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Dr D Selby
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Dear Dr Selby

Ofsted survey programme: Evaluation of Reforming and Developing the Workforce

Thank you for the hospitality and co-operation I received from you, your staff and your students during my visit on 16 - 17 November 2006 to evaluate the impact of reforming and developing the school workforce.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of documentation and observation of staff training.

The overall effectiveness of reforming and developing the workforce in your school is judged to be satisfactory.

Impact on standards and the outcomes of Every Child Matters

The impact of the strategy to reform and develop the school workforce on standards and the outcomes of Every Child Matters is satisfactory.

- Overall achievement and standards in the school are good and changes resulting from the remodelling agenda make some contribution to this.
- Cover supervisors help to maintain standards of behaviour in lessons during teacher absences and, by providing more continuity, help students to feel more secure and to make appropriate levels of progress.

- Teaching assistants ensure that those students with special educational needs, whom they support, access the full range of the curriculum and improve their enjoyment and achievement.
- The provision and support offered by members of the wider workforce, such as the coordinator for the South Lakes Federation Inclusion Project, contributes well to the enjoyment, achievement, safety and economic well-being of those students in danger of becoming disaffected or disengaged.

Impact on the quality of teaching and learning

The impact of the strategy to reform and develop the school workforce on the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- The work of associate staff is reducing the administrative workload of teachers. This, together with reduced cover and the effective use of planning, preparation and assessment (PPA), means that teachers have more time to review and plan lessons and to engage in collaborative activities, all of which contributes positively to teaching quality.
- Gained time is used effectively to review schemes of work and to plan future teaching.
- Cover supervisors, with structured guidance from teachers, are ensuring that the quality of lessons taking place in teachers' absence is maintained. The continuity they provide for students and the liaison with, and feedback to, teachers has the potential to improve students' learning.

Impact on the quality of the curriculum

The impact of the strategy to reform and develop the workforce on the quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Curriculum review and planning within subject areas has been facilitated by the time made available through the changes brought about by workforce reform, in particular time for planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) and gained time.
- Deploying members of the wider workforce has enabled the school to broaden and enrich its curriculum provision, for example the alternative curriculum provision offered by South Lakes Federation for those students at risk of disengagement or disaffection and the extended school provision for all students and the local community.

Leadership and management of reforming and developing the school workforce

The quality of leadership and management in relation to reforming and developing the school workforce is satisfactory.

- The headteacher has a good understanding of workforce reform and is making good progress in encouraging an inclusive culture among all staff and ensuring that roles and responsibilities are well defined.
- The school has implemented all of the requirements of the workforce agreement.
- Workforce reform has created more leadership and management time. The senior leadership team have more time to devote to their strategic responsibilities and as a result are more active in supporting teaching and learning within the school. Middle managers are able to focus more effectively on curriculum planning and teaching and learning in their subject areas.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluating the impact of workforce reform, for example, the extent to which the delegation of tasks, the introduction of PPA and the employment of cover supervisors are leading to improvements in teaching and learning and outcomes for students, have yet to be introduced.

Impact on training and developing a reformed school workforce

The quality of training and development in relation to reforming and developing the school workforce is satisfactory.

- The school supports the training needs of all staff well.
- A robust system of performance management is provided for teaching staff but the process of performance management for all associate staff is less formalised.
- Very effective training on the management of change has been provided for members of the associate staff, which has improved their understanding of the remodelling agenda and their contribution to it.

Impact on inclusion

The impact of the strategy to reform and develop the school workforce on inclusion is satisfactory, with good deployment of members of the wider workforce to support students at risk of disengagement or disaffection.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed included:

- monitoring and evaluating the impact of workforce reform on the quality of education
- establishing a system of performance management for all associate staff
- ensuring that all staff recognise the contribution their particular roles make to improving the quality of education provided for students.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to reform and develop the school workforce.

As I explained in my previous letter, 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

Gwen Coates
Her Majesty's Inspector