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Mr Andrew Hutchinson  
Executive Headteacher  
Coleridge Community College  
Radegund Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 3RJ

Dear Mr Hutchinson

**Ofsted monitoring of Grade 3 schools with additional focus on behaviour:  
monitoring inspection of Coleridge Community College.**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your college on 27 March 2012 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please pass my thanks to the students I interviewed for the very thoughtful views they so willingly shared with me. Can you also thank the Chair of the Governing Body and the parent governor for the time they gave to meet me.

Since the last inspection the college has transferred to academy status. It has continued to grow but there have not been any significant changes in staffing.

As a result of the inspection on 6-7 July 2010, the college was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence, I am of the opinion that at this time the college has made satisfactory progress in making improvements and the effectiveness of the college in improving pupils' behaviour is good.

**Achievement of pupils at the college**

Since the college was inspected there is evidence of improvement in the achievement of students. The 2011 results indicate better attainment in all areas although the progress made by some groups of students was disappointing, including that for disabled students and those who have special needs. As a result of the improvements the college has made to its provision there is now evidence of much better progress for all groups. The college has taken effective steps to improve the accuracy of its assessments. Current records indicate that all students, including disabled students and those with special needs are making enhanced progress. During the monitoring visit students were observed to be making good progress in the large majority of lessons. The picture was not quite as strong in mathematics

January 2012



because not all teachers in this subject ensured all students worked at good pace. Generally more effective teaching, including the setting of appropriate homework, is leading to students having more positive attitudes to learning. For instance, students demonstrated a commendable willingness to communicate their ideas to their class mates and were comfortable about the possibility of making mistakes. At times teaching was observed to inspire students to make substantial contributions to lessons that enriched learning. In Year 11 students make especially strong progress because teachers plan lessons that make it very clear what students of all abilities must do to achieve their challenging targets. With younger age groups there was not always such clarity and as a result the progress students could make, particularly for the most able, was diminished.

### **The quality of teaching**

There is evidence that teachers now expect students to take greater responsibility for their learning. Many teachers resist the temptation to give students the answers and instead support them in solving problems for themselves. Teachers take effective steps to encourage all students to think about responses to their questions. For instance, in a French lesson all students had to indicate their responses on white boards so the teacher could check their understanding and identify any misconceptions. In a science lesson a teacher was observed to be skilfully probing students' understanding of forces to highlight any misconceptions so these could be further explored. In most subjects there are strengths in the way teachers are helping students appreciate how learning in college links to the real world. For instance, Year 11 students were observed to be enjoying learning about the performing arts in the context of planning a festival. Students are less clear about the usefulness of what they learn in mathematics. Teaching is effectively promoting students' communication skills and as a result students confidently express their opinions. Teachers use a good range of activities to maintain high levels of interest and to ensure students enjoy learning.

Students are benefiting from the feedback they receive from both teachers and through self- and peer-assessment activities. Particularly effective practice was observed in English where areas for improvement are always identified and students are kept well informed of their progress towards the achievement of their targets. This effective marking has also enhanced the value of homework. In other subjects there are inconsistencies in marking so students are less clear about what they must do to improve. Although students have challenging targets these are not always sufficiently linked to the learning outcomes in lessons. Particularly with younger age groups, too often all students are expected to attain the same outcome regardless of their abilities.

### **Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Students were observed to be universally polite, considerate and well behaved throughout the duration of this unannounced inspection visit. Behaviour is becoming

a strength of the college. Exclusions are reducing and the college has been successful in meeting the needs of students that have arrived from other schools where their behaviour had been deemed problematic. Students reported that only rarely does poor behaviour interfere with learning. Instrumental in this is the fact that students can positively influence decision-making in the college. This success has resulted in older students wanting the opportunity to be even more involved in helping improve their college. The positive involvement of students in the college community, including emphasis in lessons on students increased responsibility for their learning, is improving students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development.

Action by senior leaders has led to an improvement in attendance although it continues to be slightly below average. The college is successfully improving the attendance of those groups that have traditionally not attended so well.

### **The quality of leadership and management of the college**

Leaders have successfully improved the college and there is evidence that progress has been made in terms of all the key issues identified at the July 2010 inspection. All the groups that previously did not achieve quite as well are making accelerated progress. The college is more effectively tracking the progress of different groups and effective plans are being made in response to this. The provision for disabled students and those who have special needs has been enhanced. These students are now experiencing a more appropriate curriculum that includes time outside of normal lessons, where this is appropriate. The narrowing of the gaps that previously existed is evidence of the increased effectiveness of the college's approach to promoting equal opportunities.

The governing body is more strongly focused on ensuring improved achievement for all students. The links that exist between individual governors and subjects have been strengthened through more frequent visits and more robust reporting to the full governing body. Senior leaders are clear about existing weaknesses. For instance they have identified the need to spread the more effective practice in communicating learning outcomes used as regards the addressing of learning outcomes with older students so this becomes whole college practice. Senior leaders are also aware that not quite so much progress has been made improving mathematics and plans are in place to address this. Leaders are positive about the work of an independent consultant who has provided useful additional insights into college effectiveness.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your college. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

January 2012

## Annex

### **The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in July 2010.**

- Raise attainment for all students, particularly in mathematics, to be at least broadly in line with national averages by 2011-12, by:
  - ensuring the analysis and monitoring of different groups of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is undertaken in sufficient detail to aid targeted improvement planning
  - improve the consistency of assessment to maximise students' progress
  - using homework to more consistently extend and enrich students' knowledge.
  
- Ensure that the governing body, leaders and managers monitor and evaluate with equal rigour all aspect of the school's work so that this provides a clear basis for improvement by:
  - developing and establishing bespoke initiatives and strategies within the federation for Coleridge and ensuring the evaluation of these are clearly linked to student's outcomes and achievement
  - using trend data more consistently to measure clearly the impact made
  - providing more consistent and coherent monitoring and evaluation in key areas, such as equalities promotion.