

21 November 2006

Mr Beazeley
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Dear Mr Beazeley

Ofsted survey of the Young Apprenticeships programme: 2006/07

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on the 20 November 2006 to look at work in the Young Apprenticeships programme.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

I undertook to provide a brief written version of the main points made in my feedback at the end of the visit, to support development of the partnership. This follows:

The overall effectiveness of Nottingham Partnership was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards overall are satisfactory.

- Pupils show satisfactory progress from Key Stage 3. Nearly 50% of pupils do not meet the entry standards but have been selected on the basis of aptitude and the majority of these are showing satisfactory achievement.
- A small minority may have difficulty achieving the level 2 qualification.

- Targets set based on progress data are inadequate. Although initial appropriate targets have been set for pupils, they are yet to be reviewed and re-set based on progress so far.
- Pupils have made satisfactory in their development of sector skills, knowledge and understanding.
- The development of core skills is also satisfactory but links with core skills work in the schools are inadequate.

The pupils' personal development and well being are satisfactory.

- Pupils' attendance is good and most behave well in class, but a small proportion of pupils do not show appropriate attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils enjoy the programme and respond well to adults. They particularly appreciate the more adult college environment.
- The development of independent learning is inadequate for the majority of pupils at this stage.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress in taking responsibility for their learning.
- Pupils have a good understanding of health and safety principles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning are satisfactory.

- Most pupils show positive attitudes to their programme.
- Teachers are developing a greater understanding of the needs of this age group and their widely differing abilities.
- Planning for learning has ensured satisfactory progress but there is inadequate planning to challenge the most and least able pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is overall satisfactory and pupils work well in teams.
- The support teacher is deployed well and has ensured effective pastoral, personal support for pupils but more support for key skills is limited.

Curriculum provision is satisfactory.

- There is a satisfactory programme of activities with good opportunities for enrichment.
- The programme has inadequate links to the curriculum in schools, which has resulted in under-developed opportunities to develop key skills.

- The requirements of the programme are being met with appropriate activities but there are insufficient opportunities for traditionally female sports.
- Pupils are prepared well for work placements that mostly meet their needs.

Care guidance and support are satisfactory.

- The information for pupils and their parents is satisfactory, enabling pupils to make an informed and appropriate choice.
- There is insufficient contact with parents in the early stages of the programme to maximise progress.
- The recruitment and selection procedure is inadequate with too many pupils being placed on the programme who do not fulfil the Key Stage 3 requirements.
- Pupils have good support from their tutors and the work placement / pastoral tutor.
- The use of independent learning plans is under-developed with insufficient specific target setting.
- Pupils are well informed about opportunities for progression with many wanting to continue with sport qualifications.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- Collaboration between most partners is good with effective and reliable work placement arrangements.
- Members of staff are deployed effectively and are appropriately qualified.
- The leadership of the programme is well focussed on the personal well-being and development of the pupils and is beginning to ensure that pupil progress is monitored effectively to raise standards.
- The partnership has satisfactory arrangements for self-evaluation and there is a willingness to learn from initial experiences of the programme.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- closer liaison with schools to ensure more effective and efficient recruitment
- monitoring of progress and more effective target setting
- pupils' independent learning

- development of teaching and learning to challenge all ability levels.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your Young Apprenticeships programme.

As explained in my previous letter, a copy of this feedback will be sent to LSC national office and will be published on the Ofsted web-site.

Yours sincerely

John Honeybourne
Additional Inspector