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Ms A Zohhadi
Nelson Mandela School
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Dear Ms Zohhadi

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in literacy

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 3 November 2009 to look at work in literacy.

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. 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 discussions with senior leaders and the literacy coordinator, meetings with pupils, examination of school documentation and five lesson observations.

Features of good practice observed

- You and other school leaders keep a sharp focus on maintaining high standards in literacy within a rich curriculum that the pupils enjoy greatly. Each term, senior leaders and teachers review how well pupils are progressing in reading and writing. This ensures that they can identify quickly any underachievement by pupils or groups.
- Almost all children start Nursery with very little knowledge of English. Yet because of outstanding provision, they have above average reading and writing skills by the end of Year 2. Pupils continue to make outstanding progress from Years 3 to 6. In the statutory tests at the end of Year 6 in 2009, over half of them attained Level 5 in English.
- Boys love reading and writing and attain the same high standards as girls. The 40% of pupils entitled to free school meals achieve above average standards in English.
- All staff celebrate their pupils' bilingualism and multilingualism as evidence of their skills as learners. Staff have correspondingly high

expectations of the pupils' cognitive abilities when teaching reading and writing.

- In lessons and through marking, teachers provide encouragement and practical guidance on areas for improvement. Pupils recognise how this support helps them to become better readers and writers.
- Because of the school's outstanding focus on building self-esteem, pupils are confident to ask and answer questions. They do not worry about getting something wrong.
- Displays around the school celebrate the pupils' high-quality writing. These, and work in books, demonstrate well the pupils' skills at organising their ideas logically, spelling accurately and forming letters correctly.

Areas for development, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that:
 - all teachers are able to assess written work accurately
 - teachers apply assessment criteria consistently throughout the school so that, for example, secure Level 3 writing in Key Stage 1 shares the same attributes as secure Level 3 writing in Key Stage 2.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop literacy in the school.

As I explained previously, a copy of 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

Anthony O'Malley
Her Majesty's Inspector