

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



12 November 2008

Mrs S Horncastle
Headteacher
Our Lady of Good Help Catholic Primary School
South Drive
Liverpool
Merseyside
L15 8JL

Dear Mrs Horncastle

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 10 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 part of a lesson.

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.

- Since the last inspection the school has raised standards in writing. Teaching assistants have made a positive contribution to this success particularly in providing support for lower ability boys.
- Members of the wider workforce and the teaching staff share a clear understanding of the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities which leads to well organised support and good progress. Standards for these pupils are higher than those for similar pupils nationally.

- The work of administrative staff has contributed to improved rates of attendance.
- Teaching assistants manage a breakfast and after school club which provides additional care for pupils and also improves punctuality at the start of the day.
- Members of the wider workforce make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and well-being by providing good role models. They reinforce the school's behaviour policy consistently and establish caring relationships with all pupils.

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

- Teachers deploy support staff effectively to allow pupils to be taught in smaller groups. Lessons run smoothly and teachers have more time to focus on specific pupils.
- Teaching assistants are responsible for delivering numeracy and literacy intervention programmes. Pupils' assessment records show these sessions have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
- Teaching assistants are not involved in curriculum or lesson planning and so are not always clear about the overall focus on pupils' learning. This means their skills are not fully used and their ability to question and extend learning are not fully exploited.
- Teaching assistants provide encouragement and advice as pupils work but are unsure of pupils' long term targets.

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

- The breakfast club organised by the wider workforce enables those pupils who attend to get a good start to the day. This provision makes a positive contribution to the community.
- Additional support staff are responsible for teaching information and communication technology. This teaches pupils valuable computer skills and provides additional planning and preparation time for teachers.
- Teaching assistants accompany pupils on visits thus reducing group sizes. Pupils value these experiences.

The leadership and management of the wider workforce are good.

- The wider workforce is effectively deployed to support teachers and pupils. Teachers are very appreciative of the additional time they now have to plan and prepare work.
- Effective support from the bursar releases the headteacher from day to day financial management providing more time to lead the school forward.
- Ample training is provided for members of the wider workforce and several individuals have successfully achieved qualifications to extend their career prospects. However, performance management is not yet in place and coherent links have not been established to school development planning.
- Although members of the wider workforce feel part of the school team they are not involved in the school's self-evaluation or in contributing to the school improvement plan.

The impact of the wider workforce on inclusion is good.

- This is a very inclusive school and pupils report that all staff make this a 'happy and friendly school'. They feel that everyone works together to take good care of them.
- Effective interventions in small groups combine well with support in class to enable pupils of all abilities to make at least good progress.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- involve teaching assistants more in the planning of lessons and the curriculum so that they have a clearer understanding of what pupils are expected to learn
- develop performance management for the wider workforce and provide more opportunities for them to be involved in the school's self-evaluation process.

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