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Mrs Trudy Brothwell  
Headteacher  
Spitalgate Church of England Primary and Nursery School  
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Dear Mrs Brothwell

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 on 03 December 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 pupils and staff, visits to classes and scrutiny of relevant school documents.

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.

- Pupils join the school with below average social and communication skills and find it difficult to adapt to the school environment; many join and leave the school at other than normal times. The reformed workforce is focused effectively to help meet these challenges.
- The reformed workforce makes an outstanding contribution to pupils' personal development through leading nurture groups and their work in the learning support unit. Their specific skills often help pupils adopt more positive attitudes and attend more regularly. Since spring 2007

exclusions and the use of other sanctions have dropped steeply while attendance has begun to rise. Attendance, while improving, is still at a lower level than the school would want. There is scope for all staff, including the reformed workforce, to give greater priority to raising attendance. A new and positive climate for learning reflects the consistent way in which teachers and members of the reformed workforce apply rewards and sanctions.

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

- Collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants is well organised. Teaching Assistants give effective support to individuals and contribute well to the smooth running of the class as a whole.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- Members of the reformed workforce with specialist knowledge offer good quality teaching in PE, information, communications technology and science.

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

- The school's use of teaching assistants' specialist knowledge extends the curriculum significantly. They provide teaching and therapeutic help for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in nurture groups and the learning support unit.
- Members of the reformed workforce organise over half of the school's extra curricular activities programme, including areas with the highest take-up such as gymnastics and dance.

Leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- Monthly reviews of the work of all staff are increasing accountability and setting a clear direction for improvement. Members of the reformed workforce are valued as a central part of the improvement process which leads to high morale. Performance is monitored annually through an appraisal system which is being adapted to match performance management for teachers.
- The work of the reformed workforce is evaluated against the graduate teacher programme to set challenging expectations.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is good.

- The school is very successful in supporting pupils with personal or social difficulties. Teaching assistants and senior leaders link well with parents. The wider community is drawn into school life partly because nearly half of parents have children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. These contacts are developing through parenting classes and involving parents in supporting some of the extra-curricular activities. There is less explicit provision for gifted and talented pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- giving greater priority to raising attendance
- considering how to use the support of the reformed workforce to raise the achievement of gifted and talented 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Robert Drew  
Additional Inspector