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Dr. R Litawski
Principal
The Ferrers Specialist Arts College
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Dear Dr. Litawski

Ofsted survey inspection programme – 14-19 reforms

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 02 to 04 March 2009 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.

Overall, the contribution the school is making towards the implementation of the Creative and Media Diploma and functional skills by the consortium is good. I outline the main findings as bullet points below.

The main strengths are:

- very enthusiastic and committed students and teachers
- effective collaborative working between several local schools, building on well established protocols and practices within the consortium
- innovative curriculum design, highly responsive to students' individual needs, to enable them to undertake the Diploma in a single intensive year at age 16
- excellent involvement of local professional practitioners and employers to provide contextualised learning through 'live' briefs and individually tailored work placements for students
- excellent development of students' personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) through the nature of what is asked of them as collaborative and reflective practitioners
- very strong leadership of the development of the creative and media Diploma by senior staff at the school.

Areas for further development:

- improving the coherence and connections between the additional and specialist learning component (a national certificate in business studies) and the principal learning component of the Diploma course
- ensuring that the process of marking and internally moderating final unit marks is undertaken more promptly, and fed back to students in an explicit, consistent and clear way
- ensuring that students' acquisition and development of expressive skills across a range of disciplines enjoys primacy in the overall objectives of the course.

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

Alan Marsh
Her Majesty's Inspector