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Mr Stef Etherington
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Dear Mr Etherington

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 26 March 2007 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 pupils, scrutiny of documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of five parts of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of Reforming and Developing the Workforce in your school was judged to be good.

Impact on standards and the outcomes of Every Child Matters

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- Class teachers report that behaviour has improved, due to consistent application of the revised behaviour policy and the enhanced role of teaching assistants.
- Improved provision for information and communications technology has enhanced pupils' skills development.

- The school has identified weaknesses in pupils' progress - for example, in mathematics - and is successfully rectifying them. In part this is due to teachers' effective use of planning, preparation and assessment (PPA) time.

Impact on the quality of teaching and learning

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

- PPA time is used well, especially as it gives teachers opportunities to plan together.
- Performance management and professional development are improving the skills of teachers and teaching assistants.
- Improved access to, and use of, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has led to better assessment and tracking of pupils' progress, analysis of data, feedback to pupils and communication between staff.
- Workforce reform has contributed to high staff morale.

Impact on the quality of curriculum

The impact of the strategy on quality of the curriculum is good.

- The curriculum for ICT has improved and all pupils in Key Stage 2 now learn a modern foreign language.
- A locally coordinated approach to extended school provision has greatly increased the opportunities available to pupils and their parents, both before and after school.

Leadership and management of Reforming and Developing the Workforce

Leadership and management of the strategy are good.

- There is good strategic commitment to the successful implementation of the workforce reform programme which has contributed significantly to better staff morale.
- PPA time has been implemented well.
- The management team, other than the Headteacher, is very inexperienced. A good programme of development is in place but their inexperience leads to weaknesses in monitoring and evaluation, for instance of the quality of teaching and learning, and slows the impact of workforce reform in a few areas.

Impact on training and managing a reformed workforce

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

- There are very good policies for staffing and performance management that include the wider workforce.
- The wider workforce has very good opportunities for professional development which have improved their skills and contributed to high levels of morale.

Impact on inclusion

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

- The wider workforce provides very good support for all potentially vulnerable pupils and for those with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- PPA time has enabled teachers to plan work that meets pupils' individual needs.
- Teaching assistants are now involved in assessment and in setting and monitoring individual pupils' learning targets.

Areas for improvement

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

- continue the development of inexperienced managers, in particular their understanding of the use of monitoring and evaluation of the school's work as a tool for improvement.

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

Paul Sadler
Additional Inspector