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Mr D Marshall
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Marshall

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 pupils, during my visit on 17 March 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, 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, groups of parents, including parent governors, pupils representing most year groups, professionals from key agencies which support the work of the school and scrutiny of relevant documentation.

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

The impact of parental involvement on outcomes

The impact of parental involvement on outcomes is satisfactory.

- Parents and carers are well informed about their children's progress through regular parents' evenings and a written annual report.

- Targeted work with the Traveller community is very effective in promoting achievement. The standards reached by these pupils, by the end of Key Stage 2, are high when compared with the national Traveller cohort.
- Day-to-day procedures for promoting better attendance are thorough and while there is much yet to accomplish to reduce absence rates further, existing strategies are proving to be successful.
- Pupils appreciate the support they receive from parents and family members with their homework. The school has started collecting evidence to demonstrate how the help provided by parents, particularly with reading, is showing a marked improvement in pupils' reading levels.
- Parents receive regular and timely communication from the school, mostly in the form of newsletters. The school is, however, making increasingly effective use of text messaging as a reminder for parents about school events and to support the school's attendance strategy.

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 satisfactory.

- You are beginning to make effective use of parents' expertise to promote pupils' understanding of the world of work and to raise their expectations of themselves and what they can achieve.
- Attempts to engage parents more directly in curriculum matters and policy formulation have met with only limited success.
- You, the teaching and support staff make yourselves readily accessible to parents at the beginning and end of the school day. This provides an informal context to deal with parents' views, concerns and queries effectively.

The impact of the involvement of parents on inclusion

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

- You are making determined efforts to fully engage with your community. Work done with the Traveller community, for example, provides very effective support to ensure that pupils are fully integrated into school life.
- Engagement with parents of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is also effective in meeting pupils' needs and underpins their good progress.

The impact of leadership and management on the involvement of parents

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

- You have clear ambitions to develop extensive engagement with parents in support of their children's education and this is fully reflected in the school's strategy documentation.
- While parents' attendance at events which directly involve their children is high, the school has been less successful in gaining their commitment to engage more widely.
- Senior staff, governors and parents see the re-establishment of the parent-teacher association as a priority in promoting effective partnership arrangements as this gives parents a platform to become more directly involved in school activities.
- Most parents say their concerns are dealt with very effectively and often informally by staff. However, some parents believe that arrangements for making more formal requests for appointments with senior staff and teachers should be improved.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- seeking appropriate ways to capture parents' views so that these can be considered fully when curriculum and school policy developments are being reviewed
- continuing to explore ways to evaluate the impact of activities which engage parents in their children's learning
- devising ways to engage a greater range of parents routinely in the work of the school.

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 previously, 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

Tom Grieveson
Her Majesty's Inspector