

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Ms L Parvez
Headteacher
Aveling Park School
Aveling Park Road
Walthamstow
London
E17 4NR

Dear Ms Parvez

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 30 January 2007 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, and 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 parents speak highly of the school's open-door policy. Parental questionnaires show that they have confidence in the school and its

communication with them. These are conducted regularly; the results are shared with parents via regular newsletters and acted upon in the school's planning.

- Good induction arrangements ensure that pupils settle well into school and that parents understand the school's expectations. The school visits all primary schools and communicates well with parents prior to admission. Parents speak highly of the meetings held at the school in Year 6, which give them good contact with tutors and details of courses. All year groups receive an information booklet annually, which sets out the subjects and their curriculum for the year. Information about homework is also good.
- School planners are used to best effect and are frequently checked by parents. There is clearly good contact with families via telephone and letter, which is initiated by the school or parents as appropriate. Parents have confidence that they will always be spoken to and action will be taken.
- Parents are well informed about courses and options, enabling them to help their children make the right choices and meet the course requirements. There is an annual options evening which is followed up by another meeting early in Year 10 to explain courses. Good communication with parents about coursework, deadlines and examination entries contributes well to their preparation for future economic well-being.
- The school has effective arrangements for monitoring behaviour, with sound systems for issuing rewards and sanctions. Parents value the school's swift response to their concerns and the way that the school contacts them if teachers have any concerns about their children. The school has a prefect system that works well.
- The school works hard with parents in order to raise rates of attendance giving all parents a full attendance printout each term which clearly explains the significance of patterns of absence and the impact on their children's learning. Attendance is improving.

Quality of teaching and learning including assessment, support and guidance

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

- The school provides parents with a good range of information about their children's progress during the course of the year.
- It issues termly reports at both Key Stages 3 and 4. There is an annual parents' evening at which subjects are represented and an annual academic review day where parents meet the tutor to discuss overall progress. This represents a significant commitment to constantly improving communication with parents.

- The school pays particular attention to inform parents, often not familiar with the British education system, about courses, coursework and examinations. Parents truly value this. There are good arrangements for explaining the course options that students have and a variety of subsequent meetings are held to discuss the requirements of subjects.
- The school works hard to meet the needs of all students within the school and recognises that parents and carers play a key role in their child's education.
- Arrangements for those with learning difficulties and disabilities and special educational needs are generally good. There is close and very regular contact with parents and the school is very successful at raising the self-esteem of these pupils and ensuring that they achieve well. However, the quality of individual education plans (IEPs) is inadequate. There are too many targets and the targets themselves lack specificity. They are not written in student friendly language and are often not appropriate for the literacy levels of either the child or their parents.
- The provision for students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) has significantly improved recently but further work is needed within subject areas and in terms of in-class support and EAL materials.

Quality of the curriculum

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

- Parents feel well informed about the curriculum through the curriculum evenings held in Key Stage 4 and the written description of courses issued annually to every year group.
- The Key Stage 3 and 4 curriculum reflects the changing needs of the students within the school. Evidence for the suitability of the curriculum is supported by the fact that all students who left in 2006 achieved at least one qualification and 95% of all students left with the equivalent of 5A*-G grades.
- There is a very good school visits policy, which links to the curriculum and involves parents in their planning. Parents are kept well informed of preparations for events, frequently participate in them and enjoy the regular post-event occasions at which the pupils share what they have gained from their experiences. Parents are actively involved in school productions, the school float for the Waltham Forest carnival and multi-cultural week. Parents from all year groups get involved in the mock interview days for Year 11 students.
- The curriculum responds to the diversity of the local community and the school takes effective steps to involve the parents of pupils from all

backgrounds in their children's education. It ensures access to curricular information by providing translators when necessary for parents.

Leadership and management of parent and carer involvement

Leadership and management in relation to parental involvement are good.

- The headteacher and the senior team have a clear commitment to involving parents and carers in the education of the pupils.
- Effective pastoral systems are responsive to parents' concerns and swift to involve parents when there are problems.
- Parents are well represented on the governing body. There is full complement of parent governors.
- There is a good range of meetings for parents and regular consultations.
- Evaluation and planning for the involvement of parents is implicit in the school's main priorities. There is no separate evaluation of parental involvement but it is so ingrained in the ethos of the school that it forms part of all planning. This is clearly the case and the high level of parental involvement and confidence reflects this.

Inclusion

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

- Achievement and standards of all groups of learners are at least satisfactory at both key stages.
- Parents are well involved and feel secure in the information provided by the school.
- Personal development and well-being is promoted well and parents are actively involved in the process. Communication with them is good. Rewards and sanctions are clearly understood and the school responds effectively to parental concerns.
- The school ensures that hard to reach parents are included and, where appropriate, helps parents to access additional support from other agencies.
- Teaching and learning take account of individual needs effectively.
- Senior leaders take great pains to involve all parents in the life of the school and the education of the children.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing IEPs which have fewer but realistic achievable targets and clearly inform the student how they can achieve these

- further improving provision for students with EAL within subject areas, in terms of in-class support and EAL materials.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop parental involvement even further 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

Cheryl Jackson
Additional Inspector