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Mr D Hardiman  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Hardiman

Ofsted survey inspection programme – New models of school leadership: influences and outcomes

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 30 September 2008 to evaluate the impact of new models of leadership on school improvement.

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 governors, staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and a lesson observation.

The overall effectiveness of the model of leadership, a federation with another Catholic primary school, is outstanding.

The impact of the model of leadership on achievement and standards is outstanding.

- Overall, standards are above those seen nationally at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the areas of English, mathematics and science. From below average starting points in the Nursery, children make very good progress throughout the Foundation Stage. This beneficial start is built upon well, so that all groups of pupils make good progress as they move through the school.
- The school has developed excellent systems for tracking the pupils' progress across the federation, enabling early intervention for pupils at risk of underachieving.
- Standards in both reading and writing have risen because of the shared expertise across the federation.

- Pupils make good progress because they are well taught, thoroughly enjoy learning and understand what they need to do to improve their work.

The impact of the model of leadership on the quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

- Shared expertise within the federation has helped to improve the quality of teaching and to raise standards. The school recognises the need to evaluate the impact of the writing project over the longer term.
- Collaborative training has enhanced the skills of teaching assistants enabling them to have greater impact on raising attainment, particularly for those pupils who find reading and writing more difficult.
- The high quality teaching of modern foreign languages across the federation has improved due shared expertise, including visiting staff from Spain and opportunities for reciprocal visits.
- The introduction and development of a common system for tracking pupils' progress across the federation ensures that teachers challenge all groups of pupils to do their best.

The impact of the model of leadership on the quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- Across the federation there is a rich and diverse curriculum that has been enhanced significantly through opportunities to share resources, staffing and facilities. Pupils appreciated the opportunities to work together on 'themed activities' such as the Ancient Greeks Day.
- The number and range of clubs, visits and out of school activities have increased across the federation, considerably enriching the experiences for all pupils. Pupils take part in residential visits to France and Spain.

The impact of the new model of leadership on the quality of leadership and management throughout the school is outstanding.

- There is a clear understanding of curriculum development and equality of provision across the federation.
- The structure of the senior leadership team has been adapted effectively to take account of the different needs of the schools.
- Professional development provides all staff with skills that enhance learning across the federation.
- The skills of senior staff have been enhanced as a result of the opportunities for them to take on additional responsibilities.
- The skills of subject leaders have improved through sharing ideas and expertise.
- The leadership has been very effective in ensuring the learning environment has improved across the federation.
- The governing body has adapted successfully to ensure it considers the needs of both schools and holds each fully to account.

The impact of the new model of leadership on inclusion is outstanding.

- There is a very clear focus on addressing the emotional development of all pupils. The employment of a member of staff to work across the federation to ensure the well-being of pupils has been effective.
- The needs of pupils with learning difficulties are met very well. Pupils of all abilities progress well because of the strength of the 'can do' culture that pervades the federation. In addition, work is planned very effectively, on an individual, group and class basis to ensure pupils fulfil their potential.
- Responses to parent questionnaires undertaken by the schools demonstrate a high level of confidence amongst the parents.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continue to evaluate the impact of the writing project on pupils' skills and achievement throughout the federation.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the leadership of your school and the federation.

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

Paul Edwards  
Additional Inspector