

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



19 January 2009

Ms J McArthur
Principal
Chesterfield College
Infirmary Road
Chesterfield
S41 7NG

Dear Ms McArthur

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 the 7 January 2009 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 a careful reading of all the documents supplied to me in advance of my visit, an earlier self assessment report (SAR), and the most recent inspection report, interviews with key staff and learners and additional documents provided on site.

Features of good practice observed

- A genuine culture of inclusivity within which the views of learners of all abilities and backgrounds are valued.
- The learners' voice is an integral and effective part of the College's quality improvement arrangements.
- Productive and well-considered data produced through learner surveys and other feedback leading to a range of improvements for learners including improvements to induction, widening of access to IT resources, more comprehensive careers guidance and improved health and welfare facilities.
- Particularly good use of opportunities to enhance the curriculum through enrichment activities in which learners are practically involved in the re-design of learning resources.
- Learner involvement activities which are particularly productive in increasing learners' social confidence and in the development of applicable, vocationally-related skills.

- Good involvement of parents/carers ensuring that learners work in a safe, supportive environment.
- Productive use of employer feedback to ensure that learners' work-related experiences are responsive to local needs.
- Very well coordinated academic and pastoral support structure that has a clear focus on providing feedback that supports learner achievement and retention.
- Wide variety of effective strategies, including comprehensive learner surveys, well-established student ambassador programme, annual student conference, and representation on the academic council and the governing body to capture the voice of all learners.

Areas for development

- Continue to develop ways to capture the learners' voice using a variety of electronic media.
- Enhance the sharing of successful approaches to capturing the learners' voice across all five directorates.

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

Clive Blanchette
Additional Inspector