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Ms M Galliers
Principal
Leicester College
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Dear Ms Galliers

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 23 and 24 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, curriculum managers, tutors and students.

Features of good practice observed

- Senior managers have a reflective and thoughtful approach and have adapted the college's curriculum to ensure students receive good support despite the cuts to entitlement funding.
- A strong ethos prevails throughout the college that helps students to progress and achieve success. The fully committed staff work very hard and are successful in raising the aspirations of students, helping them to reach their full potential.
- Students find the broad range of enrichment activities interesting and relevant. Extra-curricular activities, including many trips, are tailored and meet the needs and interests of students.

- Enthusiastic and skilful staff deliver group tutorials. Topical themes are introduced at regular sessions which are adapted to meet the level and previous experience of students.
- The wealth of high-quality learning materials covers contemporary topics relevant to the 'Every Child Matters' themes. These materials are freely available to staff and students on the college's virtual learning environment.
- Individual learning plans (ILPs) contain specific and measurable targets that help to keep students motivated and focused on their progress.
- Tutors liaise closely with teaching staff and regularly monitor the progress of students. ILPs are held electronically and tutors have up-to-date information about the performance of their students in all aspects of their course.
- Rigorous quality assurance procedures, including graded observations of group work and individual review meetings, are used to inform managers and improve the quality of student support work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- tackling the inconsistency arising in 2011/12 in some curriculum areas where not all students receive their full entitlement of enrichment activities and the overall decrease in participation by students in sporting activities
- introducing further staff training to ensure that all tutors make the most of their opportunities to promote spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues with 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