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Mr R Bennett  
North Lindsey College  
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Dear Mr Bennett

### **Ofsted 2011–12 best practice survey: supporting college students to progress and achieve**

Thank you for your warm welcome and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 20 and 21 February 2012 to look at your work in supporting students to progress and achieve.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about best practice in supporting college students. The publication will include case studies about individual providers. If your college is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment prior to publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included scrutiny of documentation and meetings with senior managers, course team leaders, support staff and students.

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

- Staff encourage students to have high expectations for further and higher education, training or employment. The college has created an ethos of high aspirations for all and students are urged to achieve their full potential.
- Close liaison is in place between teaching and support staff who deliver the very effective tutorial system. Tutorials cover the Every Child Matters themes well and also ensure that students are set relevant academic and personal targets that are monitored regularly.
- Students receive good training to become peer mentors and help other students and staff to promote anti-bullying and anti-cyber-bullying practices.

- Close communication occurs between staff and parents. Tutors ensure parents are kept well informed of the progress of their son and/or daughter through regular meetings and telephone contact.
- Senior managers have devised a successful strategy to diversify the college's income sources, thus enabling the college to be flexible in its response to cuts in specific funding streams.
- Good financial support is made available to students, which helps them to overcome barriers to completing their course. A very large number of students receive rewards for their high performance and good attendance.
- The wide range of curricular and extra-curricular activities improves the experience and skills of students. In particular, the large number of trips and international exchange visits broaden the outlook of students.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- increasing the number of tutorials which are observed to give managers a better awareness of their quality and an indication of how to improve them further
- implementing college plans to establish electronic individual learning plans for students to further aid communication between staff when monitoring the progress of students.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your approaches to providing support for your students. As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

**Tony Noonan**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**