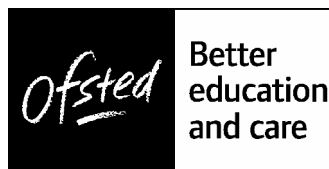


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13 February 2007

Mr J Cockburn
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Cockburn

Ofsted survey inspection programme - Evaluation of the impact of extended services on children and young people and their families 2006/07

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 16 January 2007 to evaluate the impact of your extended services. I appreciate you were a little surprised to be in our survey because you had not considered your school "extended" in any formal sense. I hope you can see that my comments bear your position in mind.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of documentation.

Compared with extended schools nationally, the overall effectiveness of the services in your school was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

The impact of extended provision on achievement and standards is satisfactory.

- Academic standards and pupils' progress are both strengths of the college, but these cannot confidently be attributed to extended provision. The college is just beginning to build up its services and has had neither the scope nor need for analysing data on pupils' academic success to see where it might reflect involvement in extended services.
- However, personal development has benefited: there are signs of improved motivation, better learning skills and higher attendance amongst some pupils because of extended provision. Extra-curricular sport and music are particularly well developed and enthusiasm here spreads to school life in general, including attitudes to learning. Pupils at risk of exclusion gain a great deal from the use of the Farne Centre (an off-site support centre) which supports them intensively and has a remarkable success rate in reducing exclusions.

Quality of provision

This is satisfactory overall, with some strengths and some areas yet to be developed.

- The menu of activities is very strong in some respects, particularly extra-curricular activities and visits and there is a well-established homework club. In addition, the City Learning Centre adjacent to the school contributes valuable extra study facilities as well as timetabled teaching opportunities.
- Childcare has not been strongly promoted, though the school has a crèche on site.
- There is good parenting support in terms of guidance about transition arrangements. A suitable focus is given to supporting the most vulnerable families.
- Referral to specialist support agencies is satisfactory. The school's role is essentially one of signposting parents to off-site providers such as educational psychologists, speech therapists and a Family Support Worker.
- Wider community use is already good. There is a very full adult education programme on site, operating during the day and in the evening, with a focus on ICT, vocational courses and the arts.

Leadership and management of extended services

Leadership and management of existing provision are effective. Their impact on pupils at this stage is satisfactory.

- The school has put many additional activities and services in place, but makes no claim to have been working towards meeting the "core offer."

- Planning for meeting the offer in the future is good: auditing of current provision has been carried out, key areas to develop identified and responsibility for leading the expansion of services assigned.
- The college has shown the imaginative thinking and collaborative working that underpin successful extended services. The Farne Centre, set up in partnership with another local school, illustrates these qualities well.
- The college has not needed specific management structures for running extended services, nor assessment systems for evaluating their impact.

Inclusion

The provision for inclusion is satisfactory.

- The school's major services are open to all. It has not sought to provide services explicitly for the most vulnerable pupils or parents, except in case of transition support and the Farne Centre.

Areas for improvement

Areas for improvement, which the school's plans acknowledge, include the need to:

- expand the services offering parenting support
- access to a greater range of specialist support services

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop extended services.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Robert Drew
Additional Inspector