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Mr John Winter
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Winter

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

Thank you for your co-operation and hospitality, and that of the staff, during my visit to Weydon School on 15 October 2007 to evaluate the impact 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 students and the chair of the governing body, scrutiny of documentation, and an overview of lessons.

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

The impact of the reformed workforce on achievement and standards, including personal development and well-being, is good.

- The reformed workforce comprises six teams of associate staff whose roles are focused on raising standards and achievement across the school. The wide ranging support provided by the associate staff allows teachers and managers, particularly heads of achievement, to focus on improving students' learning and this has contributed to a steady rise in examination results and improved progress.
- Intervention and support from Higher Level Teaching Assistants and Learning Support Assistants enable students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to make significant progress at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Learning Support Assistants provide individual learning programmes and booster reading groups at Key Stage 3. These have raised literacy levels, resulting in more students achieving level 5 in the end of key stage national tests.
- The course on personal effectiveness, planned and taught by the special educational needs coordinator and Learning Support Assistants, is highly effective in raising the achievement of students at risk of leaving school with no qualifications. All students who followed this course in 2006 passed it.
- The attendance officer has contributed to improved rates of attendance.
- The associate staff and additional specialist staff contribute significantly to improving students' personal development and well-being by interacting purposefully with them, conveying high expectations of behaviour and encouraging them to make a positive contribution to the school community.

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

- The associate staff and teachers have strong relationships and a shared understanding of students' needs which lead to effective support and intervention.
- Cover supervisors are an important part of the teaching team. They are developing specialist skills and subject knowledge which provides continuity for students' learning in lessons. In addition, they provide administrative support for curriculum areas and cover lunchtime duties, releasing teachers to teach revision and booster sessions.
- Specialist Higher Level Teaching Assistants assigned to mathematics, science and English improve learning by developing resources and materials for teaching that match the needs of individuals and groups. For example, in science, the Higher Level Teaching Assistant is reviewing the schemes of work for Years 7 and 8 in order to plan and provide lessons matched better to the needs of groups of students who find the current curriculum difficult.
- A daily coursework clinic and homework club, run by associate staff, provides good guidance and support for students who are behind with coursework or need help with organising homework. A key factor in its success is the effective communication between teachers, students and associate staff.

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

- Specialist sports coaches in rugby, cricket and tennis are used effectively to develop the skills of gifted and talented students so that they can play competitive sport at a very good standard.
- Additional associate staff with particular expertise in music and drama have increased enjoyment and participation in a range of extra-curricular activities.
- The business and enterprise team of associate staff has improved provision for disaffected students and those unable to access an academic curriculum by planning and providing suitable courses and arranging long-term work experience. Consequently, students' motivation and self-esteem have improved.
- Students talk positively about the significant contribution members of associate staff make to the curriculum by helping teachers to organise and staff a wide range of educational visits, residential trips, concerts and charity events.

The leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- You, your senior leaders and the governing body have a very strong commitment to training and developing the workforce at all levels, as identified in the school development plan. The restructuring of associate staff into teams has been carefully planned to improve outcomes for students and to link to school improvement priorities.
- The business and finance manager has a clear understanding of strategic leadership and management. She has articulated a clear vision in which all members of the associate staff will have a positive impact on learning and contribute fully to school development planning.
- Comprehensive procedures to manage the performance of the associate staff are not fully in place.
- Members of the reformed workforce are provided with good opportunities for leadership and management within their own areas of responsibility, such as the Learning Support Assistant who is training and developing other members of the team to teach the course on personal effectiveness at Key Stage 4.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is outstanding.

- The school has successfully developed an inclusive ethos where members of the reformed workforce are valued and their contribution recognised by staff and students.
- The offsite education facility, The Respite Centre, staffed by two experienced associate staff skilled in behaviour management, effectively supports

disaffected students at risk of exclusion. There have been no permanent exclusions since the club opened in September 2006.

- The family outreach worker helps families to improve parenting skills and involves them in supporting their children's studies. Long-term unemployed parents have benefited from the support of the community outreach worker, with over half gaining full-time employment.

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

- further evaluate the impact of the reformed workforce on students' learning
- develop a coherent cycle of induction, training, performance management, and professional and career development for the associate workforce, linking these to school self-evaluation and improvement planning.

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

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector