

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



28 May 2013

Mr S Calvin
Headteacher
Barr's Hill School and Community College
Radford Road
Radford
Coventry
West Midlands
CV1 4BU

Dear Mr Calvin

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 May 2013 to look at the school's use of alternative provision. During the visit I met with senior leaders and teachers at the school involved in the co-ordination of alternative provision and with a group of students who attend alternative providers. I examined a range of documents and published materials. I also visited the following providers that your students attend:

- Learn2 – academic and social re-engagement
- Arthur Rank – construction and motor vehicles.

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 own inclusive policies and practices set a very high expectation for the quality of all alternative providers and courses used by the school. The school's aim to 'get the best out of every youngster' is reflected in alternative provision which closely matches the needs and interests of every student and leads to accreditation and qualifications.
- The inclusion team at the school knows the students well and considers carefully their personal and academic needs, interests and aspirations in

selecting the most appropriate external provision. As a result, students' participation, engagement and success rates are very high.

- The school is supported very effectively by the local authority through a work-related learning partnership. The authority keeps a comprehensive directory of off-site provision. This extensive programme provides a wide choice of courses, social experiences, pathways and opportunities, all with clear progression routes. Furthermore, it commits to quality assurance through statutory checks and vetting, coupled with continuous review and improvement to ensure that the placements are safe, are of high quality and can provide appropriate qualifications. As a result, the school can be very confident in the quality and safety of the provision offered.
- The providers used by the school are of a very high calibre. Students' progress and well-being is regularly and rigorously monitored by the school and the local authority partnership.
- Students are timetabled very carefully so that the external provision can fit around the timetable in school. This ensures that all students can follow their chosen alternative courses alongside appropriate qualifications in English and mathematics. Their timetables are structured so that if a subject that is important or is of particular interest to them is missed, it can still be followed through taught 'catch up' lessons.
- Case studies show the positive impact of alternative provision. Students learn to manage their behaviour, develop positive attitudes to learning, improve their attendance, and go on to study courses at school, further education or enter employment. This is typified by a student who reported that her life had been 'completely turned around' by this experience.
- Students interviewed value the alternative provision highly and openly show their gratitude to their teachers and outside providers for 'giving them a second chance'. They say that the individual support and attention they receive, together with the opportunity to follow more vocational courses, gives them the confidence and self-esteem to continue their studies, to integrate into school life and become successful learners.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- measuring and reporting on the impact of the use of alternative provision on the school life of students as a discrete group to senior leaders and the Governing Body.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Riddiough
Her Majesty's Inspector