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Mrs J Beech  
Headteacher  
Scawthorpe Sunnyfields Primary School  
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Scawthorpe  
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DN5 9EW

Dear Mrs Beech

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, parents and children during my visit on 12 January 2010 to look at the impact that links between parents/carers and schools have on supporting and encouraging young people's achievement, well-being and personal development.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the aspect, 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff, governors, parents and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation, a review of pupils' planners; and observation of the school at work, including a lunchtime club.

The overall effectiveness of the school's links with parents/carers and its impact on the outcomes for children are good.

The impact of parental involvement on outcomes

The impact of parental involvement on outcomes is good.

- A considerable majority of parents show a genuine desire to support their children's education. This is demonstrated by increasing levels of attendance at school events, including the Friday special mentions assemblies, which has a particularly positive impact on children's confidence and self-esteem.
- You have made a promising start to extending parents' understanding about what their children are learning, for example, by allowing them to observe lessons during open days. However, many parents of the older children do not know modern methods of mathematical calculation.
- The parents of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have good opportunities to be involved in their children's learning, helping to support activities and projects with their children at home.
- You have rightly identified that, although pupils generally complete their homework and parents are supportive of it, this is not consistent across the school, nor does it link effectively to the curriculum or involve parents sufficiently.

The impact of parental involvement on the quality of provision

The impact of parental involvement on the quality of provision is satisfactory.

- As a result of the warm welcome your parents receive, more parents are becoming involved in the work of the school. This is part of an improving picture and a good example for pupils. It means they are supported well when changing their books regularly, playing traditional turn-taking games and developing their enquiring minds on school trips.
- You regularly share information about what pupils are learning. This is enhanced by good use of their planners right across the school and regular newsletters.
- Effective transition arrangements for the families of children entering the school positively influence children as they settle in the nursery.
- You currently plan too few experiences which utilise parents' knowledge and skills across the curriculum or for parents to learn alongside their children. You are not yet systematically involving parents in enabling their children to learn, although you have already identified this as a priority on your school improvement plan.
- Parents are sometimes aware of their children's targets but are not always clear about how they are progressing towards them or how they can support their children in making the next steps.

The impact of parental involvement on inclusion

The impact of parental involvement on inclusion is good.

- Parents are consulted well on school policies; for example the recently updated policies for behaviour and attendance, and are most supportive of

these. You work with other professional stakeholders and families where there is a need and to good effect.

- You ensure that you support the families of all pupils, no matter what their domestic circumstances. You work closely with parents and carers to ensure they are able to fulfil their part of the home/school agreement.
- Parents of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are now working more closely in partnership with staff as a result of improved individual education plans. These helpfully encourage more consultation and agreement on their children's learning targets.

The impact of leadership and management on the involvement of parents

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

- Your newly formed senior leadership team is appropriately building partnerships with parents and carers and is committed to it. This now features in the school improvement plan, although it is not fully integral to the work of the whole school.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has moved further forward in the development of this work. Changes to the school entrance and to the opportunities for parents coming into school are helping to break down any barriers. There is a greater staff presence when meeting and greeting parents and a newly formed Parent Association.
- Parents are responding positively to the improved channels of communication and the quality of the information they receive. They feel valued and recognise their views are important to the school.
- The school perseveres with those parents who may be more reluctant to become involved and is forming positive relationships with them. You carefully monitor the progress of those pupils who receive less support in the home to ensure they are not disadvantaged in their learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring the curriculum, and any homework linked to this, is more tailored to pupils' interests and better utilises parents' skills and knowledge as a resource for learning
- helping parents to use and apply current methodology in mathematics to enable them to effectively help their children and sometimes learn alongside them
- ensuring that parents are consistently clear about their children's targets, understand what their next steps are and know how they can provide relevant support.

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 be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Jane Melbourne  
Her Majesty's Inspector