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Mrs Betty Ellis-Martin
14-19 King Street Alternative Provision
New College
King Street
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TF1 1NY

Dear Mrs Ellis-Martin

Notice to improve: monitoring inspection of 14-19 King Street Alternative Provision

Thank you for the help which you and your staff gave when I inspected your school on 29 June 2011 and for the information which you provided during the inspection. Please also convey my thanks to the students I met, your staff, the vice-chair of your management committee and the representatives of the local authority for the help they provided.

As a result of the inspection on 22 November 2010, the school was asked to address the most important areas for improvement which are set out in the annex to this letter.

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time the school is making satisfactory progress in addressing the issues for improvement and in raising the pupils' achievement.

Satisfactory progress is being made in improving students' progress and achievement. Attainment is rising and improved monitoring systems indicate that GCSE and other examination outcomes will improve in 2011. Students are now being provided with more information about their targets. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the use of assessment and other data to set targets and to monitor progress against such targets. Though few lessons took place on the day of the inspection because of an off-site careers event, what was seen in classes indicates that work is being set at the right level. Evidence shows that learning is satisfactory but to improve it to a higher level, staff need to ensure that the students are given every possible opportunity to develop their literacy, computing and presentational skills. In the observed lesson on e-safety, for example, the students enjoyed the work and raised many interesting and relevant concerns. The requirement simply to list their ideas on sheets of paper, however, limited the scope they had to use relevant computer programmes to make good quality presentations that could be

displayed in classrooms and elsewhere. A prime opportunity to celebrate their work and ideas was missed.

Attendance remains stubbornly below average with a minority of students having particularly poor attendance records. Staff are working hard to secure improvements and there is evidence that the headline rate of attendance is improving at a satisfactory rate. Where the curriculum has been improved and is perceived by the students to be more relevant, attendance has clearly improved. For example, students on the New Directions programme, where they can access a wider and more relevant curriculum by attending mainstream schools, frequently have improved attendance rates, with some now attending at a level that is at least in line with the national average. Some other students respond well to the various strategies you use to encourage good habits, but much work still needs to be done.

The monitoring of teaching and learning has improved and this contributes well to the satisfactory improvements in progress. Many staff started at the school at the beginning of the present academic year and have not previously encountered the complexities of alternative education provision. Satisfactory progress has been made in ensuring that their roles and responsibilities are clear. Appropriate support has been offered by senior staff and the local authority. This is helping to ensure that all teachers fully understand how to monitor and evaluate learning and other outcomes of a diverse and frequently demanding and challenging cohort of students.

The service operates on two sites. The available accommodation is inadequate and severely limits curriculum innovation. Despite these limitations, satisfactory improvements have been made to the curriculum, especially in the provision of science and information and communication technology. Further improvements are planned but are largely dependent on better accommodation being provided.

Improvements in school self-evaluation are satisfactory. The statement of action provided by the local authority fulfils requirements. The local authority's action plan, plus the support they and the School Improvement Partner have offered, has been satisfactory. It has been especially helpful in terms of monitoring teaching and learning and developing staff roles and responsibilities. Although some inconsistencies remain, achievement, teaching and learning, attendance, curriculum provision and monitoring of staff and students have all improved. These developments indicate a satisfactory capacity to improve further.

I hope that you have found the inspection helpful in promoting improvement in your school. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Bill Stoneham
Additional Inspector

Annex

The areas for improvement identified during the inspection which took place in November 2010

- Increase students' learning, progress and achievement by:
 - Ensuring that teachers provide work that is pitched at the right level
 - Improving the consistency of assessment and target setting
 - Ensuring that students know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work
 - Matching the curriculum closely to the students' specific learning needs and interests.

- Improve attendance by supporting those students and their families with high absence rates.

- Increase the effectiveness of monitoring the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum by:
 - Creating clear roles for subject leaders in monitoring and improving attainment
 - Increasing the effectiveness of subject leaders through appropriate training and support.