

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



10 December 2009

Ms S Moore
Principal
Weymouth College
Cranford Avenue
Weymouth
Dorset
DT4 7LQ

Dear Ms Moore

Ofsted 2009-10 survey inspection programme: girls' and young women's achievement

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 19 November 2009, to examine the causes of girls' and young women's underachievement and long-term economic well-being and the good practice that effectively supports them.

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 included: discussions with staff; observation of parts of two lessons; discussions with two groups of young women; feedback from local employers; and relevant documentation provided by the college.

Overall, your work on promoting the achievement of young women, and in developing their future economic well-being is satisfactory. Young women on non-traditional courses are well integrated and work productively. They have a realistic view of their future economic opportunities.

Features of effective practice observed

- Vulnerable girls and young women progress well into higher level college courses and employment.
- Development of personal and social skills is good, such as self-confidence, work-related and employability skills. Vulnerable girls and young women have a realistic view of their future job and earning potential to support their economic well-being.

- In lessons observed, behaviour was good. Females on non-traditional courses are well integrated in their classes, work productively and engage effectively with the subject matter and the other students in the class.
- There are effective foundation learning programmes and vocational tasters to attract and retain vulnerable girls and young women; courses are often located in the community.
- Effective partnerships with schools are used to promote college both to primary and secondary school students to raise aspirations early and to motivate young people.
- A committed support team has recently strengthened its multi-agency working across the area to improve the sharing of information and resources to support vulnerable students.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving the attendance of girls and young women who have been identified by the college as persistent absentees, in particular in hairdressing and care courses
- improving the numbers of girls and young women on non-traditional courses, particularly construction and engineering
- developing college-wide strategies to tackle stereotypical attitudes and behaviour
- improving the routine college-wide analysis and evaluation of the success rates and retention of vulnerable girls and young women and the impact of the support on their achievement.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to promote achievement and develop the economic well-being of girls and young women.

As I explained, a copy of this letter will be sent to the 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

Linda Truscott
Her Majesty's Inspector