

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



18 June 2007

Mr Sharrat  
Headteacher  
Redruth School  
Tolgus Vean  
Redruth  
Cornwall  
TR15 1TA

Dear Mr Sharratt

Ofsted survey inspection programme – a comparison of the effectiveness of post 16 providers

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 13 and 14 June to look at work in level 3 provision.

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 analysis of performance data.

The overall effectiveness of level 3 provision at post 16 was judged to be good.

#### Achievement and standards

- Standards as shown by advanced level results in 2006 were broadly average. Achievement in 2006 was also satisfactory although the average points score per student was below average, mainly because they were not entered for as many subjects as most students nationally.
- Achievement and standards are now generally good. In the current level 3 provision, standards remain broadly average although they are on an upward trend. Students' achievement is now good as they are beginning to achieve challenging targets on a wider range of programmes. In addition the school is enabling a significant minority to achieve at least

satisfactorily, despite their challenging personal circumstances which are outside the school's control.

- Although no groups of students underachieve, there is still some variation between subjects and between different aspects of level 3 provision.

#### Quality of teaching and learning in level 3 provision, including academic guidance

- Teaching and learning, including academic guidance are good. Strengths lie in teachers' good subject knowledge, provision of a range of activities and excellent relationships between students and teachers. Teachers recognise the need to develop students' independent learning skills as a crucial aspect of their work with Year 12 groups.
- Monitoring and tracking of students' progress are excellent with teachers and tutors, well supported middle and senior leaders, intervening to tackle underachievement. Prior attainment is used effectively to help plan activities matched to students' needs.
- Students are clear about how well they are doing and how they can improve their work through regular feedback and reviews from subject teachers and tutors. This occurs both formally through the school's reporting system and informally as needs arise with individual students.
- Students are aware of their progress against their targets, which effectively motivates them.

#### Quality of curriculum

- The quality of the level 3 provision is good. The range and type of subjects offered has increased over the last three years and includes an increasing proportion of vocational courses. This is in part as a result of expanding the collaborative activities of the existing consortium arrangements.
- Guidance for course selection is generally accurate although more students than might be expected left programmes this year.
- Teachers take into account the abilities and aptitudes of their groups when planning programmes of study and developing schemes of work in their subjects.

#### Leadership and management of level 3 provision

- Leadership and management are good and the school is beginning to benefit from a stable hand at the sixth form helm following an extended period of uncertainty.
- Leadership and management are bringing about improvements in the level 3 curriculum and are raising standards. There is a clear sense of purpose and high expectation of both students and teachers about how the level 3 provision and other aspects of the sixth form can be improved.

- Self evaluation of level 3 provision is excellent as it is thorough, accurate and uses a range information to provide a clear and often challenging picture of strengths and weaknesses, particularly regarding achievement and standards. Leadership at all levels contributes effectively to this self evaluation.
- Improvement planning is well founded on the self evaluation outcomes and identifies appropriate priorities. However, these lack sharpness and do not always state clearly what outcomes are intended for students as a result of planned actions.
- Targets set for individual students are generally challenging as the school seeks to exceed those grades simply predicted by prior attainment at GCSE.
- Collaborative arrangements are improving the quality of the curriculum and providing opportunities for teachers to share and develop good practice. The school is effectively building on valuable experience gained through existing partnerships and sees further collaboration as an important way of improving provision across the whole of the local area. Collaborative arrangements do not always operate smoothly in some subject areas.
- Despite past difficulties in the leadership and management, improvement has occurred and the school is in a strong position to further improve its level 3 provision and achievement.

### Inclusion

- Provision for inclusion at level 3 is good. The curriculum is becoming more accessible to a wider range of students. Support and guidance are good, enabling many students to succeed despite difficult personal circumstances.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- seek ways in which students can improve their independent learning skills, to enable them to tackle the requirements of advanced level courses more effectively
- clarify the targets and required outcomes for improvement and link these more closely to planned actions
- ensure achievement and standards are more consistent across all level 3 subjects and increase the number of subjects where achievement is significantly higher than national norms.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop level 3 provision 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Tom Winskill  
Her Majesty's Inspector