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Mrs Y Lee
Principal
Hind Leys Community College
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Dear Mrs Lee

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: English

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 15 and 16 November 2010 to look at work in English.

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 included: interviews with staff and students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of seven part lessons.

The overall effectiveness of English is good.

Achievement in English

Achievement in English is good.

- In 2010, the provisional results for GCSE suggested broadly average attainment overall although the proportion of students achieving grades A* and A was above average. Attainment in the sixth form was broadly average overall but over half of students achieved grades A* to B. Attainment in English has risen over recent years across all courses.
- Year 11 students made good progress in 2010 from their starting points and sixth form students made at least satisfactory progress. Progress in English by the end of Key Stage 4 has been good over the past three years. Boys performed as well as girls in 2010 when the national gender gap is taken into account. Those students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities also made good progress.

- In lessons, students show interest in their work. They concentrate and work well collaboratively. They use subject terms effectively. Many students speak convincingly in front of their peers but a significant minority lacks confidence and this inhibits their performance in group work and class activities.

Quality of teaching in English

The quality of teaching in English is good.

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it effectively to plan lessons with clear objectives. Very good relationships in lessons enhance learning and encourage students to share ideas. Lessons are well-structured and most have tasks which are adapted to cater for students of differing abilities.
- Teachers use a good variety of activities to engage students' interest, including the use of technology to play film clips and audio material. They use questions effectively to extend students' responses but, on occasions, insufficient time is provided for individuals to think or discuss with others. This limits teachers' ability to assess students' progress in some lessons.
- Teachers mark students' work regularly. Students know their target grades but there is variation in the approaches taken and the quality of teachers' guidance on how they might improve further.

Quality of the curriculum in English

The quality of the curriculum in English is good.

- The curriculum is broad and covers a wide range of genres and types of text, including non-fiction, media and poetry. Planning for the new Year 10 course has been effective. Good emphasis is given to students reading widely, especially in the sixth form.
- An effective programme of intervention exists for students at all levels to help them to achieve their targets and this has been successful in raising achievement.
- The inclusion of English in the college's arts specialism has contributed strongly to a wide range of additional activities which engages students and broadens their understanding of the subject. For example, there are opportunities for them to work with writers and with younger pupils in other schools.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in English

Leadership and management in English are good.

- The subject leader has a clear vision for English and sets high expectations. There is productive teamwork and teachers' subject expertise is used effectively, with good practice shared regularly.

- Close analysis of students' performance and patterns in results has led to well focused plans for improvement with clear priorities. The subject leader monitors provision and students' progress regularly, taking into account students' views. Self-evaluation of provision is accurate. There is increasing consistency in the quality of teaching and common approaches to learning.
- Involvement in the college's arts specialism has raised the profile of the subject. In combination with effective strategies to raise achievement and a determined approach to reviewing practice, this has improved outcomes for students at all levels.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that all students have regular opportunities to build their confidence and capability in speaking to their peers and, where appropriate, to wider audiences
- developing greater consistency in teachers' use of assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
 - take opportunities to assess students' progress during lessons
 - provide regular and specific guidance to students on how to improve their work.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop English in the college.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg
Her Majesty's Inspector