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Mrs D Richards
Arbour Vale School
Farnham Road
Farnham Royal
Slough
Berkshire
SL2 3AE

Dear Mrs Richards

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 23 January 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 across phases.

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:

- discussions with yourself and a number of teaching and support staff
- observations of parts of teaching sessions
- discussions with the student council
- discussions with a number of post-16 pupils
- visit to the post 16-unit and pupil run café
- meeting with external partners including Connexions and the Education Business Partnership
- review of documentation, including policy and planning documents, curriculum documentation and pupils' files.

Overall, your work in developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your school is good with some outstanding features. Most pupils develop a good level of self-confidence and team working skills, which is demonstrated by the involvement they show in the classroom and other activities including the student council. Older pupils make good progress in their independent living skills and community awareness. Through their work-related activities and other contact with employers and the wider community, they develop a good appreciation of the skills and attributes necessary for adult life.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Features of effective practice:

- Pupils demonstrate a high level of confidence and self-awareness, they communicate effectively with visitors to the school and talk effusively about the way they are encouraged to participate in the life of the school. Pupils are genuinely listened to and contribute to the programme within the school.
- Pupils have good opportunities to understand the world of work with good support from local employers, the Education Business Partnership and other agencies. Pupils are able to participate in work experience and work-related activities.
- Pupils make good progress in meeting their targets, especially in the personal, social, health and economic well-being (PSHE) curriculum and work-related learning. PSHE is reinforced and embedded across the whole of the curriculum. A range of enrichment and enterprise activities includes making cards and calendars, running a café and other activities arranged and led by pupils.
- The curriculum linked to the school's sports college status enhances pupils' development of self-confidence. Pupils work well with others in developing sport and physical skills.
- Transition between phases is well managed. The layout of the school creates clear transition points. Despite the age range of pupils in the school from two to 19, there are clear differences between the phases. Specialist provision at the local further education college has been withdrawn and this limits the range of opportunities for pupils post-16.
- Careers education is well structured and embedded within the curriculum, with regular input from Connexions, the Education Business Partnership and employers. Pupils have many opportunities for work tasters and shadowing including work experience.
- Leadership and management is strong with a focus and commitment by all staff to ensure each pupil achieves at the highest level. All timetables are individual and adapted to meet specific needs.
- Partnerships with other schools and agencies are good and effective but there are limited links with the co-located school.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, include:

- Improve links with the co-located school
- Key staff do not have qualifications in the information, advice and guidance area and are unaware of national guidelines.

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

Alun Maddocks
Additional inspector