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Mr Paul Hafren
Principal and Chief Executive
Warrington Collegiate
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Dear Mr Hafren

Ofsted 2011/12 best practice survey: supporting college students to progress and achieve

Thank you for your warm welcome and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 22-23 February to look at your work in supporting students to progress and achieve.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our publication about best practice in supporting college students. The publication will include case studies about individual providers. If your college is included as a case study, you will have an opportunity to comment prior to publication. Individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included scrutiny of documentation and meetings with senior managers, support staff and students.

Features of good practice observed

- Highly evaluative approach to the review and development of student support services in response to funding cuts, particularly in relation to the monitoring of students' academic progress.
- Very committed staff focus strongly on meeting individual students' needs and helping them to achieve their potential.
- Close liaison between personal tutors and pastoral staff ensures the close monitoring of students' academic and pastoral progress.
- Very effective strategies to improve retention and attendance including the appointment of two retention officers.

- Excellent use of data to monitor students' attendance. The college's highly effective reporting system promotes systematic and close monitoring of attendance at lessons. Attendance is good.
- Effective transition and pre-planning arrangements to ensure support for students is in place as soon as they arrive in college.
- Strong partnerships with external agencies to support students' health including their mental health, and well-being very well.
- The clear focus on providing value for money through ongoing reviews of tutorial provision and its impact on students' performance and enjoyment of college.

Areas for improvement

- The need to ensure greater consistency in the quality of personal tutoring.
- The need to ensure that all personal tutors set targets for students that are detailed and measurable.
- The need to streamline the electronic individual learning plans to ensure that they have a greater impact on students' success.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop your approaches to providing support for your students. As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Josephine Nowacki HMI
Her Majesty's Inspector