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Mrs Margaret Gooch
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Gooch

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 pupils, during my visit on 14 November 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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of staff at work, one-to-one support for pupils and parts 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 is good.

- Pupils join the school with varying skills and diverse needs; many have skills below those expected, particularly in the area of communication, language and literacy. This profile is further complicated by the increasing number of pupils who join and leave the school at other than normal times. The reformed workforce is focused effectively to help meet these challenges and ensure pupils make at least satisfactory progress, with

many making good progress, to achieve broadly average standards at the end of Key Stage 2.

- The reformed workforce makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' personal development. Between them, higher level and other teaching assistants have a broad range of skills and expertise which they use flexibly to build pupils' social skills and confidence. This work has a positive impact on achievement and standards. The school is refining systems for recording the range and impact of support for pupils to ensure they have very precise evidence of this.

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

- The reformed workforce plays a major part in meeting the needs of pupils by personalising learning. They know pupils well, are regularly involved in reviewing their progress and work with class teachers to engage pupils in the next learning step in a timely and successful way.
- In lessons, higher level and other teaching assistants are central to ensuring pupils are ready to learn and able to sustain their concentration.
- Warm, well established relationships are an important factor in pupils' enjoyment of, and willingness to take responsibility for, learning in lessons.

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

- The reformed workforce adds to the breadth of the curriculum. Their talents are used well to enhance creativity and widen pupils' experiences. A good example of this is a higher level teaching assistant leading the development and delivery of music. The school plans to consider how the capacity of the reformed workforce can be increased to support other specialist areas of the curriculum.
- Higher level and other teaching assistants are effective in tailoring the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- The school has a Special Needs Support Unit for pupils with physical and/or complex, multiple learning needs. These pupils enjoy lessons both in the unit and the main school because programmes of work are expertly tuned to their needs by teams of teachers and teaching assistants.

The leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- You and your senior leaders have a strong commitment to training and developing the workforce at all levels.
- There is a clear understanding of how the reformed workforce can be strategically deployed to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Good performance management procedures for the reformed workforce include full consideration of professional development and training needs. Members of the reformed workforce feel well supported. They are

enthusiastic about their work and have a sense of being part of a joint endeavour to continue improving the school.

- The impact of the reformed workforce on outcomes for pupils is evaluated and linked to the priorities in the school development plan and the local Children and Young People's Plan. Records are being refined further so the school has a detailed picture of the benefits of different types of support.
- 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 excellent.

- The school is highly effective in ensuring equality of opportunity by matching the development of the reformed workforce to the diverse needs of pupils. Consequently, vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve well and are successfully included in school life.
- The reformed workforce helps to create and deliver innovative strategies to support pupils and their families in overcoming barriers to learning.
- The school's supportive ethos embraces everyone. Members of the reformed workforce are valued and their contribution is recognised by pupils, parents and other staff.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- refining records of support for pupils so the impact of the reformed workforce on raising standards and achievement can be demonstrated very precisely
- developing the capacity of the reformed workforce to support specialist areas of the curriculum.

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