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Dear Mr Rosewell

Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: leadership of more than one school

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during our visit on 5 and 6 October 2010 to look at the leadership of the federation. Please pass on our thanks to the parents and governors that also gave up their time and made a valuable contribution to the visit.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to a national report. Published reports are likely to list the names of contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with senior and middle leaders, governors, staff, parents and pupils; and the scrutiny of relevant documentation.

The effectiveness of the federation leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement is outstanding.

Outcomes

- Attainment is above average overall and has risen steadily since the federation. Pupils' writing is now improving significantly as the focused strategy across the federation is increasing its impact. Girls perform well in

writing and although boys are making increasingly better progress, they have not yet caught up. Achievement has improved and is now at least good for the majority of pupils. The consistency of the high-quality communication between schools in the federation results in improvements to the achievement for groups of pupils very effectively.

- Pupils enjoy school a great deal and have positive attitudes to learning and a wider sense of community. They are polite and eager to discuss the variety of opportunities they have, including their involvement in the very active school council and outdoor learning.
- The federation has a very significant positive impact on the outcomes for a small number of vulnerable pupils and their families as a result of the continuity of provision that is enhanced by the 0 to 11 opportunities, embraced by the Children's Centre, the Nursery and the primary school.

Provision

- The school has very effective systems for monitoring the pupils' development and ensuring clear communication between staff and other partners across the federation. This information is used very effectively to ensure that teaching meets the needs of individuals with well-planned learning opportunities that motivate and engage pupils in the learning process. In addition, communication facilitates greater partnerships with parents and carers to support their children's learning and engage with the school.
- Professional development opportunities within the federation have been used very effectively to enhance further the quality of teaching, ensuring that it is consistently of a high standard. Many examples of outstanding teaching were observed across the federation. Strong features include the brisk pace of lessons, high level of teacher knowledge and focus on achieving both personal and academic progress.
- The curriculum has been developed extremely well to include a wide range of learning opportunities, a high-quality learning environment and the very effective use of the school grounds to provide outdoor learning opportunities. The federation has enabled funding to be used flexibly so that, for example, access to information and communication technology for pupils across the federation has been greatly improved.
- The synergy that the Children's Centre, the Nursery and the primary school brings to care, guidance and support is very strong. The inclusion leader demonstrates great efficiency in ensuring that teachers are well informed about the needs of individuals. Highly effective support is then provided that is tailored and meets pupils' needs.

Leadership and management

- You lead the federation extremely well and have established a highly effective federation leadership team. They have a clear drive and ambition

to provide high-quality opportunities for all pupils within a very inclusive setting. The well-considered development plan for the federation has been established through wide stakeholder consultation and is being implemented very effectively.

- Resources are deployed very well. Leaders monitor impact with precision and are not complacent about the success of improved achievement. They are analytical in their approach and so are able to prioritise strategies well.
- The governing body demonstrates a clear understanding of, and ambition for, the benefits federation brings to all stakeholders. The local authority has also been supportive of the federation and was instrumental in the initial stages of its formation.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed include:

- embedding and developing further the successful strategies for driving up standards, particularly in writing.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop the leadership of the federation.

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 may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection.

Yours sincerely

Paul Scott
Her Majesty's Inspector