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Mr A Yates  
Acting Headteacher  
The Tynings School  
Eastleigh Close  
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Dear Mr Yates

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit with Pauline Robins HMI on 17 November 2008 to look at work in CPD.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of CPD the visit had a particular focus on how professional development activities impact on raising standards and achievement.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgement about the overall effectiveness of CPD included interviews with senior managers and staff, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of CPD was judged to be outstanding.

The strengths identified:

- There is an excellent commitment and dedication to the professional development of all the staff in the school; this was wholeheartedly acknowledged by teaching, support and administration staff.
- Over the years the school has developed into a genuine professional learning community where the culture of sharing best practice to raise standards is well established. The enthusiasm displayed by the staff in discussions was a fitting tribute to this. Without exception all spoke with refreshing honesty about the quality of training on offer and how it had helped them to grow professionally into confident leaders of learning in their

own right. Notable examples of this include the strong leadership in both science and the Early Years Foundation Stage.

- There is a commendable drive from senior leaders to challenge staff to grow professionally and at a swift pace to assume greater responsibility within the school. Both the new subject leader for humanities and the Higher Level Teaching Assistant (HLTA) spoke perceptively about how, on appointment, they were encouraged to pursue further qualifications. This type of support from senior leaders is having a significant impact on the professional growth and confidence of all the staff. Moreover the number participating in further degree qualifications, vocational qualifications and leadership accredited programmes is exceptional for a small school.
- There is a strong link between CPD, performance management and the school improvement plan. The performance management system is used well to identify targets, for example improving standards in writing through developing a whole school approach to teaching phonics. The lesson observed, where the 'Letters and Sounds' materials were being used in a discrete phonics session, was well planned with a good range of strategies to extend the children's phonics skills and accuracy of spelling.
- The introduction of the 'Lesson Study' programme as part of the school's collaborative approach to improving classroom practice is both an innovative initiative and an excellent model not only for colleagues to share expertise, but to also engage in a reflective, professional dialogue about children's progress in quality time. It also provides a good vehicle for staff to use assessment for learning in a rigorous way to ensure the future work set is carefully matched to the abilities of the children.
- The meticulous forward planning for CPD has allowed the school to respond effectively to the recent changes in the leadership and management positions as exemplified by the acting senior leadership and the recently appointed leader of mathematics. Staff assuming new roles are receiving appropriate training and ongoing support.
- The CPD programme is flexible to accommodate a good range of training opportunities which encompass teaching and learning, family support and extended services, and business and administration. There are excellent collaborative partnerships with local universities and schools which are contributing to the high quality CPD on offer. I note the school's mentoring programme for post graduate students is held in high regard by the local university and is a real strength of the school. The induction programmes for newly qualified teachers and new staff joining the school are excellent. Although coaching is good at a senior level this is less well developed throughout the school; we agreed this is a CPD element for further improvement.
- The management and coordination of CPD are good and activities are sensibly aligned to the school improvement plan. The internal systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of CPD, including its cost effectiveness and value for money, are rigorous and governors take their role seriously in holding the school to account. We agreed that the school improvement plan coupled with key CPD documents do not state clearly enough how data will be used to measure the school's performance and reference to this requires a sharper focus.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- sharpen the reference to how data will be used to measure the school's performance in key CPD documents and the school improvement plan
- further extend the coaching model throughout the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop CPD 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

Mary Harlow  
Her Majesty's Inspector