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15 March 2013

Mrs J Lawrie
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Lawrie

Ofsted 2012 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 6 and 7 March 2013 to look at the school's use of alternative provision. During the visit I met with senior leaders who co-ordinate the alternative provision and met with students in school and at the local college. I also met with the Director of The Wessex Partnership and examined a range of documents. I visited the following providers and held discussions with the staff responsible for the provision: Knightwood Leisure Ltd, Wiltshire College and River Bourne Community Farm.

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

- The school is committed to inclusion and meets the needs of almost all students on the school site. Consequently, only a very small proportion of students require arrangements which include using part-time alternative educational provision.
- Strong collaborative work with other schools in the area through The Wessex Partnership has helped to identify suitable providers that meet students' academic, social and behavioural needs. The school has also

used its own contacts creatively to find suitable providers which meet students' particular interests and needs.

- There are good examples of providers meeting the personal needs of individual students, and in preparing them for work, training or further education beyond school. For example, one student has established a pattern of punctual and regular attendance at a work place, while another is taking a vocational course in animal care which he hopes will lead to a career when he leaves school.
- Providers feel well-supported by the school and The Wessex Partnership. They receive a good level of information about the individual needs of students prior to their attendance and appreciate the continuing open communication with the school once students take up their place.
- Most students follow a balanced timetable which includes the study of English and mathematics. However, not all receive sufficient education during the school week and the linking of some alternative provision to accredited courses in school, for example the certificate of personal effectiveness, are underdeveloped.
- In 2012, three of the five students who attended an alternative placement for part of the week achieved a GCSE pass in English and mathematics.
- Students who attend provision which forms part of The Wessex partnership receive regular written reports on students' progress.
- The students who were available during the visit to talk about their work enjoy attending their off-site provision and like learning in a working environment. They also value the care and support they receive from staff, both at school and in the off-site provision.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- receiving regular written reports, linked to specific social skills and employability targets, on the progress of those students who attend alternative provision which is outside The Wessex Partnership
- linking some alternative provision more closely with accredited courses offered at school
- working with the local authority to ensure that all students who attend alternative provision receive suitable full-time education.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Redpath
Her Majesty's Inspector