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Mrs Avril Newman
Headteacher
Sir William Burrough Primary
Salmon Lane
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Dear Mrs Newman

Ofsted survey: good practice in the development of leadership skills and effectiveness

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 02 July 2009 to look at the work that you are doing to develop and sustain high quality leadership in your school and your partner schools.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: discussions with a range of staff; discussions with colleagues involved in programmes to improve school effectiveness at a local, national and international level; discussions with pupils; scrutiny of documentation; a number of lesson observations. In addition, evidence was also used from my visit on 1 July 2009 to one of your partner schools.

Features of good practice observed

- The school's work to develop the skills and effectiveness of leaders is outstanding. Your open and supportive style of leadership is valued highly by staff and pupils alike. It inspires colleagues to excel in their practice.
- Staff are extremely positive about the opportunities created for them to develop and to lead. Many of these opportunities are innovative and tailored to suit their needs ranging from developing educational leadership in South America to supporting classroom teachers in your partner schools.
- You are very well informed about leadership theory and practice and make explicit how theory applies to practice both within your school and with colleagues at a national level. This is because your approach is rooted in the benefits for pupils.

- Senior leaders explicitly model the behaviours they want to see across the school. Pupils clearly articulate how they learn leadership skills from observing teachers. They are confident, mature and fully understand the leadership qualities that are essential for their current and future lives. This is a testament to the development of leadership at all levels and contributes to the inspirational place your school is.
- The strong emphasis on continuous learning as a team is seen in activities such as visits to lectures by the senior leadership team, discussion of research papers in meetings and explicit sharing of and learning from good practice within your school, nationally, internationally and from business.
- Co-opting colleagues to the senior leadership team enables them to have first hand experience of the role and informs their future career plans.
- You and your staff are strongly committed to valuing and respecting the professionalism of teachers. This helps to build mutually productive relationships with your partner school. The impact of your work with your partner schools is tangible and they speak highly of the support provided to them.
- Strong links set up with local headteachers through business partnerships and international programmes to develop leadership help to set your school as a vibrant learning community at the forefront of educational developments. You and your staff are generous with your time and your expertise.

Area for development

- governors are very well informed about developments in the school. They are very supportive of the many initiatives the school is involved in but also challenge what it means for the pupils. However, they note the need to formally review their skills and training needs.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your work in this area.

As I explained previously, 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

Asyia Kazmi
Her Majesty's Inspector