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Mr S Perfect
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Perfect

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in promoting equality

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 29 January 2009 to look at work in promoting equality.

The visit provided valuable information that 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 discussions with key members of staff, the observation of several part-lessons, rehearsals of the choir as well as several other support activities.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is good.

Features of good practice observed

- The leadership of the school is outstanding and the strong vision and direction provided by the headteacher has had a significant impact on the ethos of the school and the pupils within. This ethos of the school is being developed around respect and high expectations for all. All members of the school community are aware of this, and this enables all staff to play their part in raising standards throughout the school.
- Pupils are well tracked through the school, from their time of entry. The school's systems are strong and robust enough to monitor individual and group progress in the core subjects. This allows the school to be able to identify and target pupils who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or are showing some signs of potential underachievement. Due to this targeting,

pupils are able to access a good array of support for their needs, and there is also good use of small support groups. This ensures that pupils are able to receive intervention according to their individual needs, resulting in good, and some outstanding, progress.

- Other services available to support pupils are well co-ordinated by the school which is quick to seek advice for pupils who are at risk of underachieving or have other problems which need extra provision. These services help to give pupils the confidence and self esteem that they need to be positive contributors to the life of the school
- Partnerships are a good aspect of the school's work due to the range of services available which enhance its work. This has a particularly strong impact on the work on supporting pupils and their families. A good example of this is the use of the common assessment framework to monitor the needs of families and to provide support from a wide range of agencies as needs arise.
- The school has established many good links in the wider community which contribute to the good personal development throughout the school. An example of this is the Gloucester Cathedral project where the choirmaster from the cathedral comes in to school on a weekly basis to establish a choir in Year 5. In the short time that this has been running, there has been a marked change in the attitude of the children and they thoroughly enjoy the sessions.
- Parents spoke very highly of the support that the school provides for them and their children. They are extremely supportive of the school and they appreciate the learning opportunities available to all pupils, both within and outside of the curriculum. Parents feel that their views and ideas are taken seriously by the school and that the school is a very welcoming place to visit. The headteacher is always accessible and his work for the school over his time here is well recognised throughout the school community, with good reason.
- The school recognises that all pupils make a positive contribution to the life of the school and plans clubs and activities which enhance the curriculum to encourage pupils to try new activities and develop new talents. As a result of this approach, pupils develop their self esteem and self confidence. The school is a fully inclusive community and all pupils are encouraged to participate in this wide range of activities, which includes before and after school clubs.
- The school works closely with outside agencies such as the Traveller Education Team to ensure that this particular group of pupils receives support which is tailored to meet their cultural needs. The school's ethos is one which promotes a tolerance and understanding of other cultures and this is celebrated in the school.

- The school's recently implemented behaviour policy is already starting to have a significant impact on the life of the school. Pupils have a clear framework in which they can develop their positive behaviour in a safe and supportive environment.
- Support is provided to encourage families who are would not normally engage with the day to day life of the school, or their children's education, to become increasingly involved. They are provided with good intervention to help them effectively support their children and to feel a part of the school community. The school has plans to further increase its provision in supporting parents.
- Inclusion in the school is good. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds take a full and active part in school activities. The school has developed a strong feeling of community and belonging and this is reflected in the excellent behaviour of the pupils. The range and quality of support available enables vulnerable pupils to build their confidence and self esteem and concentrate on their work and to make good progress during their time in the school.
- The care, guidance and support for vulnerable groups have an outstanding impact on improving personal development for these pupils. The new behaviour systems, which are founded on a house system enable pupils to exhibit excellent behaviour. Pupils are increasingly supportive of each other and this is evidenced through such initiatives as peer mediators.

Areas for development

- To continue to devise ways to support parents and empower them to actively support their children's education
- To continue to develop systems to monitor the progress of groups of pupils who may be at risk of underachieving
- To develop systems, in planning and in practice, whereby the needs and abilities of all pupils are met in all lessons

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to promote equalities in the school.

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.

Ofsted gathers information on the immediate and longer-term impact of survey inspections, both on the institutions themselves, and with a view to improving its own processes. To this end, I should be grateful if you would complete the attached questionnaire and return it within the next ten days. We have also just sent a copy of the questionnaire by email. Please return your completed questionnaire to either the email or postal address on the form, not to me. We may also contact some schools by telephone after several months in order for us to gain a picture of longer-term impact. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

David Muir
Her Majesty's Inspector