

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Ms C Savage
Headteacher
Wood Green School
Woodstock Road
Witney
Oxfordshire
OX28 1DX

Dear Ms Savage

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 5 March 2013 to look at the school's use of alternative provision. During the visit I held meetings with staff and groups of students and parents, visited your internal provision and examined a range of documents. I also visited C and C Tyres, 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

- Strong partnerships between the school, the local authority, employers, and Abingdon and Witney College ensure a wide range of appropriate courses and work placements is available to meet the needs, interests and aspirations of the students. These placements are complemented by a range of in-school provision which helps to meet students' individual needs and to keep them fully engaged in learning. The headteacher, inclusion manager and assistant headteacher consider carefully the personal and academic needs of each student in selecting the most appropriate internal and external provision.
- The school's internal provision, known as Space 2 Learn, is highly successful in re-engaging students within the school and in supporting

those on courses at the college or on work placements. It is managed by the school's inclusion manager and staff have a range of experience, including in youth and social work. The school provides two designated social care placements for trainee social workers. Students who attend Space 2 Learn have individual and flexible timetables to address their personal and social needs as well as their academic needs such as developing literacy or numeracy skills. The school draws on a range of external services to support the specific needs of the young people. Each student is allocated a member of staff as their key worker. Key workers visit students on external placements.

- The school also hosts an area resource base for students with moderate learning difficulties. The base provides alternative provision for students in Springfield Special School which shares the school site, for example helping the students to attain GCSE mathematics and entry level English. Students in the special school wear the Wood Green School uniform and use facilities such as the school's dining hall, which helps them to feel included in the school.
- Very effective procedures are in place for selecting and commissioning off-site alternative providers, including procedures for safeguarding and health and safety.
- Providers pay suitable attention to students' safety and students understand how to keep themselves safe in the workplace due to detailed training by the school. Most of the students take a BTEC in work skills. Key workers visit placements regularly and students can contact them at any time.
- Providers are well informed about the needs of the students and how to contact the school with any concerns. They follow up any absence promptly and feel that the school supports them effectively.
- The school incorporates alternative provision exceptionally well into students' timetables, making sure that the curriculum is broad and balanced. Students take their GCSEs, including English and mathematics, at the school. On college courses, they also take BTEC qualifications which often lead to further study in the chosen vocational subject.
- The outcomes of the alternative provision for the students include a significant gain in confidence and self-esteem, a sense of being valued by a key worker and particularly by the inclusion manager, and a sense of achievement. These in turn promote improved attitudes to learning, better attendance and behaviour, and the attainment of qualifications, including GCSE mathematics and either GCSE or entry level English for all students. As a result, few students leave the school not in education, employment or training.

- The school monitors and evaluates its use of alternative provision regularly to ensure it has a positive impact on students' academic and personal development.
- Alternative provision is a positive experience for the students. They say that without it, they would not have overcome their social and emotional difficulties and achieved so well academically.

Areas for improvement include:

- working with the off-site providers to ensure that they send more regular reports to the school about students' progress.

Yours sincerely

Sue Frater
Her Majesty's Inspector