

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mr Clem Chung  
Headteacher  
Kingsbury High School  
Princes Avenue  
Kingsbury  
London  
NW9 9JR

Dear Mr Chung

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 16 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, observation of staff at work and observation of part of a lesson.

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.

- Students join the school with average attainment. They make good progress in Key Stage 3, achieving above average standards at the end of Year 9. Whilst students make slower progress in Key Stage 4, they achieve good examination results in Year 11 with an above average proportion securing five higher grade GCSEs. Effective support from the reformed workforce contributes to these positive outcomes.
- The regular monitoring of students' progress is central to the roles of pastoral assistants, teaching assistants and learning mentors. Their work has helped to improve the progress of some minority ethnic groups,

notably students of Indian heritage, and is an important factor in the good progress made by students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

- The school recognises that the expertise of some of the reformed workforce could be focused more sharply on identifying and tackling underachievement in Key Stage 4.

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

- The strong relationships between the reformed workforce, teachers and students are fundamental to everyone's enjoyment of learning. Students talk convincingly about how the reformed workforce bolsters their self-belief and enables them to take more responsibility for their learning.
- The reformed workforce helps to increase students' engagement with learning by matching learning experiences to their needs and by developing their skills to learn independently. Examples of this are the ways in which teaching assistants skilfully tailoring learning activities for students in lessons, and staff in the learning resource centre who help students to access and use information effectively.
- Good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants in lessons increases opportunities to clarify key learning and improvement points with individual students and small groups.

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

- The reformed workforce adds to the quality of the curriculum and the wide range of enrichment activities. For example, the curriculum support officer works with different subject teams to create high quality learning resources and, in addition, helps to organise educational visits.
- Teaching assistants have been influential in developing aspects of the curriculum. They provide valuable insights into how new knowledge and understanding can be related to students' experiences of life and the world around them. Some teaching assistants were part of a project team responsible for designing and implementing an integrated curriculum in Year 7. The project is at an early stage but staff and students are enthusiastic about how it has deepened understanding of the connections between subjects.

The leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- You and your senior leaders have a clear understanding of how the reformed workforce can be strategically deployed to improve outcomes for students.
- The reformed workforce has increased the effectiveness of systems for tracking students' progress and intervening where concerns arise. In particular, it has made an important contribution to the school's holistic approach to reviewing all aspects of students' development. A good example of this is how the data manager has successfully set up a computer program to collate information about individual students' behaviour which staff and the parents of the child can access at any time.
- Some members of the reformed workforce have good opportunities to review their performance. Consequently, they are clear about their

priorities and the expected impact on school improvement, have access to appropriate training and feel well supported. This good practice is not yet universal.

- The school's partnership with the local authority has been helpful in developing and training the reformed workforce.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is good with some outstanding features.

- Students at risk of underachievement and/or permanent exclusion have been successfully included in school life as a result of intervention and support from the reformed workforce. For example, pastoral assistants monitor students' attendance, progress in subjects and behaviour. Where there are concerns, they liaise with teachers, parents and external agencies to obtain appropriate and timely support.
- The school is innovative and flexible in ensuring equality of opportunity for students by matching the development of the reformed workforce to changing needs. An example of this is the deployment of a teaching assistant to support the increasing number of students joining the school who are new to the country. As well as giving guidance about school work, the teaching assistant helps students to orientate themselves in the context of the school and the wider community. Consequently, they develop a sense of belonging very quickly and have the confidence to make the most of the opportunities available.
- The reformed workforce makes an excellent contribution to the personal development and well-being of vulnerable students. This includes training peer mediators and effectively promoting anti-bullying strategies.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring the performance and development needs of every member of the reformed workforce are evaluated and linked to school improvement planning
- focusing the expertise of some of the reformed workforce on identifying and tackling underachievement in Key Stage 4.

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

Jacqueline White  
Her Majesty's Inspector