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Ms M Mellor
Principal
Liverpool Community College
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Dear Ms Mellor

Ofsted survey inspection programme – good practice in literacy

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 6 October 2009 to look at work in literacy.

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 two lesson observations; discussions with you and two members of your senior management team; discussions with the cross-college coordinator for literacy and two tutors; individual discussions with four learners and examination of some of your college documentation.

Features of good practice observed

- The college has successfully created foundation learning for adults and young people across the college. All courses for learners aged 16 to 18 from entry level to level 2 include teaching and learning in literacy. Courses in literacy form part of a wider programme of development for adults. Learners I spoke to find having clear long-term aims helps to motivate them to improve their literacy.
- The very high profile given to foundation learning, including literacy and English, is now well established throughout the college. The organisational structure promotes the importance of all learners' development of literacy skills very effectively.
- The college uses only specialist literacy teachers to teach literacy, including on vocational courses. In the lessons I observed, the teachers

were very skilled at explaining specific literacy skills, such as the use of capital letters, in different ways so that each learner could use the skill independently. Learners I spoke to said they were familiar with literacy conventions and parts of speech that had flummoxed them in the past.

- The college has maintained the funding to run adult learning, including literacy in community centres. This is significant in helping adult learners overcome barriers to attending courses.

Areas for development

- We discussed the need to ensure more learning materials and activities to develop learners' literacy skills are closely linked to the subject areas that make up learners' wider programme at the college and to learners' interests outside the college.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop literacy learning in the college.

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

Yours sincerely

Karen Adriaanse
Her Majesty's Inspector