

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



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Mr Sean Tobin
Headteacher
West Ham Church Primary School
Portway
Stratford
London
E15 3QG

Dear Mr Tobin

Ofsted survey inspection programme: Reforming and Developing the School Workforce

Thank you for your co-operation and hospitality, and that of the staff, during my visit to West Ham Church Primary School on 09 November 2006 to evaluate the impact of Reforming and Developing the Workforce.

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 and children, scrutiny of documentation, analysis of children's work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of reforming and developing the workforce in your school was judged to be good.

Impact on standards and the outcomes of Every Child Matters

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- Standards are below average in Key Stage 1 and in line with them in Key Stage 2. Results in Key Stage 2 tests in 2006 are higher than those in 2005. This is due, in part, to the good level of support children and teachers receive from teaching assistants and other adults working in most areas of the school.
- Outcomes at the end of both Key Stages in 2006 fell short of the school's targets. Achievement dropped at the end of Key Stage 1. Although pupils

achieved well at the latter end of Key Stage 2, this compensated for a dip during the key stage. Overall achievement is satisfactory.

- Children are happy in the school. They feel safe and are supported well in their learning by teachers and the wider workforce.
- A range of excellent initiatives is underpinning a focus on developing healthy life styles. Pupils are very aware and knowledgeable about the importance of diet. Relationships between teachers and the wider workforce and pupils are strong and mutually respectful enhancing provision and pupils' well-being.
- Behaviour is very good. Children are considerate of each other, adults in the school and the wider community.
- Time to provide cover for teachers to plan, prepare and assess (PPA) is given by a specialist physical education (PE) instructor and an ICT teacher who has previously completed a graduate teacher programme in the school. This gives children experience of working with a member of staff other than their regular class teacher and prepares them well for secondary school transfer.

Impact on the quality of teaching and learning

The impact of the strategy on the quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers' use of PPA time is supporting improvement in individual classes. PPA time, combined with planning meetings after school, enables staff to share teaching and learning intentions in order to meet the needs of pupils as they progress during their time in school through a combination of mixed and single age groups.
- Excellent use has been made of staff deployed to cover PPA time, where the quality of teaching is good. The PE instructor has worked with the subject coordinator to develop a coherent programme that encourages awareness of healthy eating and living. The ICT coordinator has raised skills and understanding of staff as well as pupils in ICT. Both members of staff work with regular class teachers in assessing pupils' performance during the year.

Impact on the quality of the curriculum

The impact of the quality of the curriculum is good.

- The employment of specialists for PE and ICT has enhanced expertise across the curriculum. The content of the curriculum has been enriched, staff expertise in PE and ICT has been developed further and resources to support the curriculum have been increased and improved.
- The school has used the expertise of the wider workforce to extend the impact of curriculum provision, the range of extra-curricular clubs and whole school initiatives further. The school has focused on improving the quality of play and lunch time activities. Pupils are able to apply key skills and games taught in PE to out of class activities. Extra-curricular clubs

and performances, including karate, football, gymnastics and ICT, involve a wide range of pupils, some of whom have not previously shown confidence in performing. In addition, the enthusiasm, skills and external contacts of the specialist PE instructor have been channelled to extend the range of visitors to the school, some of whom have a high profile in sports, raising pupils' interest and motivation levels further. This creates productive and harmonious working relationships between pupils and reinforces the school's policy and work in encouraging good behaviour.

- In addition, the school recognises and values the expertise of the wider workforce in extending provision across the school. An audit of parental skills has been conducted and, where appropriate, parents are involved. For example a parent nutritionist is currently working with the school's cook in piloting a food tray to guide pupils in selecting a well balanced meal.

Pupil development and well-being

The impact on pupil development and well-being is outstanding.

- Curriculum and extra-curricular developments that have been supported by the wider workforce have encouraged pupils to take individual and collective responsibilities for their own learning. This underpins their very good behaviour and sense of responsibility as citizens within the school and wider community.
- The school council has elected pupil representatives from each year group and is supported by a member of staff and a learning mentor. Meeting regularly, its representatives have developed a clear understanding of their responsibilities, perform their roles maturely and are active in evaluating and monitoring current activities as well as making thoughtful suggestions for future development.
- In addition, pupils are given good opportunities to develop financial understanding, with responsibilities that include supporting charity groups, preparing funding application for ecological developments led by pupils of the school's "eco group", and making choices and budget decisions on the purchase of playground equipment. This is all part of the school's work in encouraging good behaviour and an understanding of the responsibilities of being a good citizen.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management of the strategy are good.

- The headteacher and senior leaders understand the principles of workforce reform and development very well and are strongly committed to them.
- Very good progress has been made in implementing all phases of the workforce agreement. There is a well defined and implemented strategy for implementing PPA time.

- There are good arrangements to provide management time for leaders to fulfil their responsibilities, including monitoring teaching and learning and tracking pupils' performance. Clear and achievable strategies are in place to enable the headteacher and deputy to have dedicated leadership and management time.
- The appointment of an ICT specialist to provide PPA time has enabled the school to improve communication with parents and the wider community through the development of a website.

Impact on training and managing a reformed workforce

- The school is strongly committed to developing an inclusive ethos. Its environment is pleasant and calm and the atmosphere is welcoming and supportive. A number of systems have been developed to encourage greater involvement of and support for all involved. All staff including the wider workforce have opportunities for continuing professional development, and are part of the school's performance management system.
- Senior managers make every effort to involve all staff, and often pupils, in the process of informing and making decisions.
- Good progress has been made in planning and providing appropriate resources to support the reformed workforce. For example, all year 5 and 6 pupils have laptops, enabling them to work in different areas of the school if required. Each classroom also has two laptops that teachers and teaching assistants are able to use at home to refine planning where appropriate.

Impact on inclusion

The impact on inclusion is good.

- The school has rationalised the deployment of teaching assistants and learning support mentors well, especially in Key Stage 2, to support the most vulnerable pupils and many new arrivals for whom English is a new language.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include the need to:

- continue to review the impact of workforce remodelling on standards and quality, reporting them more explicitly to governors in order to inform future planning
- research alternative models for providing PPA time linked to the school's current staffing profile so as to ensure the strategies adopted are sustainable.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to reform and develop the school's workforce.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Calvin Pike
Additional Inspector