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06 June 2008

Mrs P Beanland
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Beanland

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 June to look at work in CPD.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of CPD the visit had a particular focus on how professional development activities impact on raising standards and achievement.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgement about the overall effectiveness of CPD included interviews with senior managers and staff, scrutiny of relevant documentation and a short observation of a 7UP lesson.

The overall effectiveness of CPD was judged to be outstanding.

The strengths identified

- Improvement planning, CPD and performance management are very well integrated. A comprehensive improvement plan sets out clear priorities for the long and medium term. Appropriate actions include a suitable emphasis on CPD. An extensive range of measures are used to assess success in meeting the plan's objectives.
- CPD is very well planned to support the priorities in the school improvement plan, subject improvement plans and individual staff needs. The balance between national, school and individual requirements is achieved very well.

- The school provides a very good range and quantity of internal CPD such as twilight sessions, training on Thursday mornings and during CPD days. These include workshops on supporting students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, active learning and developing the independent learner at Post 16. These are also supplemented well with the availability of an extensive and continually increasing bank of on-line resources for staff on teaching and learning strategies.
- CPD has continued to be pivotal in developing teaching and learning at the school and in establishing Kings Norton Girls' School as a 'learning community'. A high priority has been given to the development of active learning through the Teacher Effectiveness Enhancement Programme (TEEP) and a number of staff across the curriculum areas have received level 1 training.
- Performance management provides staff with an opportunity to have their future needs recognised, and to maintain a focus on key priorities throughout the year. Targets set for performance management include targets to maintain or raise achievement. Common targets for achievement are developed into individual staff targets. These also include clear targets for achievement for teaching assistants working with individual or groups of students.
- Teachers and managers have convincing evidence of the impact of CPD on their teaching and on pupils' learning. Examples include 7UP and the action research project undertaken in art on assessment for learning. Those staff who are involved in these developments are enthusiastic and passionate about the innovative work they are undertaking. Students are encouraged to be independent learners, are more reflective and confident. In art, student's performance in exam work is much improved with exceptionally high results predicted in applied art and design at GCSE. Students in Year 7 who have undertaken the 7UP curriculum are active learners and have successfully developed a range of personal, learning and thinking skills.
- The school regularly evaluates CPD activities and is very selective in the activities it chooses for CPD to ensure they deliver what the school needs. Regular observations of lessons by managers and peers are used to evaluate the impact of CPD.
- New staff, newly qualified teachers and graduate teachers are supported well. Mentors for the graduate teaching programme are very effective in supporting and developing teachers. Alongside establishing and embedding basic teaching and learning strategies. There are many opportunities for career development and opportunities to provide teachers with fresh challenges and opportunities. Staff are very aware of the effectiveness of CPD in improving teaching and learning and student achievement.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure the CPD programme fully addresses the need to improve achievement of students in the sixth form. Teaching and learning needs to focus on increasing the proportion of students who achieve higher grades
- consider more formal approaches to evaluate value for money of CPD activities.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop CPD in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and local Learning and Skills Council and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector