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Mr R Naik
Interim Executive Head
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Dear Mr Naik

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 staff, during my visit on 05 November 2008 to look at your work in providing for pupils from day 6 of their permanent exclusion. I am sorry for the delay in sending this letter.

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 interviews with you and with members of staff responsible for delivering the day 6 provision at the Key Stage 3 Centre, scrutiny of relevant documentation, discussion with pupils and with a parent, and the observation of a lesson at the Centre. My judgements are related to the arrangements and outcomes for pupils whose exclusions meant that you had to provide education for them from day 6.

Achievement and standards

Overall, the achievement of day 6 pupils is satisfactory. The attainment of day 6 pupils on entry is below or well below age related expectation in most cases. Many pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities that have led to them being registered for School Action or School Action plus. A few have acknowledged social, emotional, behavioural or psychiatric difficulties that have led to involvement of workers from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, (CAMHS). Realistic, challenging, academic and behavioural

targets are set for each day 6 pupil. These are based on information about the pupil provided by the school and the Centre's own assessments. Schools do not always provide the latest test results. Pupils respond well to a clear set of academic and behavioural expectations and a regime that rewards their efforts and move steadily towards their targets.

The achievement of the day 6 pupils observed taking part in an art lesson was satisfactory. They showed interest in the work of Kandinsky and with adult support answered questions about it. They were quiet and absorbed when they made their own drawings.

Quality of teaching and learning in the day 6 provision

The quality of teaching for day 6 pupils in the lesson observed was good. The pupils who were in an excitable mood when the lesson started were helped by the calm manner of the teacher and the teaching assistants to behave appropriately and take part. The lesson was planned thoroughly and took account of the need of individuals to learn primarily by looking and by doing.

Quality of the curriculum for day 6 pupils

The quality of the curriculum for day 6 pupils at the Key Stage 3 Centre is good. It meets individual needs well. Pupils follow the National Curriculum but in addition are given specific help and experiences to overcome their behavioural difficulties and gain a feeling of self-worth and confidence as learners. They are well prepared for re-integration to mainstream schools.

Leadership and management of the day 6 provision

The leadership and management of provision for day 6 pupils at the Key Stage 3 Centre are good. Many difficulties have beset the Centre in the recent past and some still remain. Chief among these are long-term staff absence and problems with staff retention and the recruitment of well qualified people to permanent posts. The Interim Executive Head and the Acting Head of the Centre who has day to day charge of it have, despite these difficulties, pushed through planned developments. Each day 6 pupil now has an individual learning plan and a clear exit strategy. The management of behaviour is much more secure and consistent than it was.

The pupil I spoke to said that he enjoyed attending the centre because there are fewer people than at his previous school. He said that it has helped him both in his academic work and in his personal development. His mother felt that the staff at the centre were approachable and helpful. She believes that the Centre has helped her son.

Inclusion

The Centre satisfactorily promotes inclusion for day 6 pupils. It does this by thoroughly analysing their needs and providing each individual with a plan to meet these. It makes good use of relevant partners and agencies to promote pupils' social development and has devised means for reintegrating each day 6 pupil into mainstream education.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- working with the local authority to resolve the staffing issues that have a negative effect on what the Centre can offer and on how much it can improve.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the day 6 provision.

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

Michael McDowell
Additional Inspector