

07 January 2009

Mr T Purcell  
Headteacher  
Rivington and Blackrod High School  
Rivington Lane  
Horwich  
Bolton  
BL6 7RU

Dear Mr Purcell

Ofsted survey inspection programme – 14-19 reforms

I write following my visit to your school on 10 December 2008. Please pass on my thanks to David Waugh for accommodating my visit in your absence and for his hospitality and cooperation. Please also thank the staff and students who were involved in the visit as part of our survey on 14-19 developments in the local area.

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.

Rivington and Blackrod High School has appropriately developed its curriculum to better meet the needs and interests of the young people in the local area. The range of courses offered is extensive and includes access to Diploma lines of learning.

The school has embraced the 14-19 reforms and demonstrates a strong commitment to local partnership working. The school plays a leading role on the Diploma development and implementation groups and has contributed significantly to the design of a quality assurance framework.

Good initial advice and guidance are provided to students through a number of informative publications and by a series of events that enable students to experience different courses and to discuss option choices. The use of a common application form is well understood by all parties.

The school has made a significant investment in resources to deliver vocational training at the 'POWERWAVE' centres including the use of vocationally qualified staff to deliver the construction and the built environment Diploma.

Links with a local construction employer are especially good and significantly enhance the curriculum and experience of students on the construction and the built environment Diploma.

The pedagogical skills of teaching staff delivering the construction and the built environment Diploma require further development to ensure curriculum planning and teaching meet course requirements and enable students to be fully engaged and to make good progress in all lessons.

If there are any points or aspects of the visit you wish to discuss, please get in touch. As we will be evaluating the survey, you may be contacted in the future to find out your views. I hope you will contribute to this evaluation. Thank you once again.

Yours sincerely

Paul Joyce  
Her Majesty's Inspector