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14 November 2008

Mr Graham Stafford
Headteacher
The Eston Centre
Middlesbrough
TS6 9AD

Dear Mr Stafford,

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 centre and careers education.

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:

- an introductory meeting with you to provide a contextual overview of the quality and effectiveness of the subject and views of the impact of links with other schools and agencies
- a discussion with members of staff with responsibility for enterprise education
- a discussion with the member of staff with responsibility for careers education together with the Connexions advisor
- observation of lessons
- meetings with staff responsible for the development of the broader aspects of business education and/or financial capability
- a separate discussion with a group of pupils
- review of subject documentation
- a visit to the Greystones vocational education centre

Overall, your work in developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your centre is good. Most pupils develop a good level of self-confidence and strong team-working skills, which is demonstrated by the initiative and involvement they demonstrate in the classroom and other activities. Older pupils make good progress in their financial literacy and in their understanding of their career options. Through their work experience and other contact with employers, older pupils also develop a good appreciation of the skills and attributes necessary for success in the workplace.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Features of effective practice:

- Pupils make good progress in the development of personal, social and vocational skills, which builds confidence, maturity and responsibility.
- There is good emphasis on teaching skills which prepares pupils for life and work. This includes listening to and acting upon instructions, punctuality, personal appearance and organisational skills. This improves pupils' employment and life chances.
- The well-planned curriculum takes good account of pupils' economic well-being. The centre has a dynamic and creative approach in developing opportunities to support learning. Pupils are involved in real-work projects around the centre such as catering and decorating. They gain valuable experience and develop values such as respect for others and taking pride from their achievements and rewards.
- The strong leadership has developed an effective strategy in the development of economic well-being and careers education. Staff are deployed well and have relevant training and performance targets.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, include:

- Arrangements for transfer of records of prior attainment and behaviour remain fragmented. The centre does request information but this is not always provided. In a few instances, staff had to visit pupils' previous schools to collect records in person.

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

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

Dr Dan Grant
Additional inspector

