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Mr N Melvin
Principal
King Edward VII Science and Sport College
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Dear Mr Melvin

Ofsted 2013 14 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 27 and 28 November 2013 to look at the school's use of alternative provision. During the visit I met with you and a vice principal, and with the learning mentor who coordinates alternative provision. I met with six students and examined a range of documents. I also visited the following providers that your students attend: Scania International Motor Vehicle Engineering, Chameleon school of Construction, 2-Inspire and Gaz Autos.

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

- This aspect of the school's work has a high priority. You, and your senior leaders, believe passionately that all pupils, including those who are the most vulnerable and sometimes challenging, should be enabled to participate in education, achieve and progress to education, training and employment.
- You know the individual needs of the pupils very well indeed and understand how vital it is to engage, include and raise their aspirations. As a result, there is a strong focus on making sure that the provision is well-matched to their needs and interests.

- There is strong collaboration with other schools and agencies, particularly those involved in the local Behaviour Partnership, so that knowledge, expertise and ideas are shared, action taken early, students are carefully tracked and the impact of interventions evaluated.
- Quality assurance, particularly relating to safeguarding, is rigorous and you are quick to act if the quality of provision falls below your high expectations or does not meet the needs of the students. All of the off-site provision leads to some form of accreditation. All of last year's students achieved at least one qualification and more than 75% of the group achieved four or more qualifications. The students involved in off-site provision all study mathematics and English. Last year over 80% achieved passes in English and mathematics at level 2 or above.
- There is regular communication with pupils, parents/carers and providers. Providers are complimentary about how responsive the school is, particularly in relation to attendance and behaviour. Overall school attendance has improved markedly over time and the attendance and behaviour of many pupils on the off-site programmes have significantly improved in the past.
- Students are full of praise for the opportunities provided and enjoy the courses. They know that they are learning useful skills and improving their employability. Several commented that their behaviour and attendance have improved and that they have become more mature as a result of spending time in a more adult environment.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- strengthening the focus on progress and achievement in learning on the offsite courses
- involving parents and carers more, particularly in celebrating achievement
- requiring providers to produce more frequent reports and making the pupils' targets, particularly in the personal learning plans, sharper so that their progress can be more readily and frequently evaluated.

Yours sincerely

Sheena MacDonald
Her Majesty's Inspector