

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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Mr S Robson
Headteacher
Haydon School
Wiltshire Lane
Eastcote
Pinner
Middlesex
HA5 2LX

Dear Mr Robson

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 students, during my visit on 05 June 2008 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 students, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of part of a lesson.

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.

- Students join the school with just above average attainment and reach standards that are well above the national average. This is partly due to carefully planned and targeted support for students and teachers from learning mentors, learning support assistants and other members of the reformed workforce.
- The deployment of assistant house managers and learning mentors enhance the school's capacity to raise standards of behaviour and levels of

attendance and underpins the outstanding personal development and well-being of students.

- The school has thorough systems to assess and track students' achievement but these are not yet used fully to monitor and evaluate the contribution that members of the reformed workforce make to students' progress.

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

- The deployment of the reformed workforce is focused clearly on reducing the workload of teachers, middle managers and senior leaders in order to improve teaching and learning. The support provided by administrative and premises staff helps maintain a pleasant and well-ordered working environment.
- The strong relationships between the reformed workforce, teachers and students strengthen effective teaching. Learning mentors and learning support assistants use their knowledge, skills and expertise well to provide support for students and teachers.
- Students talk convincingly about how support from learning support assistants and learning mentors raises their self-esteem and helps them to improve their attitudes to learning.

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

- Members of the reformed workforce make some helpful contributions to the curriculum. For example, learning mentors and learning support assistants differentiate work to make it appropriate for dyslexic students. Weekly workshops focusing on the development of self-esteem and advancing social skills are highly valued by students at Key Stage 3.
- The curriculum provides very good opportunities for learners to progress and develop well, although the potential of members of the reformed workforce to enhance the curriculum is not yet fully realised as it is limited to a relatively small number of areas.

The leadership and management of the reformed workforce are satisfactory.

- You and your senior leaders are developing an understanding of how the reformed workforce can be deployed to improve student achievement. For example, assistant house managers and the social inclusion unit team contribute a great deal to the school as their roles have a clear focus on school improvement priorities.
- Strong collaborative working practices have developed between staff but there are limited opportunities for members of the reformed workforce to share their good practice with each other or, as a group, to contribute ideas to school development planning.
- Members of the reformed workforce report that they feel valued and supported. They have access to relevant training and some are active in seeking opportunities for career development. However, this often relies on the initiative of an individual or their line manager.

- There is a commitment to assessing and managing the performance of associate staff but, as yet, the structures that link induction, training, performance management, and professional and career development are not applied coherently across the school workforce.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is outstanding.

- There is a very strong sense of collective identity amongst staff who work together as an inclusive team.
- The high quality support provided for students with behavioural difficulties and those at risk of exclusion through the social inclusion unit helps these students to improve their attitudes to learning and engage more successfully with the curriculum. Students interviewed recognised and valued the support they receive from members of the social inclusion unit team.
- Learning mentors and learning support assistants make a very significant, positive and highly regarded contribution to re-engaging potentially disaffected students, or those facing personal problems.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- focusing monitoring systems more sharply on evaluating the impact of the work of the associate staff on students' learning
- providing a formal, coherent structure to lead and manage the reformed workforce linked 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector