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Mr N Weller
Headteacher
Dixons City Academy
Ripley Street
Bradford
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Dear Mr Weller

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 10 November 2010.

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

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

- While recognising that the academy makes limited use of alternative provision, its evaluation indicates that last year almost all students who attended an alternative provision sustained or improved their attendance and rate of educational progress.
- Attendance at the alternative provision enables students to gain vocational qualifications and almost all who left at the end of Year 11 progressed to further training.

Selecting and commissioning

- The academy has access to a broad range of alternative provision although this is rarely used. It prefers to use the South Bradford Vocational Centre (SBVC) which was established in partnership with other local schools.

- Alternative provision is chosen carefully to dovetail with the curriculum offered in the academy.
- The academy values the support provided by the local authority's inclusion service in suggesting possible providers and in discussing placements with students and their parents.
- The academy feels that there is limited provision for students who are less socially confident than their peers and for those who are capable of gaining Level 2 qualifications.

Monitoring, evaluation and support

- The academy makes regular checks on each student's attendance and receives termly reports from the SBVC on their progress.
- The academy recognises that should a wider range of alternative provision be used in the future, a system for regular monitoring would need to be introduced to record students' progress in developing their vocational and personal skills.

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

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
Her Majesty's Inspector