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Miss L Butcher
Headteacher
Woodland Grange Primary School
Beaufort Way
Oadby
Leicestershire
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Dear Miss Butcher

Ofsted survey: good practice in capturing the user voice

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 2 March 2009 to look at work on capturing the user voice.

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: observations of lessons, discussions with the school council and other groups of pupils, discussions with staff and scrutiny of documentation.

Features of good practice observed

- Managers ensure that gathering pupils' opinions and using the information to make changes, either at an individual or school level, is part of the everyday processes and structures of the school.
- Reception children have plenty of opportunities to make choices over how to organise and carry out activities. Adults talk to children about the reasons for their choices and children know that the staff respect their decisions. Children learn the importance of considering different options and this benefits their confident contribution of ideas in the later years.
- The school council and year group representatives successfully gather information and views from pupils of all ages and feed these back to the staff.
- Pupils' voice is used to shape the curriculum so that it reflects the ways that pupils prefer to learn. Pupils relish the creative curriculum, designed in consultation with them, with its thematic approach, practical and first-hand experiences. Pupils of all ages are involved in planning topics so that their interest and enthusiasm for learning are built in right from the start.

- Pupils give feedback to teachers on a wide range of issues. They do this, either at home or at school, by using the virtual learning environment that forms part of the school's web site. Pupils evaluate their progress towards their individual targets, express their opinions about recent visits or visitors and raise any concerns, either academic or personal. The staff use this feedback very successfully to provide advice and guidance to individual pupils. The information gained is also well used by staff to gauge what is working well in different subjects and what needs to change.

Areas for development

- Gather pupils' views on the effectiveness of the school council and year representatives' work.
- Include an action plan in the school's strategic planning to support the current priority of reviewing the effectiveness of the structure of pupil consultation groups.

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

As I explained previously, 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

Barbara Crane
Additional Inspector