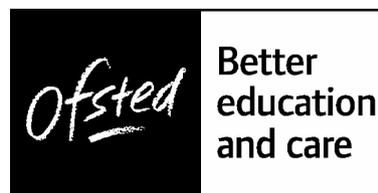


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26 March 2007

Mr K Hayton
The Headteacher
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Dear Mr Hayton

Ofsted survey programme: evaluation of Reforming and Developing the Workforce

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during our visits to Richard Lee on Thursday 01 February, and Wednesday 21 March, to evaluate the impact of Reforming and Developing the 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 a governor, staff and pupils, meetings with staff from a range of external agencies working with the school, scrutiny of documentation, a tour of the school and observations of lessons and of a Parent Partnerships session.

The overall effectiveness of reforming and developing the workforce in your school was judged to be good with some outstanding features.

Impact on standards and the outcomes of Every Child Matters

The impact of workforce reform on achievement and standards is good and improving.

- Over the last three years there has been an upward trend in pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science. The effective targeting of intervention strategies and very good academic and pastoral support for the pupils, involving both teachers and members of the wider workforce, have contributed significantly to this improvement.

- The school is highly focused on the government's "Every Child Matters" initiative. Pupils understand the importance of maintaining healthy lifestyles and know how to keep themselves and others safe. They show much enthusiasm for school life and enjoy the diversity of activities they experience. Their willingness to play an active part in the school community is preparing them well for their future roles as citizens.

Impact on the quality of teaching and learning

The impact of the strategy on the quality of teaching and learning is good.

- There is a very strong ethos of collegiality, mutual support and team-working in the school. The high level of collaboration between teachers and members of the wider workforce has a very positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning, including the support they receive for literacy and numeracy and for their personal and social development.
- Very good attention is given to the deployment of the wider workforce. This ensures that expertise is targeted to areas of greatest need. The involvement of teaching assistants in the planning of lessons and assessment of learning ensures that pupils' progress is tracked closely and provision is well matched to their individual needs.
- The provision of planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time is providing increased opportunities for teachers to plan lessons thoroughly, analyse pupil performance data and develop high quality teaching materials. Provision is enhanced by the effective use of information and communication technology (ICT).

Impact on the quality of curriculum

The impact of the strategy on the curriculum is outstanding.

- The school curriculum has been greatly extended and enhanced as a result of contributions from the wider workforce and outside agencies. For example, the music curriculum, which is ably led by a teaching assistant very well qualified in the subject, is an outstanding aspect of the school's provision. Work with a Creative Partnership has contributed to a plethora of imaginative arts-related activities and a teaching assistant has led the garden project aimed at extending learning into the outdoors.
- There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, many led by members of the wider workforce.
- The school has used the guidance provided within the DfES publication "Excellence and Enjoyment" and exploited the flexibilities offered by the remodelling initiative to incorporate innovative activities, such as an Arts week, within the curriculum. These have a very positive impact upon pupils' motivation and enjoyment of school life.

Leadership and management of reforming and developing the workforce

The leadership and management of the strategy are good.

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have a clear vision for the school and a very good understanding of the potential of workforce reform for school improvement. They have led and managed the remodelling initiative very effectively and in doing so their actions have taken very good account of both the school and staff's needs. Actions taken to reform the workforce have had a positive impact on several aspects of the school's work but coherent procedures are not in place to monitor and evaluate the impact on achievement and standards or to inform future strategy.
- Remodelling has contributed to a significant change in the culture of the school. Members of the increasingly diverse workforce are given encouragement and support to take responsibility and this contributes to the culture of innovation and creativity which is evident in the school's work.
- The headteacher recognises the importance of ICT for school improvement and has successfully led a programme of investment in this area. This is already making an impact on pupils' learning and the quality of teachers' planning.

Impact on training and managing a reformed workforce

The impact of training and managing a reformed workforce is good.

- The headteacher is adept at recognising the expertise and skills of members of the wider workforce and identifying how and where these can be best employed and developed. Arrangements to line manage members of the wider workforce do not operate consistently across the school.
- There is a very strong commitment to staff training and development. Staff are proactive in identifying their own training needs and positive about the very good opportunities they have for further development within the school and through training provided by the local authority or the local cluster of schools. However, continuing professional development is often reliant on the motivation of individuals, as a coherent structure for performance management of members of the wider workforce is not fully developed.

Impact on inclusion

The impact of the strategy on provision for inclusion is outstanding.

- The school has a very strong inclusive ethos to which staff are very committed. Strenuous efforts are made to foster good relationships with parents from the time pupils join the playgroup through to the end of Year 6. The Parent Partnerships course is an excellent example of the school's efforts to build close links with parents and help them understand the ways in which they can support their child's learning.
- The school provides an excellent range of support to meet the needs of its pupils, including the most vulnerable. This includes counselling, targeted

social skills development, speech and language therapy and a range of intervention strategies aimed at improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

- The very effective collaboration between the school and a wide range of external agencies, including the NHS Speech and Language Service, Relate and the local authority, has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and their personal development. Very good attention is given to the integration of external provision within the day-to-day work of the school.

Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- ensure that there are clear, consistent line management arrangements for members of the wider workforce
- strengthen the performance management arrangements for members of the wider workforce
- introduce coherent and systematic systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of workforce reform on achievement and standards and to inform future strategy.

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

Rhona Seviour
Her Majesty's Inspector

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector