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Mr S O'Hare
Headteacher
St Bernadette's Catholic Primary
School
Devonshire Road
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Dear Mr O'Hare

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 14 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. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half term.

The evidence base used to inform the judgements included: interviews with nominated staff, a group of parents and two groups of pupils; scrutiny of school documentation including school policies; and observation of two lessons and the school's lunchtime arrangements.

The quality of provision to promote healthy eating

The quality of provision to promote healthy eating is outstanding.

Compliance with the 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 outstanding.

- School lunches fully meet the food-based and nutrient-based standards for school lunches. With the exception of two minor points, the food provided at the breakfast and after school clubs met the food-based standards for

food other than lunches, and the provision of food was effectively coordinated within the school.

The quality of the dining experience

The quality of the dining experience is good.

- The dining hall is spacious and clean. Pupils can take their time over their meals to eat and to chat. Pupils are able to sample meals they are unfamiliar with and are encouraged to eat salad and extra vegetables.
- The 'family service' approach provides older pupils with a position of responsibility as they serve younger pupils their food. A few pupils felt this arrangement meant that they could not sit with their friends.

Helping pupils and parents to make healthier choices

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

- Newsletters contain regular reminders about healthy eating and advice has been shared with parents about healthy lunchboxes. Assemblies and classroom displays reinforce these messages with pupils.
- Parents and pupils are able to attend food-taster sessions at after-school events. Parents and their children are helped to learn about healthier eating at the new 'cook and eat' club.
- Younger pupils are awarded stickers for bringing healthy packed lunches and for eating all their food.

Development of pupils' knowledge and personal skills

Development of pupils' knowledge and personal skills is good.

- Pupils talked confidently about healthy eating and know it is important to eat a variety of foods in moderation. They know it is important to exercise regularly and there is a good level of take up by older pupils of sports activities. However, there is room to increase the opportunities pupils have to share their views on healthy eating initiatives which would help the school identify areas for improvement.
- Pupils have a good understanding of hygiene requirements for when they prepare food.

Teaching about healthier eating

Teaching about healthier eating is good.

- Teachers are knowledgeable about aspects of healthy eating and hygiene and teach pupils well how to prepare food safely.
- Pupils gain good experience in making a range of healthy foods.

Planning the curriculum

Planning the curriculum is outstanding.

- Healthy eating and understanding about nutrition are taught in science and physical education. The healthy schools coordinator has ensured there are very good, well-planned links within the school's creative curriculum which means that healthy eating is also taught in subjects such as history.
- The 'eat well plate' model is predominantly used in a range of subjects rather than less widely accepted forms of explaining healthy eating.
- The curriculum is enriched through pupils growing vegetables in the school's sizeable allotment which they can take home to eat.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- You provide very good leadership in promoting healthy eating and physical exercise, for example through the appointment of a family support worker and the planned development of the school's grounds.
- Staff are consulted on the detailed healthy lunchbox and healthy eating policies. There is scope to consult more widely with pupils and parents on healthy eating issues.
- There is a high level of collaboration between all in the school who provide food and promote healthy eating. The senior family support worker supports and engages very well with parents and supports staff in promoting healthy eating in lessons. The before- and after-school club leader also takes great care to ensure pupils eat healthily.

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

- expand consultation procedures with pupils and parents to identify areas where pupils' understanding of healthy eating can be improved.

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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Michael McIlroy
Her Majesty's Inspector