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Mrs Lesley Hughes
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Hughes

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Deploying, training and developing the reformed workforce

Thank you for your co-operation and hospitality, and that of the staff, during my visit to Longcroft School on 18 October 2007 to evaluate the impact of the deployment, training and development of the reformed workforce. For the purposes of this survey inspection, the term 'reformed workforce' will apply to any person employed by or working in partnership with the school who is not a qualified teacher.

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 pupils, observation of lessons and scrutiny of documentation.

The overall effectiveness of the reformed workforce in your school was judged to be good.

The impact of the reformed workforce on achievement and standards is good.

- Pupils reached above average standards in GCSE examinations in 2006 and made good progress from their starting points when they entered the school. School data indicate that all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, have made similarly good progress and reached above

average standards in examinations in 2007. Teaching assistants have provided good academic support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, which has contributed to these pupils' good achievement.

- The data manager has improved systems to present and analyse data, which has enabled teaching staff to track pupils' progress better and intervene in their learning.
- Members of the reformed workforce, such as the school welfare co-ordinator, pastoral managers and attendance officers, have increased the school's capacity to improve behaviour and attendance. Attendance has risen further above the national average and unauthorised absence has reduced.
- The school inclusion team has provided valuable emotional and social support to pupils, especially the most vulnerable, which has enabled them to complete their education and achieve well. Pupils interviewed recognised and valued the support they receive from members of the inclusion team.
- Although the reformed workforce has contributed to raising achievement, there are no formal systems to assess its impact on students' progress.

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

- Members of the reformed workforce have had a significant impact on raising achievement and pupils' enjoyment of learning in music and, through the use of information and communications technology, in modern languages.
- Learning support assistants are deployed well to support learning.
- The administration and development manager deploys his large team well. They all have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Their work is clearly focused on reducing the workload of teachers and middle managers so they have more time for improving teaching and learning.
- The work of cover supervisors is not monitored sufficiently closely to ensure that all pupils make sufficient progress in lessons.

The impact of the reformed workforce on the quality of the curriculum is good.

- Members of the reformed workforce make a very good contribution to pupils' enjoyment and achievement by leading extra-curricular activities, particularly in the performing arts, and also in sport.
- Higher Level Teaching Assistants are deployed well to support pupils on off-site vocational courses.

The leadership and management of the reformed workforce are good.

- You and your senior leaders have a very strong commitment to training and developing the workforce at all levels, as identified in the school development plan.

- You and your senior managers recognise the valuable impact of the reformed workforce on reducing the time leaders spend on day-to-day administration. You make good use of the time saved to fulfil your strategic roles more effectively.
- New performance management procedures for the reformed workforce, although yet to be implemented for all members, are designed well to appraise effectiveness and set objectives to develop further their knowledge, skills and expertise.
- The expansion of the reformed workforce is giving individuals good opportunities to lead and manage within their areas of expertise.

The impact of the reformed workforce on inclusion is good.

- The school has an inclusive ethos, where members of the reformed workforce are valued. Their contribution is recognised by staff and pupils and their morale is high.
- Members of the inclusion team are very effective in engaging the most vulnerable pupils and helping to ensure they remain in school and achieve their potential.

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

- develop systems to monitor and evaluate the impact of all members of the reformed workforce on pupils' learning
- ensure that the new performance management policy for the reformed workforce is implemented consistently
- monitor the work of cover supervisors more carefully to improve pupils' learning.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to train and develop the reformed 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

Ann Wallis
Additional Inspector