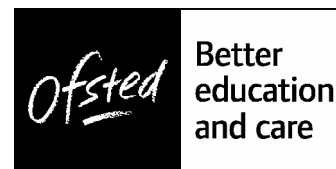


Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



14 March 2007

Mr Craig Pamphilon
Headteacher
Uckfield Community Technology College
Downsview Crescent
Uckfield
East Sussex
TN22 3DJ

Dear Mr Pamphilon

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 27 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 and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of activities.

The overall effectiveness of the extended provision was judged to be good with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are high and all groups of pupils make good progress. This is confirmed by new data and the last inspection report in 2005.

- Students enjoy their time at the college and attendance is good. Many take advantage of the early opening hours and breakfast club to arrive in time for lessons. Many students are also participating in additional activities during school hours and before and after college.

- Personal development and well being are very good. A significantly high proportion of students (70%) stay on at the college post 16 gaining good qualifications, additional training and opportunities to start apprenticeships. The number of students not engaged in education, employment or training (NEET) is falling.
- Students know how to stay healthy and the choices in the café at lunch and break times are nutritious and tasty. They make good choices about their diet and are conscious of the need to stay fit through regular exercise. In addition to the regular PE lessons many students participate in additional sports activities at break times and after college.
- The majority of the students feel safe and well cared for. There are many opportunities for counselling and discussions about their personal concerns with a range of different agencies and professionals which operate within the college. Many younger vulnerable students attend lunch time clubs with their friends so that they feel more secure in new surroundings.
- Many students take the opportunity to stay for study support after college enabling them to complete homework faster. Students spoke of the better access to information and the good support they get from the library facilities.
- Parents too are given appropriate support through parenting classes and adult tuition in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

Quality of provision

The quality of provision is outstanding.

- The college offers the full core provision and this is fully integrated into the already rich and interesting curriculum. It meets the needs of almost all users and as a result students are thriving at this college. The whole college site is a vibrant and lively place from 8am in the morning until 10pm at night when adult tuition finishes.
- The range and quality of the extended provision is very good and offers students a vast choice of opportunities to participate in activities beyond the usual school curriculum. These activities range from study support, counselling, sport, youth clubs, holiday clubs, visits, charity work and many more. Taster days are offered to test their interest and then these activities are offered to the wider community through the college's excellent links with its local primary schools and youth service in the area.
- Expectations of students to actively participate in these are very high. The provision fully meets the needs of the students and their parents because their views have been actively sought and dealt with. An example of this was the creation of the successful basket ball team by some sixth formers so that they could have sport activity as part of

their curriculum. Another was the development of a technology workshop for 'young engineers' to build kit cars in response to a request by some students.

- Where students have special needs these are also supported very well through the counselling service or the medical expertise that is always on site while students are at the college. There are good and easy referral systems in place because many agencies have strong links with the college. The police, social services and youth workers are regularly in college and have become an integral part of the staffing structure.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good.

- Leadership and management promote and deliver a very good range of services. Information for students and their parents is very good, they know what services and activities are available and readily make good use of these.
- There are very good inter-agency links with the college; social services, the police and medical staff work regularly in the college. The college also has good links with the youth services and youth justice board. The local authority attends Local Partnerships for Children (LPC) meetings which it minutes and assists with the monitoring of the services.
- The excellent provision at the college is largely based on need and is in response to suggestions from the students and the local community. There has been extensive canvassing of local opinions and the agenda is tailored to meet these needs.
- There is very good inclusion of all students and their families and both students and their parents spoke about the range and quality of what was offered.
- There is some early monitoring of the provision and the outcomes for students. The college has established good tracking data about students and it uses this information to build individual programme to meet their needs. The leadership of the extended provision is good. It knows its own strengths and weaknesses and has identified these through a self evaluation of the service so far. This is a good start to self evaluation.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- All students and their families have access to the range of high quality services offered by the college.

- Close attention has been given to whether the services will have an impact on improving achievement, attendance and personal development and well being. As the last report said 'the college works hard to raise the achievement of different groups of pupils, for example those with particular gifts or talents'.
- Most students participate in one or more activities which are closely integrated. The most able, gifted and talented students attended a summer school last year.
- Providers of outside services find the college approachable and inclusive.
- Many families feel more closely involved with the college and appreciate that their children are well supported during their time there.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

The college has identified within its own self evaluation where there are improvements to be made. This includes the sharpening of monitoring and evaluation to ascertain the impact of the extended services on individuals, families or groups of students. It recognises that it needs to develop its systems so that staff understand which services have the scope for greatest impact and where there can be measurable differences to the outcomes for students.

I congratulate you on your success and hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop extended services in the college.

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

Linda Kelsey
Her Majesty's Inspector