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26 March 2007

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Dear Mr Stewart

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Impact of extended services on children and young people and their families

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 22 and 23 February 2007 to look at the impact of extended services on children and young people and their families.

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, partners, young people and Governors and scrutiny of relevant documentation.

The overall effectiveness of the extended provision was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are good.

- There are good examples of students benefiting socially and academically through their involvement in extended school activities. Attitudes among students are good.
- The college has been successful in promoting learning activities, homework clubs and workshops to help students improve their grades. These are beginning to have a positive influence on attainment but

there is more to do to target these effectively. The assessment for learning (AFL) scheme is assisting in this respect.

- Support for some of the most vulnerable students is very good and the school and its partners give close attention to the detailed needs of individual young people.
- The small group of looked after children (LAC) are well-cared for through a good working relationship between foster parents and school. Collectively, these efforts have had a positive impact on attendance, academic performance and students' general outlook.
- Work to support parents and families is effective. Tutors readily contact parents and act quickly to deal with issues as they arise.
- The community is benefiting from the responsive leisure and sports programme provided by the District Council.

Quality of provision

The quality of extended provision is satisfactory.

- The community college has traditionally provided aspects of the core offer, for example the onsite childcare and the varied menu of activities for young people. It provides an important community resource for local clubs and for social events and the privately provided nursery has extended its remit to provide after school activities. The community library also acts as a study support base for children.
- The leisure and sports centre provides excellent facilities and more recently a fitness suite, dance studio and crèche. A swimming pool is also available. The facility is being increasingly used by the community and some 80% of its users are very local.
- Referral systems work well and links with the Hatford students' support centre (PRU), the Primary Care Trust, the church, Connexions and the youth service are good.
- Work with parent and family learning is limited, but the online learning platform and electronic communication are beginning to engage parents well and provide them with ready access to the school. This has much potential.
- A partnership arrangement for adult education is in place with Huntingdonshire Regional College but provision has been diminishing over recent years. Youth work activities are inadequate. In terms of developing extended service options this backdrop is disappointing.

Leadership and management of extended services

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- Governors and managers are responsive to the needs of local community groups and organisations particularly at a time of budget constraints on community provision.

- Management of the inter agency work to support vulnerable young people is good and based upon sound local intelligence and knowledge about individual family needs.
- There is insufficient critical analysis of the impact of extended services and of the approaches taken to user and community consultation.
- The implications of meeting financial income targets and of insurance frustrate joint planning between the leisure/sports centre and the community college. In terms of cost effectiveness, it is difficult to reconcile the on-site crèche being limited only to leisure/sports centre users.
- Longer term planning is not taking sufficient account of management imperatives in terms of resources, sustainability and emerging Children's Services structures.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- Vulnerable young people, including those looked after, are well supported; communication between the college and parents and foster parents is effective.
- Building adaptations ensure that students with mobility difficulties have access to the full range of facilities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- the need for more effective monitoring of the impact of extended services to aid evaluation and inform future planning
- clarifying planning arrangements with the embryonic local Children's Services cluster arrangements
- reviewing consultation arrangements with users and the community.

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

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

Tony Gallagher
Her Majesty's Inspector