

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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Mrs Lynn Treadway
Headteacher
Sandbach Community Primary School
Crewe Road
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 4NS

Dear Mrs Treadway

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 Sandbach Community Primary School on 29 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, review of school documents and observation of support in two lessons.

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

- Pupils join the school from low starting points. Support from the reformed workforce is focused effectively so that pupils make good progress to achieve broadly average standards at the end of Key Stage 2. The school deploys support staff well to improve the progress of pupils with learning difficulties.

However, the school is not focusing support so well on raising achievement of the more able pupils.

- Interventions by teaching assistants in literacy and numeracy are key to closing gaps in attainment for many pupils.
- The learning mentor provides good support for the more vulnerable pupils and those who start and leave school throughout the year.
- Behaviour is good because support staff have a clear understanding of the procedures used to manage behaviour. Lunchtime supervisors organise games that teach the importance of sharing and fair play.
- The learning mentor is helping to raise attendance and improve punctuality through effective monitoring.

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

- Teaching assistants with good subject knowledge are skilful at extending learning through the use of challenging questions.
- Teaching assistants help lessons run smoothly because they keep a watchful eye on behaviour and intervene promptly to prevent any disruption to learning.
- Good relationships between all staff and pupils lead to a friendly learning environment.

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

- The knowledge and expertise of members of the reformed workforce in sport, music and Spanish are used well to enrich the curriculum.
- The needs of the pupils with learning difficulties are fully met through literacy and numeracy interventions which help overcome barriers to learning.
- The learning mentor contributes to personal, social and health education by leading groups and supporting individual pupils.

Leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good with some outstanding features.

- Training for members of the reformed workforce is linked to the school's identified improvement priorities. There are very good opportunities for career enhancement.
- The school monitors and evaluates the impact of interventions on pupils' progress and maintains exemplary records of evidence.
- The reformed workforce collaborates in the school's self-evaluation which contributes to high levels of motivation.

- The school holds regular meetings with members of the reformed workforce to identify training needs. The school recognises that the development of systems to manage performance is a priority.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is good

- Members of the reformed workforce are excellent role models for pupils and contribute well to developing pupils' social skills.
- Teaching assistants are fully involved in supporting the progress of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities by setting targets, contributing to reviews and liaising with parents.
- The learning mentor organizes parent groups for those who find visiting school difficult and shows them how to help their children at home.

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

- develop systems to manage the performance of the reformed workforce
- focus the support of the reformed workforce on improving the progress of more able pupils.

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

Jennie Platt
Additional Inspector