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Mr G Williams,
Principal
West Kirby Residential school,
Meols Drive,
West Kirby,
Wirral,
Merseyside, CH48 5DH

Dear Mr Williams,

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Moving through the system

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Wednesday 8 October to look at work on developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your school. We also looked at how well arrangements are made to support pupils during their transition into secondary school.

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: scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of five lessons and interviews with staff and pupils.

Overall, your work in developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your school is outstanding. Pupils, despite their difficulties, develop self-confidence by their active involvement in lessons and other activities. They often take responsibility for their own learning and work constructively with others. They learn well how to manage their difficulties and succeed in many different situations.

Features of effective practice:

- The quality of teaching observed was outstanding. Teachers' planning is thorough, evaluative and draws on a good range of teaching strategies and resources. As well as meeting the needs of a wide range of pupils, lesson objectives are clear and are shared with pupils. Assessment is used effectively to inform future planning. Lessons observed involved some paired work and pupils collaborated very well and shared information freely despite their communication difficulties. Good quality questioning by both teaching and support staff enables pupils to develop their understanding and further learning.
- Pupils meet the teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and have very positive attitudes to learning. Teaching and learning are regularly reviewed by the senior leadership team using a variety of strategies including weekly evaluation of teaching forecasts. Feedback is then provided for teachers. The creative use of information and



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communication technology (ICT) supports teaching and learning very well. Teachers use interactive whiteboards effectively.

- The broad and varied curriculum is enriched well by the addition of many and varied trips and visits from writers and poets. This effectively brings learning to life to ensure relevance for all pupils. Development of economic well-being for pupils is embedded throughout the curriculum. For example, pupils learn about financial capability in mini-enterprise activities to raise funds by growing vegetables and selling them for a small profit to staff. Pupils then decide themselves how to spend the profits; reinforcing teamwork and decision-making skills. Sixth form students also develop responsibility and teamwork by budgeting, shopping and cooking their own lunch each day.
- The school leadership is innovative and creative with a strong commitment to inclusion within the school. The head and the senior leadership team effectively implement well-planned strategies. The close working relationship between the care and education team ensures pupils' well-being is continuously supported.
- Processes for transfer and transition from Key Stage 4 are excellent. They ensure staff, parents and pupils understand and are involved in the policy and procedures relating to transition. Liaison with outside agencies is very effective. Processes for supporting pupils with learning needs, disabilities and those who are vulnerable are very good. The well-planned transition arrangements for pupils support them in preparing for further education or the world of work and continue after they leave to ensure these vulnerable young people's future success.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, include:

- At present, the system for evaluating the pupils' performance within a national framework is underdeveloped.
- At present, the systems for collecting information on pupils' previous attainment from local authority sources are underdeveloped.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop economic well-being in the school.

As I explained, 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,

Marian Thomas
Additional Inspector

