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Mr G Phillips  
Headteacher  
Lilian Baylis Technology School  
323 Kennington Lane  
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Dear Mr Philips

Ofsted 2009-10 survey inspection programme: healthy eating in schools

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, students and parents, during my visit with my colleagues from the School Food Trust on 9 November 2009 to look at your work on healthier eating and school food provision.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports are likely to list the names of the institutions visited but individual institutions will not be identified within the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with parents, students and staff; scrutiny of school documentation including your school evaluation and school food policy; analysis of students' work; and observation of two lessons, snack time and school lunch.

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's) food-based and nutrient-based standards for school food

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

- The lunchtime provision was compliant with all the food-based standards. The lunch provision met nine of the 14 nutrient-based standards and the catering provider has a strategy in place to tackle the areas of non-compliance. The school works with the catering provider for its nutrient-analysis information, but this is not always completed quickly enough to allow adjustments to be made to the current meal cycle.
- The food and drink provided at the mid-morning break were compliant with all the food-based standards for school food other than lunches.

The quality of the dining experience

The quality of the dining experience is good.

- The suitably timed and well-organised lunch break enables all students to eat comfortably. Queuing is controlled well and is kept to a minimum. The food items are labelled well so that students know what is available as they go through the line, but there is room to publish the menu more extensively beforehand to further promote the uptake of school lunches.

Helping students and parents to make healthier choices

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

- Parents were pleased with the excellent care the students receive and appreciate that students are encouraged each day to eat a balanced meal and to use their money wisely. Students with identified problems related to food are supported exceptionally well. The school has run a very helpful programme for students who are overweight and also follows this up by helping these students with their choices in the dining room. Parents appreciated being fully involved in the programme and said that their families had benefited as a result.

Development of students' knowledge and personal skills

The development of students' knowledge and personal skills is outstanding.

- Students understand which foods they should eat little of and why, and the importance of fruit and vegetables in their diet. They all enjoy the hands-on cooking experience in Year 7. Older students, including those in more vulnerable groups, learn how to modify recipes to make them healthier. All students understand the 'five-a-day' message, including what portion size is suggested.

Teaching about healthier eating

Teaching about healthier eating is outstanding.

- The students experience an excellent range of teaching about healthier eating in a wide variety of subjects. This reinforces the main messages in numerous ways. Each subject adds to their knowledge so they gain skills,

such as budgeting in mathematics, analysis of sugar content in science and learning about French food in their modern foreign language classes. The school listens to students' ideas and suggestions and these are followed whenever possible.

## Planning the curriculum

Planning of the curriculum is outstanding

- Consistent messages are given in science, personal and social development, food technology and physical education. Themes that go right across the curriculum also add substantially to the excitement, and help to hold students' attention and reinforce messages. The school appropriately takes the teaching of healthy lifestyles very seriously and tries hard to help students to apply the knowledge after school. The close proximity of fast-food outlets makes this difficult.

## Leadership and management

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- You, the bursar and governors all see eating healthily as fundamental to helping you to provide a good education in a school where a large number of students are eligible for free school meals. You promote healthy lifestyles effectively.
- Despite the complex contract arrangements imposed by the private funding initiative, you respond to the needs of individual students and provide inviting meals. The bursar works tirelessly to promote healthy eating. Effective support by the special educational needs and/or disabilities department is provided to any student, no matter how complex the situation. This sensitive management of students enables them to benefit from the many opportunities the school provides to enjoy a healthy diet and to try new foods.

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

- ensure that the nutritional analysis of menus is carried out in time to enable any necessary adjustments to be made
- further encourage the few students who do not take their free school meals to consider doing so.

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 sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Mo Roberts  
Her Majesty's Inspector