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Mr I Potter
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Potter

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 21 and 22 January 2013 to look at the academy's use of alternative provision. During the visit I met with you, members of the leadership team and spoke with the local authority representative for alternative provision. I met with students individually and in groups, and examined a range of documents and students' files. I also visited the following providers that your students attend:

- Portsmouth Football Academy, Portsmouth
- Releasing Potential, Havant
- Enterprise Academy, Gosport.

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 academy's work

- The academy's use of alternative provision is given a high priority and is highly effective in helping a small proportion of selected students to remain in and re-engage with education or training. Students' destinations post-16 indicate that all students who left in 2012 went onto a range of education, employment or training opportunities.
- Students and who take part in the alternative opportunities and some who have now left the academy spoke about how the alternative provision

opportunities have had a positive impact in helping them to improve attendance and motivation, build confidence and encourage them to take more responsibility for their own learning and achievement. The academy involves parents, pupils and leaders from the alternative providers to make sure that students have comprehensive information, advice and guidance and to ensure courses are well suited to the needs and aspirations of individuals.

- For most students, the academy's main curriculum is flexible enough to meet varying needs. It offers a range of additional interventions to support learning and complement the main curriculum. The alternative provision is an element of the overall support for students. The academy is pro-active in seeking suitable alternative provision that best meets individual students' needs and circumstances. They have reduced the number of providers that they use and have developed their own provision so that the academy can assure the quality of the provision as well as ensuring it is matched well to the students' needs.
- Thoughtful curriculum planning and timetabling ensures that a focus on English, and mathematics remains a priority so that students who attend alternative provision can continue their studies in important basic skills. The academy arranges additional tutoring opportunities to support students who keenly ensure they keep up with lessons that are missed on some days. As a result students are working well towards GCSE exams in English and mathematics. A small number are studying and on target for achieving equivalent level 2 courses in English and mathematics.
- The academy monitors and tracks students' progress well. Daily checks are made on attendance at provision. Absence is followed up quickly. Regular visits are made to check on outcomes and ensure that communication between all involved is effective. Providers produce regular reports and are responsive to the academy's monitoring processes. Monitoring of the quality of provision relies largely on students' outcomes and the academy is assessing how they can monitor the teaching and instruction at providers more effectively.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing further the way in which the academy evaluates the use that providers make of the wide range of information it supplies and the quality of teaching and instruction, in order to refine the assessment of the impact of the alternative provision.

Yours sincerely

Paul Scott
Her Majesty's Inspector