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Mr N Beckett
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Beckett

Ofsted 2009-10 survey inspection programme: the impact that links between parents/carers and schools have on supporting and encouraging young people's achievement, well-being and personal development

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 17 and 18 November 2009.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on how the school's work with parents and carers affects a range of outcomes for pupils.

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 included: interviews with staff, parents, governors and pupils as well as representatives of extended services; scrutiny of relevant documentation; observation of the school at work; and analysis of pupils' work.

The overall effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers is good.

The impact of parental involvement on outcomes

The impact of parental involvement on outcomes is good.

- Regular newsletters, curriculum information and homework keep parents informed about their children's achievements.
- Each term, parents have formal opportunities to meet their children's teachers to review their work and progress. Most parents value these

occasions, although some say they would appreciate more specific information about their children's targets and how they could support learning at home.

- The majority of parents appreciate the regular informal opportunities to discuss their children's progress or raise concerns.
- Some parents say that sometimes written information sent home is too detailed and that this can be confusing.
- Curriculum evenings are effective in helping parents to understand and support their children's learning.
- Home-learning journals are appreciated by parents as an effective system for establishing dialogue between home and school. Topics and activities are chosen carefully by the school to encourage parents to become actively involved in their children's learning.

The impact of the involvement of parents on the quality of provision

The impact of the involvement of parents on the quality of provision is good.

- You consider parents' views when new initiatives or major changes to provision are proposed.
- The skills and expertise of some parents enhance curriculum provision. Governors acknowledge they have yet to carry out an audit of parents' skills and abilities.
- Early morning routines allow parents to support pupils' reading.
- The school is working closely with a few interested parents to develop a website portal for use by parents and carers and the wider community.
- The parent teacher association (PTA) is very successful in fundraising for the school and in organising a wide range of community activities. It is effective as an informal forum through which parents/carers can raise concerns. However, although you welcome parents' suggestions, the PTA does not contribute significantly to the strategic development of the school as a channel for parents' views.

The impact of the involvement of parents on inclusion

The impact of the involvement of parents on inclusion is good.

- The local authority's family support service is beginning to have a positive impact. Two support workers assist the school in providing confidential support for parents and carers.
- The school supports parents and carers of pupils identified as vulnerable, or requiring specialised support by coordinating meetings with support services, providing regular updates on pupils' progress and responding swiftly to concerns raised.

The impact of leadership and management on the involvement of parents

The impact of leadership and management on the involvement of parents is good.

- A variety of communication strategies keeps parents informed about their children's achievements.
- The school relies on informal discussions and occasional questionnaires when gathering the views of parents. A systematic analysis of parents' views is not undertaken when reviewing the school's strategic planning.
- However, a high percentage of governors are parents. They are actively involved in the strategic development of the school.
- The school leadership team includes a parent representative, appointed at your invitation. This relatively new role is beginning to strengthen parents' involvement in the shaping of communication networks and policy development.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- governors conducting an audit of parents'/carers' skills and abilities so that their expertise can be better used as a resource for learning in the curriculum
- developing the role of the parents' representative on the school's leadership team to promote further stronger partnerships between home and school
- using outcomes from evaluations strategically to strengthen parents'/carers' contribution to their children's learning and development.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the impact of the work of parents and carers in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

David Edwards
Her Majesty's Inspector