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Dr G Berwick
Headteacher
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Dear Dr Berwick

Ofsted survey inspection programme – good practice in the development of leadership skills and effectiveness

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 16 September 2009 to look at work the work that you are doing to develop and sustain high quality leadership in your school and in one of your partner schools.

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 colleagues involved in programmes to improve school effectiveness at a local, national and international level; discussions with students; scrutiny of documentation and a learning walk. In addition, evidence was also used from my visit on 17 September 2009 to one of your partner schools.

Features of good practice

- The school's work to develop the skills and effectiveness of leaders is outstanding. Senior leaders have a powerful vision and are emphatically committed to improving the life chances of students. You and your senior leaders have created a learning community where the achievement of every student is important. As a result, achievement is very high.
- Your strong interpersonal skills and highly successful management style enable you to recognise, build upon and utilise the leadership strengths of individuals for the benefit of the students in your school and in the schools you are supporting.

- Your team of committed staff feel empowered to make improvements to the quality of provision. You have been astute in cultivating the talent of your staff by providing support through mentoring and coaching. Consequently, leadership skills are explicitly and robustly developed at all levels.
- Programmes to identify and develop future leaders are very impressive and wide ranging. Comprehensive in-school training for middle and aspiring senior leaders enables them to understand the priorities and demands of their current jobs, as well as preparing them for the demands of future roles. Middle leaders are very appreciative of these opportunities.
- Students are thoroughly involved in improving the work of the school which, in turn, is developing their leadership skills. Their skilful evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is most notable. Students report that these opportunities develop their character, confidence and life skills.
- You offer a range of excellent, sensitively brokered support to your partner schools, including seconding personnel to key positions when necessary. Staff in your school, and in the partner schools, are very positive about the impact of this work on their own professional development.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your work in this area.

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

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector