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Mrs Carol Mason
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Dear Mrs Mason

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Deploying, training and developing the reformed workforce

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 10 October 2007 to evaluate the impact of the deployment, training and development of the reformed workforce. For the purposes of this survey inspection, the term 'reformed workforce' will apply to any person employed by or working in partnership with the school who is not a qualified teacher

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 discussions with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of students' work.

The overall effectiveness of the reformed workforce in your school was judged to be good.

The impact of the reformed workforce on achievement and standards is good.

- In 2007, GCSE results were the school's best ever and progress between Key Stages 3 and 4 improved. The reformed workforce contributes well by providing targeted support for individual students to improve their progress. Their management and distribution of performance data allow teachers to set appropriate targets and monitor students' progress more rigorously.
- Students' personal development and well-being also benefit from the contribution of the reformed workforce. Faculty leaders and teachers are able to monitor and support students more effectively because administrative tasks are delegated to non-teaching colleagues. The

support provided by mentors has helped to improve students' attendance and behaviour.

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

- As administrative tasks are delegated, teachers are able increasingly to focus on improving teaching, and the quality of teaching and learning is more consistent. Senior and middle managers are able to allocate more time to monitoring teaching, and advising and supporting teachers.
- Cover supervisors ensure better continuity of learning when teachers are absent.
- The level of support teaching assistants provide in lessons is carefully planned and evaluated to improve students' ability to work independently.

The impact of the reformed workforce on the quality of the curriculum is good.

- Key aspects of the curriculum, notably information and communication technology, are taught by members of the reformed workforce who have specialist knowledge and expertise.
- Members of the reformed workforce accompany students on activities that form part of the 'Aim Higher' programme and many extra-curricular visits.
- Links with primary schools have benefited from contributions from the reformed workforce, such as staffing for the visits of the 'science bus' and help with Saturday master classes for gifted and talented students.

Leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- Relationships between the reformed workforce and teaching staff are very positive and collaborative.
- Although the reformed workforce has improved students' learning and personal development, the impact of their work on students' progress is not formally monitored or evaluated.
- The training and career development of the reformed workforce are very well managed to develop the potential of individuals and to contribute to school improvement. School leaders have been successful in identifying development needs and making opportunities available for training in school. Although there is some awareness of the support from the Training and Development Agency for Schools for training for Higher Level Teaching Assistants, other than this, information from external sources to guide the training or career paths of the reformed workforce is limited.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is good.

- The impact of the deployment of the reformed workforce has been greatest where support has been targeted to meet students' needs. For example, the work of learning mentors helps students to manage

challenging circumstances and stay motivated. As a result, those at risk of underachieving have done well at GCSE level.

- Pastoral support for heads of year from non-teaching assistants has been particularly effective in establishing positive links with parents and carers and gaining their support for their children's learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- clearer systems to monitor and evaluate the work of the reformed workforce in order to assess their impact on students' progress.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to train and develop the reformed 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Robert Drew
Additional Inspector