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Mr M Rigby  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Rigby

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Workforce Reform: has it made a difference?

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 11 November 2008 to evaluate the impact of the deployment, training and development of the wider workforce. For the purposes of this survey inspection, the term 'wider 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, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of parts of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the wider workforce in your school was judged to be good.

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

- Members of the wider workforce make a positive contribution to pupils' good progress. This is especially the case in mathematics where daily sessions greatly enhance pupils' learning.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress because their needs are identified promptly as they start school. Additional intervention from teaching assistants helps them to access English quickly and settle easily to school. The support for older pupils who start school speaking little or no English is also effective and pupils interviewed talked about the helpful guidance they receive.
- The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are carefully monitored and support from teachers and teaching assistants closely

matches their individual needs. Many reach standards in Year 6 that are higher than these pupils nationally.

- Effective use of the learning mentors has successfully tackled the previously identified weakness in attendance. Since the last inspection learning mentors have played a major part in improving attendance and punctuality. They have tightened up on monitoring procedures and improved contacts with external agents and parents.
- The wider workforce contributes well to pupils' personal development. They promote healthy eating well and organise energetic activities at lunchtime.

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

- Pupils report that they value the support they get from teaching assistants and say they help them by asking extra questions about their work. Teaching assistants also annotate pupils' work so that the teacher has a good understanding of how well the pupil had understood the lesson.
- The additional numeracy sessions are taught very effectively by teaching assistants. Practical activities and clear instructions lead to effective learning.
- Bi-lingual support and the play therapy are used effectively to support pupils with limited English.
- In Key Stage 1 teachers do not always deploy support staff effectively. Their roles are often too passive and they do not provide enough encouragement for pupils to work independently.

The impact of the wider workforce on the quality of the curriculum is good.

- Additional numeracy sessions that are targeted by teachers to increase pupils' understanding of mathematical vocabulary are managed well by teaching assistants.
- The curriculum enhances pupils' personal and social development through the work of learning mentors who offer guidance and advice. Pupils say they 'show us how to deal with bullies and give suggestions to stop us falling out'. In addition, members of the wider workforce accompany school visits which enhance pupils' knowledge and experiences. Pupils look forward to these activities.
- A club to encourage communication through role play for those with communication difficulties is very successfully organised by teaching assistants.

The leadership and management of the wider workforce are good.

- The wider workforce is very much a part of the school team and relationships between teachers and those who support learning are very positive.
- The school monitors the deployment of the wider workforce especially in the provision of additional numeracy and literacy sessions. These initiatives have a positive impact on progress and provide good value for money.
- Training needs for the wider workforce are matched to the school's requirements. For example, on the termly day away from school teaching assistants have valuable time to extend their skills.

- Plans for performance management of the wider workforce are ready but are not yet in place. Currently, members of the wider workforce do not have sufficient guidance on professional or career development and are not fully involved in the school's self-evaluation.

The impact of the wider workforce on inclusion is good.

- The wider workforce improves links with the community by the provision of a breakfast club and after school care. This often enables the more vulnerable pupils to get a good start to the day.
- The effective deployment of staff to the needs of the pupils at the early stages of learning English and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures they have full access to all the school has to offer.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure that members of the wider workforce who support learning are used effectively to focus on pupils' learning and to encourage independent learning skills
- implement performance management for the wider workforce and provide clear guidance for their professional and career development
- develop ways in which the wider workforce can contribute to the school's self-evaluation
- ensure that members of the wider workforce who support learning in Key Stage 1 are used effectively to focus on pupils' learning and to encourage independent learning skills.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to train and develop the wider 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

Jennie Platt  
Additional Inspector