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01 October 2008

Ms M Hollingsworth  
Headteacher  
Annie Lennard Infant School  
The Oval  
Smethwick  
B67 6LE

Dear Ms Hollingsworth,

Ofsted subject survey: good practice in promoting equality

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff at Annie Lennard Infant School during my visit on 30 September 2008 to look at work in promoting equality.

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: interviews with parents, a social worker, a Speech and Language Support Worker, a New Arrivals Team Manager, senior staff, the Headteacher, and observations of three lessons.

The quality of provision to promote equalities is outstanding.

Features of good practice observed

- The school engages very positively with other stakeholders including professionals from other agencies. Professionals from outside the school are consistent in their praise for the openness with which Annie Lennard conducts its dealings. The school prepares well for inter-agency meetings, ensuring a genuine partnership is possible with attendant positive outcomes for children. This accessibility combined with a clear sense of responsibility means issues are resolved speedily.
- The school's understanding of what other agencies do, or can do, to help the children who attend Annie Lennard is excellent. As one colleague put it, the school is characterised by "Speed, openness, and letting experts do their job."
- Best practice from other agencies, for example regarding speech and language or new arrivals, is quickly embedded so the impact of visiting professionals in subsequent visits is greater.

- The school has made full use of resources offered by its local authority, for example in pupil tracking systems. This allows the school to follow the progress trajectory for every child and make timely and focussed interventions to ensure all children including those in vulnerable groups meet or exceed learning targets.
- The school has augmented the authority's tracking systems with more detailed tracking of pupils that includes learning objectives that are teacher assessed on a weekly or more often basis.
- The school acts quickly on any data it has and, as a matter of course, changes its provision to meet the individual needs of learners in a very timely fashion. This flexibility of approach means that no time is lost for children who require additional interventions.
- Assessment informs planning and staff differentiate their planning to ensure all children's needs down to an individual level are met within their groups.
- The school has availed itself of the many training opportunities offered by the local authority, for example in Early Years or for specific needs. Parents of children with additional needs commented that they felt confident as staff went on additional training courses to understand their child's condition and needs.
- Parents regard the school very highly and value the partnership approach from staff. "If you have an idea it will be taken seriously and acted upon." The warmth of relationships means children thrive and parents are happy to leave children with sometimes complex needs in the care of the school. "I can come in at any time, and have done. I know my child is safe here." Children are keen to attend. "The children want to go to school even when we want to keep them off."
- Communication is regarded as excellent by those who come into contact with the school. For example, both parents and professionals commented on the readiness of the school to quickly meet with stakeholders and then take appropriate action following a meeting.
- Children are given real responsibility which is reinforced through the ethos of the school. For example, children demonstrate confidence in their expectations that they will be of assistance to each other. They are praised for demonstrating initiative in helping others.
- The staff and leadership have a "can-do" approach and will try new approaches that have worked elsewhere, even if they are unsure if they will work. The provision of worry boxes, for example, produced a significant new way for children to communicate their concerns, and the boxes are well used.
- In lessons, excellent assessment and planning, together with imaginative dynamic activities provided by an experienced and well trained staff team mean pupils are engrossed in activity throughout the school day.
- The school places less emphasis on celebrating festivals through the year than previously as it has aimed to get parents from different communities directly involved in the school. Parents have become more confident in working with the school and participate in learning experiences with the children, for example in cooking. Children have followed this parental lead and readily discuss cultural and community differences and similarities rooted in their day to day curriculum, rather than through set-piece events.

## Areas for development

- Ensure the maintenance of already high standards of data analysis through analysing outcomes for different groups or combinations of groups in the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop promoting equalities in Annie Lennard Infant 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

David McMahon  
Additional Inspector