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07 December 2006

Mr Robert Sheffield
Principal
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Dear Mr Sheffield

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Impact of Extended Services

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 14 and 15 November to look at the impact of extended services on children and young people.

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 pupils, staff, parents, partners, pupils, governors and representatives from the local authority and Excellence Challenge. I was also able to draw on evidence from the recent Joint Area Review of children's and young people services in Havering.

The overall effectiveness of the extended provision was judged to be good with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

- Overall students attain average standards. Those linked with Britton's extended school team (BEST) and the associated home school support workers (HSSW) make significant progress in relation to their social, emotional and behavioural development. Issues being tackled include anger management, transition problems, bereavement and special educational needs. There are individual examples of improved attainment for targeted students. School attendance for this group is up and the exclusion trend is down. Students, in the main, enjoy

school and cope far better than in the past. They look forward to their education with greater confidence.

- The BEST approach is firmly based on providing parallel support for parents and families. It is ably assisting parents with deep rooted problems the nature of which have ongoing and negative impact on the family. Difficulties like domestic violence, child behavioural problems, divorce and very low esteem are now less of a hurdle for those able to access family support.
- The transition element of extended school includes a one week summer school for those viewed by feeder primary school as in need of support. Parents and students have found the summer school of great benefit in allaying fears, meeting new friends prior to the new term and getting to know staff. Importantly, teachers have got to understand better the particular difficulties which individual students face before the commencement of term.
- Students are able to articulate well how the home school support workers assist them towards a greater level of independence. They and their parents feel confident in seeking out help when it is needed.

Quality of provision

- Extended school activity successfully revolves around integrated family support, multi agency planning, rapid response, behaviour support and transition. The BEST element incorporates a multi agency school based team approach. This group spans the work of specialists in behaviour support, educational psychology, family therapy, special needs and the vital home school support workers. It has made very good progress and there is evidence of speedier referrals, earlier interventions, improved recording and HSSW acting as a conduit to families to keep them informed and engaged. Team meetings are efficient and focused on practical actions to support the child. Case review processes are good as are links with associated statutory and voluntary organisations.
- The BEST centre houses the offices of a few allied organisations like NCH but is also used very well for training and community drop-in work. The centre has independent access and a reception facility, all of which help it operate in an autonomous fashion from the school.
- The work of the home school support workers is impressive. They provide neutral, personalised and flexible help to parents. Each has a defined case load which enables parents to receive ongoing support until such time as they feel able to act independently. The service is available beyond the school hours and can include home visits. Liaison between the HSSW, teachers and other key professionals is efficient and effective.

- 'Britton's Babies' is an established on-site child care centre which operates through a charity. Extended services have been able to augment this provision by supporting it to open for longer hours.

Leadership and management of extended services

- Leadership and management are outstanding and BEST is building strong foundations. Brittons school, aided by its Governors, has a history of working closely with the community and extended school priorities reflect the needs of the locality very well. BEST has benefited from the impetus provided by the Excellence Challenge programme in Havering. Skilful use of funding streams has focused resources to area of greatest need.
- The local authority has been responsive to the BEST scheme and expresses confidence in it. Consideration is being given to its wider application in relation to children's and young peoples services across the borough.
- The risk associated with the evolving HSSW model has been well assessed and actions have been taken to ensure its longer term existence. There are common staff terms and conditions, appropriate job descriptions, supervision, monitoring and a comprehensive training programme. The HSSW scheme has tapped into a rich seam of expertise not usually available to schools.
- There are generally good measures in place for planning and monitoring, including an analysis of the impact of the multi agency team systems and a simple but effective review of particular inputs by partners. Initial work has been done to link activity with the Every Child Matters agenda.

Inclusion

- The school is committed to educational and social inclusion. Recent progress in respect of BEST has increased its repertoire of responses and with it its confidence in ensuring that fewer children are excluded. Preventative work with families is very good, well targeted and practical in nature. Improvements in a child's performance, attitudes and behaviour have often been associated with family support interventions.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- carrying out a more comprehensive review of impact of the combined elements of BEST.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop extended services in the school.

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

Tony Gallagher
Her Majesty's Inspector