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Mrs J Richardson
Headteacher
Beacon Hill Community School
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Dear Mrs Richardson

Ofsted survey inspection programme: the extent and quality of provision for pupils from day 6 of exclusion

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation and that of your colleagues during my visit to Beacon Hill School on Tuesday 4 November 2008 to look at the work of your school in relation to the extent and quality of provision for pupils from day 6 of exclusion. I would be grateful if you would pass my thanks to the students who met with me and to the carer with whom I spoke on the telephone.

During my visit I gathered evidence from discussions with you and members of staff, the school's education welfare officer and from scrutiny of documents. I talked with three students who had received fixed-term exclusions and also with the carer of the pupil excluded for more than 6 days. I was unable to observe the provision for day 6 pupils as this was not in operation as there has been only one such exclusion in the last year and this pupil is no longer at school. My judgements are related to the arrangements and outcomes for pupils whose exclusions meant you had to provide education for them from day 6 of their exclusions.

This pupil excluded for more than five days was provided for at the off-site Connexions Office and did not return to school as her looked-after placement co-incidentally changed at the time of the exclusion and she moved into residential schooling. The provision put in place for this pupil was suitable and met requirements and the letter of exclusion to the carer spelt out the day 6 arrangements. The pupil's carer was very positive about the experience, particularly with the communication from the school.

The schools number of fixed-term exclusions have reduced year on year for the last three years. There have been very few exclusions of more than five

days; only two in this period. A high proportion of pupils who are excluded are on the school's register of special educational needs. The school's exclusion policy has been suitably reviewed to include reference to day 6 requirements and re-integration interviews are held for all cases of fixed-term exclusion. There is a newly formed pastoral team including learning mentors. The school has substantial links with other services which enables it to rapidly and appropriately respond to emerging difficulties. Preventative work, in large part, has been the reason for the reduction in fixed-term exclusions. There is an array of interventions for pupils at risk of disengagement and potential exclusion. These include:

- well considered primary to secondary school transition programmes and Year 7 induction programme;
- smaller Year 8 grouping for all subjects;
- smaller, vertically aged tutor groups;
- peer mentoring from trained Year 10 pupils;
- an evening study school in conjunction with Carlisle United Football Club;
- a sports incentive programme for identified pupils;
- a community support programme in conjunction with outside agencies.

The school has plentiful data and other information about the provision in place for pupils at risk of becoming disengaged and potentially being excluded and is able to evidence successes at an individual pupil level. However, the overall evaluation of the school's effectiveness of its pastoral work, including those pupils who have received exclusions is much less strong.

The area for improvement we discussed was:

- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's work aimed at minimising disengagement and exclusion by relating the various intervention programmes to the overall attendance, behavioural and achievement outcomes for the pupils involved.

The visit will provide much useful evidence for our survey.

Beacon Hill School will not be named in any publication without your permission. Most evidence will be used at a general level to ascertain if schools and local authorities are complying with legislation and to identify the quality and extent of their provision.

Thank you once again for your co-operation to help me gain an insight into the work of your school.

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

Eric Craven
Her Majesty's Inspector