

1 December 2010

Mr N Poole  
Headteacher  
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Cranford Road  
Petersfield  
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Dear Mr Poole

### **Ofsted 2010–11 good practice survey: value for money in schools**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation and that of your staff during my visit on 9 November 2010 to look at how the school achieves good value for money.

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 and discussions with various members of staff and representatives of school partners; discussions with students; observation of lessons; and scrutiny of documentation.

#### **Features of good practice**

- The school has an exceptionally clear set of corporate educational values with personalisation for students and working in partnership at its core.
- Very effective use of financial benchmarking tools ensures that the school knows the true cost of its activities and how this compares with other providers.
- The governing body and leaders and managers ensure careful oversight of budgets and expenditure.
- The East Hants 14 to 19 partnership allows the school to offer a varied and appropriate vocational curriculum to its students that it could not offer independently. This has led to improved achievement and personal outcomes for students.
- Costs are controlled carefully by the 14 to 19 partnership. Economies of scale allow the partnership to drive down costs when purchasing provision from external providers.

- The alignment of timetables in partner institutions and closely coordinated transport allow efficient use of students' time and staffing resources.
- The East Hants Education Improvement Partnership (EHEIP) that evolved from the 14 to 19 consortia has established a number of effective cross-phase projects. Partners are drawn from primary, secondary and tertiary providers.
- The EHEIP is funded by a levy based on the number of students attending the partner institution. The economies of scale established by such an approach allow smaller institutions to take part and expertise to be shared.
- Cross-phase transition has been enhanced by the EHEIP. An annual planning conference proposes and develops projects around common interests. For example, attainment in mathematics was identified as an area of common need, which was addressed by an innovative and successful 'Dragons Den' project.
- The school's specialism in performing arts is used to drive improved outcomes across the school. It also plays a key role in partnership working. For example, specialist staff are key members of the 14 to 19 consortia delivering the creative and media diploma and contributing to several EHEIP projects.
- Developing internal capacity and reducing dependence on external expertise, most notably for the purposes of staff development, while securing higher-quality outcomes has been a notable success for the school. This process has been enhanced by also delivering training to partner institutions.

### **Areas for development**

- Bringing together the planning and evaluation of whole-school and partnership activity within a value for money framework.
- Working with partners in the EHEIP to refine the evaluation of projects to include the costs and benefits.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop the school.

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 is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Peter Gale**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**