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Mr J Allen
Head-teacher
St Joachim's Catholic Primary School
Shipman Road
Custom House
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Dear Mr Allen

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in promoting equality of opportunity

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff during my visit on Thursday 6 November 2008 to look at work promoting equality of opportunity.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: a review of school documentation, meetings with yourself and your deputy headteacher, the SENCO and Learning Mentor; interviews with a partner from the Creative Arts Partnership, the Vice-Chair of Governors, the parish priest who is also a governor, a group of parents, the school council and various groups of vulnerable pupils; plus brief observations of a creative development lesson in the nursery, Circle Time, two literacy intervention groups, and a Y3 music lesson.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is outstanding.

Features of good practice observed

- A very strong commitment to the concept of equality, community and 'Every Child Matters' within a Catholic ethos is clearly demonstrated by all staff and through displays and pupils' work around the school. It is well understood and vocalised by pupils, parents and governors.
- Excellent early identification of the needs of all vulnerable pupils, from nursery onwards. The emphasis on early language and literacy development particularly helps those children at the early stages of learning English or with restricted use of English. This, together with a

range of numeracy and emotional well-being interventions throughout Key Stage 1 and 2, has led to excellent progress in the achievement, emotional well-being, behaviour and attitudes of all vulnerable pupils by the end of Key Stage 2.

- Detailed data analysis of standards of achievement in literacy, numeracy and science and subsequent setting of targets and monitoring of progress over Key Stage 1 and 2 has very effectively contributed to high outcomes and standards for all vulnerable pupils.
- The quality of teaching and support is excellent, with well planned lessons, clear objectives, the use of imaginative and interactive approaches and ongoing assessment for learning. Vulnerable pupils are enthused, are confident with their work and are clear on how they can improve.
- A well planned curriculum which makes very good use of cross curriculum links, together with special 'creative weeks' and projects meets the needs of the diverse and vulnerable school population. Pupils are highly motivated and enjoy school. They appreciate the high quality teaching and the wide range of pre and after school clubs. Parents echo these views.

Area for development

- Develop the disability access plan further to address a wider range of need.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop promoting equalities in St Joachim's school.

As I explained previously, 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.

Yours sincerely

Morag Bowden
Her Majesty's Inspector