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Mrs C Robson  
Executive Headteacher  
Rushey Mead School  
Melton Road  
Leicester  
LE4 7PA

Dear Mrs Robson

### **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 20 and 21 February 2013 to look at the school's use of alternative provision. During the visit I met with senior and middle leaders and with four students and examined a range of documents relating to alternative provision. I also visited Style My Ride and In-Training, two 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**

- The school's commitment to providing students with high quality teaching, including procedures to manage their behaviour effectively means that alternative provision is used sparingly. Very few students are excluded from school. Only a very small minority are taught off-site on vocational courses or in placements.
- The curriculum is organised to enable students who choose to pursue vocational awards taught off-site to do so without disrupting their learning in core subjects.
- Strategic links with a range of external partners, in particular the local authority enables vulnerable and challenging students to stay safe and engage fully in learning so that they 'finish the journey'. Students study

recognised qualifications that they value and provide the basis for the next stage of their education, training or employment.

- The education of students on full-time alternative provision is taken seriously. Well-established procedures are in place to quality-assure the suitability and safety of local providers. Students' attendance and personal welfare, and their academic progress are closely monitored.
- Students and their families are known well. Senior teachers and pastoral staff meet with them to check that the alternative arrangements made for their learning are working. Students' absence is followed up promptly.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- ensuring that all students on full-time alternative provision have an opportunity to gain basic qualifications in English and mathematics
- securing new arrangements for those students affected by the recent closure of one of the main providers in the city so that they remain safe and fully engaged in learning.

Yours sincerely

**John Mitcheson**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**