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Mr R Legate
Principal
Linden Lodge School
61 Princes Way
Wimbledon Park
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Dear Mr Legate

Ofsted 2010–11 best practice survey: school governance

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and governors, during my visit on 15 and 16 November 2010 as part of our survey on school governance.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about best practice in school governance. The publication will include case studies about individual schools. If Linden Lodge is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment before publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: scrutiny of relevant documentation and interviews with governors, the clerk to the governing body, members of staff, the school improvement partner and the manager of nursing care for the local authority.

Features of best practice

- Highly committed, able and dedicated governors champion the work of the school and are extremely effective advocates, promoting the school's interests at a local and national level.
- Exemplary teamwork and very productive, professional relationships between school leaders, governors and partners are based on an explicit and shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities.
- Shrewd, highly effective leadership of the governing body and efficient delegation of specific responsibilities to committees and working groups contribute to high quality reporting and robust levels of debate.
- Governors are frequent visitors to the school and are trusted and valued members of the school community. They are extremely well informed and provide an exceptional level of support and challenge for school leaders and staff.

- The governing body is extremely successful in providing innovative and visionary support for partnerships with other providers, local authority services and community organisations. Outcomes are anticipated carefully and evaluated to ensure that actions consistently benefit the children and students.
- Governance is a dynamic process that embraces challenge as an opportunity for improvement. Governors learn from their past experience of managing projects, painstakingly assess how improvements could be made and use this knowledge to inform, educate and plan future development.

Areas for development, which we discussed, included:

- considering introducing a more systematic review and evaluation of the effectiveness of the governing body.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop governance in your school.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector