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Ms D Brown-Sackey
Principal and Chief Executive
Newham College of Further Education
High Street South
East Ham
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Dear Ms Brown-Sackey

Ofsted 2011–12 survey inspection programme: supporting college students to progress and achieve

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 19 and 20 January to look at your work in supporting college students to progress and achieve.

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 scrutiny of relevant documents; observation of tutorials; and meetings with staff, support workers and students

Key findings

- Innovative and thoughtful strategic development of student support services that provide good value for money and improve students' progress and achievement.
- Enthusiastic and well-trained support staff who successfully support vulnerable students and those identified as at risk of underperforming.
- Close liaison between student service and teaching staff that ensures the progress of students is monitored carefully and regularly.
- Effective peer mentoring that supports students to achieve and also develops the skills and experience of the mentors.
- Enrichment activities include student debates on a wide range of contemporary and relevant topics that interests students and broadens their outlook and views.

- Strong collaboration with external organisations that leads to effective work to promote sexual health and other issues that contribute to the wellbeing of students.
- High-quality electronic materials and well-established support measures that promote independent learning and enable students to develop their employability skills.
- Strong focus on quality assurance procedures that monitor compliance of student support procedures among all staff that ensure that the academic progress of students is tracked rigorously and their pastoral needs are met well.
- High-quality facilities and learning environment that are highly appreciated by students and provide well-furnished and comfortable areas where students may relax, have fun and study.
- Effective support for students is provided by dedicated and well-trained support staff who ensure good value for money.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- the consistent quality of students' individual targets agreed in electronic personal learning plans.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop supporting college students at Newham College of Further Education.

As 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

Tony Noonan
Her Majesty's Inspector