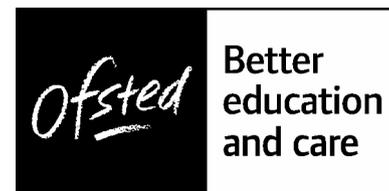


Nord Anglia Inspections
Anglia House
Carrs Road
Cheadle
Stockport SK8 2LA

T 0161 491 4191
F 0161 491 9677

Ofsted helpline
08456 404045



17 November 2006

Mr L Gair
Barndale House School
Howling Lane
Alnwick
Northumberland
NE66 1DQ

Dear Mr Gair,

**OFSTED MONITORING OF SCHOOLS WHOSE OVERALL
EFFECTIVENESS HAS BEEN JUDGED SATISFACTORY**

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I visited your school on 16 November 2006.

As a result of the inspection in November 2005, the school was asked to address four areas for improvement: ensure that the curriculum for pupils aged 14–19 fully meets statutory requirements in science and the work-related curriculum; improve school self-evaluation procedures by setting clear priorities for improvement linked to their intended effect on pupils' achievement, teaching and learning; ensure that all staff and governors are fully involved in setting school priorities and school self-review processes; and to extend the range of external accreditation available for pupils in Years 10 to 14.

Having considered carefully all the evidence presented by the school and the local authority together with evidence from Ofsted data I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making good progress on the issues identified at the last inspection. The school has made the areas for improvement the main priority in the last year. Staff and governors are more fully involved evaluating the work of the school and setting future priorities. They are working closely as a team and with the new headteacher to drive the school forward.

Progress ensuring the curriculum for pupils aged 14–19 fully meets statutory requirements in science and the work related curriculum is good. An audit of practical and investigative activities in science was carried out with the support of the local authority (LA) adviser. New activities such as a science day are developing practical capability more effectively. Outside agencies such as Young Enterprise, local business, and public services are involved

with the pupils to extend their understanding of the workplace. The connexions service is providing a wider range of activities beyond transition reviews, for example mock interviews in lessons. The school has significantly extended the number of work placements by building new networks with local industry. Placements were found for 10 out of 13 pupils aged 14–19 this year.

The school has made good progress improving self-evaluation procedures. Judgements recorded in the latest school evaluation form accurately assess the school to be satisfactory and improving. Senior managers are not complacent and aim to make it a good school in the shortest possible time.

Staff and governors are now fully involved in the process of self-evaluation and setting priorities. Records of the 12 visits by governors to the school since the last inspection are informing the school improvement plan. Governors have a much better knowledge of subject and curriculum areas. Regular meetings between coordinators, the headteacher and governors were established in January 2006 to improve the self-evaluation process.

Progress extending the range of external accreditation for pupils is good. Provision has improved beyond ASDAN to include LA accreditation units. A new essential skills qualification organised by MENCAP and validated by City and Guilds has been introduced. Liaison with the High school has improved and individually tailored programmes are offered together with NVQ programmes at local FE and agricultural colleges.

Many thanks for your help with the visit and I hope you found it useful promoting improvement at the school.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock
Her Majesty's Inspector