

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



30 October 2007

Miss Anne McErlane
Headteacher
Vermuyden School
Centenary Road
Goole
DN14 6AN

Dear Miss McErlane

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

Thank you for your co-operation and hospitality, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit to Vermuyden School on 17 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 interviews with staff and pupils, observation of lessons and scrutiny of documentation.

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.

- Recent test and examination results indicate that standards are broadly average across the school, although a higher proportion of pupils gained five or more higher grade GCSEs in 2007 than is the case nationally. Members of the

reformed workforce contribute to pupils' achievement by collating and analysing data which allows pupils' standards to be carefully monitored and their progress tracked by teachers.

- Pupils' progress is good overall. It accelerates as they move through the school. Data from 2006 indicate that pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieved at least as well as, and in some cases better than, other groups. Higher Level Teaching Assistants and teaching assistants provide good academic support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which is contributing well to these pupils' good achievement.
- The work of the house and pastoral managers has enhanced the school's capacity to improve behaviour and attendance. Although attendance remains stubbornly below the national average, exclusions have been reduced.
- Members of the reformed workforce contribute significantly to improving pupils' personal development and well-being by providing targeted support, particularly for the most vulnerable pupils. Pupils interviewed felt they were listened to and given valuable support to remain in the classroom so they could complete their education and achieve well.
- Although the reformed workforce has contributed to raising achievement, there are no formal systems to assess its effect on students' progress.

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

- Higher Level Teaching Assistants were observed teaching small groups of pupils and enabling them to achieve well.
- The large team of learning support assistants and learning mentors is deployed well and the school capitalises on expertise to support learning.
- Pupils interviewed with learning difficulties and/or disabilities recognised and valued support from teaching assistants and spoke warmly of their impact on increasing their learning.
- The school business manager, administration manager, the information and communications technology team and the administration assistants have a clear understanding of their roles. Their work is focused clearly on reducing the workload of teachers and senior and middle managers so they have increased time for improving pupils' learning.
- Cover supervisors ensure that pupils continue to make progress and behave well in lessons when staff are absent.

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

- The curriculum provides opportunities for all learners to make progress and develop well.
- Members of the reformed workforce contribute well to an alternative curriculum that is carefully matched to the needs of lower attainers and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- You and your senior leaders are very enthusiastic about the benefits of the reformed workforce and clearly appreciate its work.
- You and your senior leaders have a very strong commitment to training and developing the workforce at all levels, as identified in the school development plan. You recognise the need to develop a clear career structure for the reformed workforce.
- Performance management procedures for the reformed workforce are clear, although these have not yet been fully implemented for all members.
- Members of the reformed workforce, for example teaching assistants and the extended schools coordinator, have forged close links with primary schools, external agencies and parents to support learning more effectively.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is good.

- The school has successfully developed an inclusive ethos where members of the reformed workforce are valued and their contribution is recognised by staff and pupils. Morale is high.
- Members of the inclusion team are effective in identifying and overcoming barriers to learners' achievement, particularly in engaging those in the most hard to reach contexts and those at risk of exclusion.

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

- ensure that performance management procedures for the reformed workforce are implemented consistently
- develop systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of the reformed workforce on pupils' learning.

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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Ann Wallis
Additional Inspector