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Mr D Oliver
Headteacher
Holmes Chapel Comprehensive School
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Dear Mr Oliver

Ofsted 2008-09 survey inspection programme: good practice in promoting leadership

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 27 April 2009 to look at the work that you are doing to develop and sustain high quality leadership in your school and in one of your partner schools.

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: meetings with you, senior leaders, middle leaders, the Dean of Education at Edge Hill University, groups of students, newly qualified teachers, trainee teachers and governors; attendance at the Community and Partnership Steering Group meeting and launch of the Masters Degree Programme; a visit to the off-site intervention groups; observation of a Y12 BTEC Sports lesson; brief visits to several other lessons; and scrutiny of selected pieces of documentation.

In addition, evidence was also used from my visit on 28 April to one of your partner schools.

Features of good practice

- The school's work to develop the skills and effectiveness of leaders is outstanding. You have successfully created a common vision based upon high expectations; a relentless pursuit of excellence; and a belief that the key to school improvement is the development of leadership at all levels.
- The development of the leadership skills of the students is a strength of the school. Students are encouraged and empowered to share their skills

with others; act as positive role models for younger students; and contribute to many school decisions.

- There are clear pathways and many opportunities for all staff to develop their leadership skills. These are linked firmly with the systems for performance management and enhanced by the developing links with Edge Hill University.
- The school plays an important role in the development of leadership in other schools.
- The achievement and well-being of all pupils are firmly at the centre of all decisions made and actions taken.

Areas for development

- Implement the plans for the restructuring of the senior leadership team and continue to strengthen the links with the University.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your work in this area.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector