

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



19 December 2008

Mr R Pope
Principal
Kingsbridge Community College
Balkwill Road, Kingsbridge
Devon
TQ7 1PL

Dear Mr Pope

Ofsted survey: good practice in capturing the user voice

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 4 December 2008 to look at work on capturing the user voice.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included meetings with staff and students, observations and scrutiny of documentation.

Features of good practice observed

- The student voice permeates the work of the college. It is underpinned by strong leadership and driven at all levels by the belief that students should be listened to.
- This approach is supported by many opportunities for students to develop the skills and confidence to make a strong contribution from Year 7 onwards, through well-embedded strategies within the curriculum and pastoral programmes, which are supported by a wide range of creative activities.
- Students are articulate, confident, independent and share a sense of responsibility. They are confident that their voice will be sought and listened to.
- Their voice makes considerable impact on provision and outcomes within the school, for example homework policy, the sixth form curriculum and study facilities, global activities and charity work.
- A rich and diverse range of strategies is used to involve and engage young people at all levels. These are well embedded in the life and work of the college.
- One to one personal tutoring provides a holistic picture of all students, bringing together academic progress and personal development. Good monitoring systems ensure that the needs and views of students then feed into decision-making processes.

- Very good use is made of a number of tools to seek the views of students. These include questionnaires on wellbeing and academic progress as well as 'barometer groups' for subjects and year groups where staff carry out programmed interviews with samples of students.
- Students from all year groups are provided with many opportunities for representation through the college and sixth form councils as well as through the sports and dance councils, global and health groups and the posts of the sports ambassadors.
- New and developing vehicles for student voice include the student blog 'The Listener', the Year 7 magazine and the planned introduction of the college magazine and radio station. All these activities are student-led.
- The college's inclusive ethos ensures a quick response to meet the needs and hear the voice of vulnerable groups. These include the student support centre providing responsive one to one support for identified students, targeted outdoor activity programmes and the Leading Edge project for Year 9 boys who are at risk of underachievement.
- Aspirations and expectations are very high and practice is reviewed continually to identify areas for further improvement.

Area for development

- Consider how the governing body can engage more directly and systematically with students.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop the user voice in the centre.

As I explained previously, 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

Mary Ryan
Her Majesty's Inspector