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Mr I Collins
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Collins

13 survey inspection programme: schools' use of alternative provision

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 17 and 18 January 2013 to look at the school's use of alternative provision. During the visit I met with the co-ordinator of alternative provision and with a two groups of students, examined a range of documents' including students'. I also visited 'Construct', one of the providers that your students attend.

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.

This letter briefly summarises our discussion at the end of the visit.

Strengths of this aspect of the school's work

- Through the effective partnership with another local school, alternative provision based around construction skills has been effectively commissioned and is providing suitable qualifications for students. Although limited in size and scope, the provision meets students' needs, academic interests and aspirations well.
- The selection of students to attend the provision is undertaken thoroughly. The advice and guidance given to them prepares them well for their placements. Support for students from the provider and the school is excellent. The good guidance raises students' awareness of the progression routes available after they have completed their qualification. Guest speakers from the construction industry add value to students' experiences and help them make informed decisions of the trade they are likely to pursue. The provider has worked hard to secure apprenticeship

opportunities through a multi-national construction and development company based in Sweden.

- The curriculum is broad and balanced because the school has made good arrangements for those students attending alternative provision. Personalised timetables are based on their interests and ability. They can choose to take a modern foreign language, history or geography. However, some students do miss one or two hours of either mathematics or English which they have on occasions found hard to catch up.
- Students speak highly of their placement and of the support they are given by the school and the provider. They say they have matured and that this is due to the provider reinforcing a professional attitude at every opportunity especially to improve their punctuality and behaviour. They are able to support each other well as benefitting from mentors who help them develop good team-building skills. However, providers' written reports are brief and do not identify in any detail how well students are making progress especially in developing personal, social and employability skills.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of all the outcomes achieved on alternative provision and informing the governing body of the provision's performance regularly
- working with the provider so that they supply more detailed reports to help students understand how well they are progressing academically, socially and personally as well as how effectively they are developing their employability skills
- reviewing the timetabling arrangements so that there are sufficient opportunities for students to catch up in mathematics and English when they are missing lessons.

Yours sincerely

Sam Morgan-Price
Her Majesty's Inspector