

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



10 November 2009

Mrs M Copeland
Headteacher
Belle Vue Girls School
Thorn Lane
Bingley Road
Bradford
BD9 6NA

Dear Mrs Copeland

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Raising aspirations and achievement: the power of partnership

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 14 October 2009, to look at your partnership with higher education.

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 senior leaders, middle managers and the Aimhigher coordinator. I also visited two lessons, spoke to students and looked at documents including school data and students' evaluations.

Features of good practice observed

- The school is highly committed to working with a wide range of partners to improve outcomes for students. Partnerships with local universities through schemes such as the 'Excellence Hub', the compact scheme and 'Reach for Excellence' have been successful in raising the aspirations of students with the potential to progress to higher education. This has been particularly important in providing progression for students who wish to study at university while living at home.
- Partnerships arising from the school's dual specialist status and the international schools award have made a significant contribution to improving the achievement and well-being of students. Students are offered opportunities which the school alone and parents could not provide. An excellent example is the partnership between the language

and science faculties at the school, the departments of life science and Chinese studies at the University of Bradford and a school in Shanghai. This partnership has been used very effectively to promote cultural and international understanding through teacher and student exchanges and develop students' linguistic and scientific skills through their interaction with undergraduates.

- The school has been proactive in developing and extending the curriculum by using the expertise and resources offered by local universities. For example, extra curricular courses in Arabic offered by the University of Leeds encouraged the school to provide options to study Arabic at GCSE, AS and A level. Master classes and practical sessions in chemistry and biology, offered as part of the compact scheme with the University of Bradford, have contributed to raising standards at AS and A Level.
- The Aimhigher and gifted and talented programmes in the school are coordinated well to provide a wide range of good quality experiences for students. Opportunities to take part in national competitions, residential summer schools and initiatives to sample careers in teaching and law present students with a broader view of the world and a chance to talk to positive and inspiring role models. In discussion, students said how much they value and enjoy these experiences and recognised the considerable improvements to their motivation, confidence and self-esteem.

Areas for development

- Further evaluate the impact of partnership provision on the curriculum and teaching and learning across the school.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop partnerships in support of school improvement.

As I explained previously, 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

Anne Wellham
Her Majesty's Inspector