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Mr R Hewson
Headteacher
The Gillford Centre
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Dear Mr Hewson

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 during my visit with my colleague, Frank Norris HMI, to The Gillford Centre on Monday 3 November 2008 so that I could look at the work of your centre 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 pupil who met with us and to the parent I spoke with on the telephone.

During my visit I gathered evidence from discussions with you and from scrutiny of documents. I talked with a pupil who had been excluded and also with a parent. I was unable to observe the provision in operation as no day 6 excluded pupils were at the Kingmoor Assessment Centre, which is your provision for day 6 permanently excluded pupils. 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.

The centre meets the DCSF requirements for full-time and suitable provision for permanently excluded pupils from day 6 of exclusion.

The development of the Kingmoor Assessment Centre as separate provision for day 6 pupils has been beneficial for a number of reasons. You report that the stigma felt by day 6 pupils when they attended The Gillford Centre PRU for the first part of the autumn term 2007 has been reduced by having less of a connection now with the PRU. The fact that the Kingmoor Assessment Centre is some distance from the PRU and is viewed as separate provision has made a contribution to the rate of reintegration in to mainstream schools. Indeed, you report that more pupils have re-integrated from the Kingmoor Assessment Centre than had done from the PRU itself.

There is good collaboration between your self and the local authority's reintegration officer. The five week assessment of pupils results in reports

that help the reintegration officer find suitable mainstream schools for pupils who are able to reintegrate. The Kingmoor Assessment Centre focuses on assessing and addressing the personal and social needs of the pupils. The reports frame the pupils' strengths well and identify strategies to help them reintegrate into mainstream schools. There is much less emphasis on academic work. The reports contain insufficient information on the pupils' academic progress and needs.

You report that the information you receive from most mainstream schools about permanently excluded day 6 pupils is sparse and often has to be chased. However, your assessments give you a good knowledge of individual pupil's personal and social needs. Monitoring of the provision and individual cases is effective. Nevertheless, an overall evaluation of the day 6 provision, using all the available data, has not been made or presented to the management committee or LA.

The centre draws on the support of other agencies well. For example, educational psychology reports are usually completed within a fortnight of a day 6 pupil starting at the centre. The centre has been able to demonstrate the strengths of the provision to the LA which is now planning to develop distinct assessment centres for permanently excluded day 6 pupils at its other PRUs.

The parent spoken to was very positive about the effectiveness of the Kingsmoor Assessment Centre. He was particularly impressed with communications and with the personal and social education work which has given his child increased confidence and positive attitudes. The pupil spoken to was also quite positive about her experience at the centre citing better support from staff and a better match of work to her needs than she experienced in mainstream school. She also noted how her attendance had improved.

Improvements that we discussed included:

- analysing the academic, personal and social progress and reintegration data on the day 6 pupils as a group to identify patterns and trends and report on this to the management committee and local authority;
- increasing the emphasis on academic assessment and reporting;
- working with the local authority to improve the amount and timeliness of information received from mainstream schools when a permanently excluded pupil is referred to the centre.

The visit will provide much useful evidence for our survey.

The Gillford Centre 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 and the work you put in before hand and on the day to help me gain a good insight into the work of your centre.

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 of Schools