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Mr J Saunders
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Saunders

Ofsted survey inspection programme: the extent and quality of provision for pupils from day 6 of an exclusion

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 26 November 2008 to look at the work of your school in relation to the extent and quality of provision for pupils from day 6 of exclusion. I would be grateful if you would pass on my thanks also to the pupil that I met.

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 you and the deputy headteacher, scrutiny of relevant documentation, a telephone discussion with one parent and an interview with one pupil. My judgements are related to the arrangements and outcomes for pupils whose exclusions meant you had to provide education for them from day 6 of their exclusions.

From September 2007 maintained schools are required to provide full-time education from and including the sixth day of any fixed period of exclusion of six days or longer. This should be provided off site, unless the excluding school hosts shared provision with a number of different schools. Highworth Warneford does not host shared provision. Senior leaders make special provision on site for excluded pupils to return to school on day 6 of their exclusions, and to spend the remaining days of their exclusions at the school. The school is therefore not complying with the regulations.

Achievement and standards of pupils from day 6 of exclusion

During the last academic year, two pupils were excluded for a fixed term greater than 5 days. You reported that both pupils returned to school on day 6 of their exclusions, did not return to their classes and spent their time under the guidance of senior leaders for the remaining days of their exclusions. You indicated to me that this procedure helped both pupils continue with their learning and deal with the difficulties that contributed to their exclusions better than would likely have been the case if they had attended off site provision in another school. The one pupil and the one parent I was able to speak with agree with you.

It is clear that one pupil made good progress under this arrangement in his learning and in dealing with the issues that contributed to his exclusion. His good progress has continued since he has rejoined his class. The progress made by the other pupil is not as easy to judge given that he has moved to a different establishment.

Quality of teaching and learning for pupils from day 6 of exclusion

No lessons were observed.

Quality of the curriculum for pupils from day 6 of exclusion

The quality of the curriculum is good. The pupil remaining at school is following a curriculum that matches well with his needs. He is gaining specialist support and advice and the effectiveness of this is clear from his better behaviour and his improved attitude to school and to his work.

Leadership and management of provision for pupils from day 6 of exclusion

You have ensured that the educational provision for both pupils who were excluded for more than 5 days was minimally disrupted as a consequence of their exclusions. You provided full-time education on day 6 and thereafter to the end of their exclusions, but you were at variance with regulations when you managed their return on day 6 of their exclusions to Highworth Warneford School, rather than to off site provision or shared provision.

Over each of the last few years Highworth Warneford has seen a significant reduction in the total number exclusion days, and in the number of pupils being excluded. This is the result of a purposeful decision of senior leaders to develop and implement a wide range of initiatives, which collectively were recognised as outstanding by inspectors at the time of then last inspection (February 2008). Some, such as empowering senior prefects and creating pupil led anti bullying mentors have been particularly successful in limiting the need to exclude pupils.

Inclusion

Provision was tailored to the individual needs of the returning pupils and they gained from this. Parents, whilst not happy their children were excluded, nevertheless feel that the overall experience benefited their children's progress in their learning and in their personal development; especially because of the specific targets identified for each child at the re-integration meeting and the effectiveness of the specialist support made available by the school in helping their children meet their targets.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- remedying the breach of regulations.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the day 6 provision 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

D. Alan Dobbins
Additional Inspector