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Mrs J Hart
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Dear Mrs Hart

Ofsted survey programme: evaluation of Reforming and Developing the Workforce

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 07 February 2006 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 staff and scrutiny of documentation.

The overall effectiveness of reforming and developing the workforce in your school was judged to be good. Overall, this has provided opportunities for the school to adopt strategies and systems that are leading to improvement in the quality of provision and support offered to students.

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 good.

- The rigorous monitoring and target setting system contributes to good standards and achievement.
- Students' enjoyment and achievement are significantly enhanced by the effective academic and pastoral support structures in place.
- Very good access to pastoral assistance promotes students' emotional and physical well-being and thus their health and safety.

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 good.

- Protected planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time provides teachers with increased opportunities to improve their teaching.
- The contribution of pastoral assistants to the management of students' behaviour allows teachers to focus more on teaching and learning issues in the classroom.
- The work of teaching assistants contributes to the support of students both within and outside the classroom.
- Gained time provides opportunities for departments to share good practice and to keep up to date with new development.

Impact on the quality of curriculum

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

- Gained time is used effectively to revise schemes of work and to plan for the introduction of new specifications.

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 good.

- The headteacher is very positive and open to new developments that will lead to improvement in the quality of education provided for students. She is supported by a committed senior leadership team.
- Leadership in the school has identified clearly where remodelling actions are leading to significant improvement. For example, the effective use of information technology and data in the monitoring and tracking of students' academic progress and, in their pastoral support, the restructuring of the student support system to ensure an integrated approach to academic monitoring and progress and pastoral care.
- Ongoing evaluation of the new roles of key stage managers and pastoral assistants is taking place in order to improve the system as it develops. However, no formal monitoring or evaluation of the impact of remodelling actions in general on the quality of education has taken place.

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 good.

- Support staff receive appropriate training and development.

- Remodelling has resulted in more clearly identifiable contributions from, and enhanced responsibilities of, support staff. This in turn has improved their status among teachers and students who see them as highly valued members of the school and, at the same time, has led to significant improvement in their job satisfaction.
- A performance management system is planned for support staff but is not yet in place.

Impact on inclusion

The impact of the strategy to reform and develop the school workforce on inclusion is good.

- The work of the inclusion unit, managed by a member of the senior leadership team but staffed by teaching assistants, provides good opportunities for the care, guidance and support of students.
- Effective monitoring of students' academic progress and dedicated pastoral care results in appropriate intervention strategies for individual students and groups of students.
- The monitoring of students' academic progress and pastoral issues is supported by very effective data management systems that result in a well integrated approach to student support.
- This integrated approach allows the concerns of, and for, all students to be carefully addressed.

Areas for improvement

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

- develop and introduce a performance management system for support staff that is equivalent in quality and rigour to that provided for teachers and teaching assistants
- consider how to monitor and evaluate the impact of remodelling actions, such as PPA time, on the quality of education.

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