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Mr P Lambert  
Headteacher  
Colton Hills Community School  
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Dear Mr Lambert

Ofsted survey inspection programme – 14-19 reforms

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and learners during my visit on 01 October 2008 as part of our survey on 14-19 developments in the local area.

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.

Colton Hills Community School has demonstrated strong commitment to working productively with its partners, and is making a good contribution to the development of the Diploma across the consortium. Links between the consortium members are strong and have been used well to offer a much wider curriculum to students than would otherwise be possible. The school has planned well for the introduction of the Diplomas, including making alterations to ensure coverage of functional skills and making adaptations to premises to accommodate teaching of the Society, Health and Development Diploma.

Teaching on the different Diplomas is providing students with a range of relevant and highly motivating experiences, making very effective use of good links with employers. For example, one student took great pride in the work he produced after a visit to a local cinema as part of the Creative and Media Diploma. The school has taken full advantage of local training and development opportunities for teachers on functional skills. In the teaching of functional skills observed, there was a good sense of students moving from familiar to less familiar material; however, there was insufficient challenge for more able students in developing functional skills. The school has made sensible alterations to ensure the requirements for information and communication technology (ICT) are covered, but there have as yet been few opportunities for all teachers involved in delivering functional skills to plan together and share schemes of work.

The school has made effective use of the rigorous information, advice and guidance process developed by the consortium for students applying for Diplomas. Attainment data was used effectively to place students on courses at the appropriate level. A high priority was given to involving parents in the guidance process for students, enabling them to understand the options available and support the placements.

If there are any points or aspects of the visit you wish to discuss, please get in touch. As we will be evaluating the survey, you may be contacted in the future to find out your views. I hope you will contribute to this evaluation. Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Clive Moss  
Her Majesty's Inspector