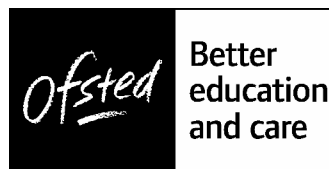


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Mrs Carol Campbell  
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Dear Mrs Campbell

Ofsted Survey Inspection Programme – The degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement in children and young people's education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, parents and pupils, during my visit on 16 January to look at the degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement in children's education.

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: interviews with staff, parents and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation. The judgements are specifically in relation to the degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement under the following headings.

The overall effectiveness of the degree and effectiveness of parent and carer involvement in children's education was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards including personal development

The impact of parental and carer involvement on achievement, standards and personal development is good.

- The pupils of minority ethnic heritage perform better than the majority white pupils in respect of their progress and attainment at GCSE.

- The progress of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is in line with the national average, though the numbers of these pupils is well above the national average.
- The pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and numbers of these pupils are high.
- Through the London Challenge the school has put in place an appropriate intervention strategy to raise the achievement of pupils in Year 11, a key element of which is to help parents in giving help to their children. Attainment rose in 2006 to 37% 5\* A-C grades.
- The school is working well with parents to promote the personal development and well-being of its pupils.
- Induction arrangements for pupils into the school are good and the school is working effectively to ensure that its expectations of parents are clear. Communications with parents of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are good and help their transition into the school. The establishment of the Transition Group is a particularly effective measure for settling those pupils with extra learning needs into school; the parents speak very well of this.
- The school is working well with parents to improve attendance and punctuality. Attendance is currently over 93%.
- Communication with parents is good and the school uses a range of ways to get in touch with parents and keep them informed. For example, the appointment and deployment of a head of year support post to make immediate contact with parents and the use of texting parents on their mobile phones has been successful.
- Permanent exclusions are low because of the ongoing dialogue with parents instigated by the headteacher after the school was federated and the range of pre-exclusion measures adopted.
- The system for rewarding pupils is effective and well used by all the departments. The pupils are very positive about how this has changed the ethos and attitudes of pupils and parents towards the school. The parents value the school's efforts to involve them.
- Regular and detailed information is given to parents on pupil progress with explanations of how they can help. Several good initiatives have been adopted to educate parents about the behaviour of the pupils such as courses on how to handle aggressive teenagers and health awareness.
- There is a good range of support mechanisms for the pupils, for example counselling and mentoring support which are appreciated by both the parents and pupils.

Quality of teaching and learning including assessment, support and guidance

The impact of parent and carer involvement in these areas is good.

- The introduction of academic review days and mentoring to improve teaching and learning has been welcomed by the parents. They receive regular reports and 'position statements' showing progress and potential achievement. However, the practicalities of explaining the actual meaning of the information, relating it specifically to how they can improve and writing this in plain English are areas for improvement.
- Parents feel they are involved positively in decision making about choices and courses. They welcomed the school's response to meeting the needs of the gifted and talented pupils and improving the extra curricular provision.
- Attendance at parents' meetings has improved but the school acknowledges that this is still an area for improvement.
- Clear information about courses and options are given as well as information on progression routes.

### Quality of the curriculum

The impact of parental involvement on the quality of the curriculum is good.

- As a result of consultation and feedback from questionnaires, changes to the curriculum have been made to accommodate the different needs of pupils at Key Stage 4. Provision of German is an example of being responsive to parental requests for extension work.
- The school has responded well to parents' and pupils' comments and put on more trips and visits which have motivated the pupils.
- Links with other schools are well used to support the pupils, for example the courses sponsored by Kings College and the two local FE colleges.

### Leadership and management of parent and carer involvement

Leadership and management in relation to parental involvement are good.

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have a clear commitment to involving parents and carers in the education of the pupils which is shared by heads of departments and the newly appointed heads of year.
- Staff and parents comment that there is a very noticeable change of culture and climate brought about by the recent change in systems and restructuring which has resulted in greater parent focus.
- Pastoral systems are good and effectively keep parents informed and involved in the progress of pupils.
- There is informative feedback to parents on the progress of pupils at the end of Key Stage 3.
- The parents confirm that the recently reorganised reception and front line services are now very responsive and welcoming to them and pupils.
- There is good follow up to concerns raised and there is a genuine open door policy and no blame culture.

- The school development plan includes involving parents but would benefit further from specific targets.

## Inclusion

The impact of parent and carer involvement on inclusion is good.

- The school works hard to identify the needs of the pupils and meet these, especially the pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.
- There is a good range of professional support for all pupils.
- The school involves parents appropriately in trying to reduce exclusions and tackle behaviour issues. It also uses an effective behaviour management tracking system.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- explaining in clearer and simpler language the meaning of the data and charts showing pupils' progress
- writing into the school development plan specifically how the school will evaluate and build on the effectiveness of its work with parents.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop parental involvement further in conjunction with raising attainment and improving outcomes for children.

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

Peter Green  
Her Majesty's Inspector