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Dr J Overbury  
Principal  
Christ The King Sixth Form College  
Belmont Grove  
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SE13 5GE

Dear Dr Overbury

Ofsted survey: good practice in capturing the user voice

Thank you for your college's hospitality and co-operation during my visit on Thursday 18 December 2008 to look at work on capturing the user voice. I am particularly grateful to the managers and teaching staff for all their hard work in preparing the programme and background documentation and for giving up their time during the visit. Please pass on my thanks to the students who gave up their time to talk to me.

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: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of learners' work and observation of lessons.

Features of good practice observed

- The college has successfully fostered a culture of trust, respect and shared values which enable learners to give freely of their views in a safe and open environment.
- The management and leadership of the learner voice are strong. Managers at all levels give a high priority to the views of students in maintaining and building on the college's outstanding provision.
- A wide range of initiatives engage and seek students' views both formally and informally. These include student ambassadors, student academic mentoring roles and the college's 'Room 4U' service which acts as a confidential listening ear. In addition there is a rapidly developing student intranet and increasingly student-owned and led e-magazine.

- A very effective peer mentoring programme enables students to link with local secondary, and more recently primary, schools to help encourage and raise the aspirations of younger pupils. The scheme involves over 40 students who are trained by the college to mentor pupils, often in the schools they attended themselves.
- The student council is exceptionally well run. The council involves approximately 70 course representatives and seven executive members who meet regularly with the senior management team. Each member of the student executive has a distinct role and responsibility, for example, a student intranet officer, publicity officer and charity events officer. All the upper and lower sixth form council representatives' views are sought on key college aspects such as resources, the quality of provision and policy development.
- Good involvement of students through the college's termly community days. The days involve the whole college community celebrating diversity and wider achievements and incorporate many student-designed and organised events. In addition, regularly held assemblies throughout the year are often used by students as a vehicle to share ideas amongst their peers.
- There is an increasing focus on gauging the feedback of learners in different subject areas and using it to review and enhance provision. For example, in psychology and social care feedback from students led to changes in course unit coverage which subsequently improved exam results for learners.
- The recently established quality enhancement team meets with student forums within subjects to gain views on, for example, teaching and assessment. This information is used effectively by managers to support quality improvement.

#### Areas for development

- Continue to develop and refine the approaches to capturing the views of different groups of learners, including the more vulnerable groups.
- Further enhance and define the links between the array of learner voice strategies and the degree of impact these have on learners' experiences and outcomes.

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

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins  
Her Majesty's Inspector