitchen where the chef judged their efforts. In another sandwich outlet, pupils had the opportunity to make a healthy sandwich, from local ingredients.

Teaching about healthier eating

Teaching about healthier eating is outstanding.

- Ideas and vocabulary related to healthy eating are steadily developed as the pupils mature. Older pupils confidently use scientific terms, such as carbohydrate, and are aware of the social factors that have led to more children being overweight in modern Britain.
- Working with a university, they accurately monitored their activity levels and developed an excellent understanding of how to balance food intake with the energy expended.
- They can identify the food that helps them grow and the items that can lead to dental decay. They are supported well by the dental nurse from the local Primary Care Trust.

Planning the curriculum

Planning the curriculum is outstanding.

- Healthy eating messages and information are embedded in the science curriculum in all classes and these messages are reinforced in pupils' personal, social and health education as well as in lively whole school assemblies, competitions, sport and through extra curricular clubs.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good.

- Leaders are well aware of the pupils' health and social needs. Individual pupils with difficulties are given good support. The school's work on healthy eating is varied, adventurous and of an excellent standard. There is room for further consultation on pupils' preferences for the vegetarian options and for dishes featuring pulses. Breakfast and snack time require minor adjustments.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- consider involving parents more in tasting school lunches; especially in developing the vegetarian options and dishes containing pulses
- ensure all foods served at breakfast and snack time are compliant with the food-based standards and are monitored and consider providing porridge in the breakfast club as the weather gets colder.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop healthier eating and provision for food in the school.

As I explained during the feedback, this letter will be copied 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

Mo Roberts
Her Majesty's Inspector