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The Headteacher
Richard Challoner School
Manor Drive North
New Maldon
KT3 5PE

Dear Mr Cahill,

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 3rd and 4th December 2008 to look at work on developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your school and careers education. 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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: scrutiny of a variety of relevant documentation, observation of lessons, as well as interviews with staff and students.

Your work in developing the future economic well-being of students in your school is good. However there are outstanding examples of good practise which enhance the quality of this provision.

Students overwhelmingly enjoy their time at the school, feel supported by the staff and appreciate the extensive range of extra curricular opportunities available to them.

Features of effective practice:

- The curriculum meets the needs of the students in the school. Alongside traditional academic subjects, a range of vocational and college link courses are offered at both key stages 4 and 5. These include regular visits of a mobile construction classroom offering accredited courses to years 10 and 12 and an opportunity to work on a media project at Hampton Court with a professional media and production company.
- The school makes good use of outside agencies and speakers to enhance the economic awareness, as well the broader curriculum offered to its students. Young Enterprise is offered to key stage 4 and 5 students and is a popular extra curricular activity.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

- In years 7 – 10 there are a range of cross-curricular and themed events which give students the opportunity to learn new skills and develop their economic and financial understanding.
- The transition between primary and secondary school is well managed. There is close liaison between the school and its Catholic feeder primaries. There are two induction days which enable new students to gain a good understanding of the schools expectations and procedures. Those requiring more support are provided with the assistance they require to ensure that their transition to secondary school is successful. Some departments are involved in the teaching or sharing of good practice with a number of the feeder primaries. Year 7 students reported that they had no problem settling into the school and felt that the induction days and other links had helped them integrate quickly.
- Careers education is integrated into the curriculum in all year groups and delivered through PSE lessons. There is a well structured careers programme complemented by interviews with a Connexions adviser, who provides independent advice and guidance to key stage 4 students. Students in key stage 3 are made aware of all the opportunities open to them, and for those considering college link courses a series of taster sessions and extra guidance is organised. All students who completed year 11 last year entered education, employment or training.
- There is well structured and detailed preparation for the two weeks work experience undertaken at the beginning of year 11, after which students are given the opportunity to review and learn from their shared experiences. This successfully enhances their understanding of the working environment and helps refine career choices.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, include:

- The lack of monitoring of the impact of EWB and careers provision on individual students has resulted in lost opportunities to ensure consistency of delivery across all year groups and key stages.
- The lack of professional development in careers education for all tutors and mentors has resulted in an incomplete understanding of the increasing range of options and progression pathways available to students both within the school and at other institutions and providers.
- While the provision of advice and guidance for 6th form students applying for Higher Education is extensive and well structured, for those considering alternatives there is limited formal careers guidance available.



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

Derek Wiles
Inspector

