

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



1 December 2010

Mr J McNally
Headteacher
Shelley College – A Specialist Centre for Science
Huddersfield Road
Shelley
Huddersfield
HD8 8NL

Dear Mr McNally

Ofsted 2010–11 survey inspection programme: alternative provision

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation and that of your staff when I visited your school on 9 November 2010. Please also pass on my thanks to the students with whom I had helpful discussions.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on examining the use of alternative provision for students who are vulnerable to underachieving, and the impact that this has on the outcomes for these students.

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.

This letter briefly summarises our discussion at the end of the visit.

Outcomes

- The college's evaluation indicates that last year the large majority of students who attended an alternative provision placement improved their overall attitudes to learning and progressed to related apprenticeships or further training.
- Almost all students gained at least five A* to G grades at GCSE and an additional vocational qualification.
- Students currently attending placements felt that they were learning important skills which would help them with their future employment.

- Some of the alternative provision has been established quite recently and the college has not yet linked it to accredited courses or to students' acquisition of personal skills.

Selecting and commissioning

- The college has commissioned a range of alternative provision which focuses on extending the work experience and vocational opportunities for students. Provision has sometimes been identified by the students themselves and is matched well to their particular interests.
- You say that that you work closely with the local careers service to identify alternative provision and to ensure that appropriate checks have been made on providers before students start their placement.
- The college is finding it increasingly difficult to identify suitable alternative provision in the area. It also finds that when provision is identified, the time taken to complete the necessary checks and legal documentation can be very lengthy.

Monitoring, evaluation and support

- The college checks on each student's attendance regularly and any absence is followed up quickly. It has information to show the overall impact of different providers. However, the college is aware that some aspects of monitoring could show more clearly the specific skills being acquired by students.
- Students feel well supported by the alternative providers and by the college. The college has recently reviewed its curriculum to provide more flexibility in meeting students' individual needs. Students report that the balance in the timetable between time spent at the college and at their alternative provision works well.

I hope that this visit has been useful in the further development of this aspect of the school's work.

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. A copy of this letter will also be sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
Her Majesty's Inspector