



21 March 2007

Ms Diane Roberts  
Principal  
Brockenhurst College  
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Brockenhurst  
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Dear Ms Roberts

Survey of good practice in Sector Subject Area 15: Business,  
Administration and Law

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation during my visit on 12-13 March. I am particularly grateful to managers and teaching staff for all their hard work in preparing the programme and background documentation and for giving up their time during the visit. I enjoyed meeting your students, please pass on my thanks to them for giving up their time to talk to me.

The visit provided much useful evidence for the good practice survey in business, administration and law. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions, but should we wish to cite specific aspects of practice we will contact the college first.

The evidence used to inform judgements included: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of learners' work and observation of lessons. Although the focus of the visit was on business, administration and law, it also included an observation of part of one session in professional studies and a discussion with the head of department.

I agreed to provide a summary of my observations of good practice seen in business, administration and law and to suggest some areas for development.

Good practice observed

- Pass rates and the proportion of students achieving higher grades in examinations are well above average in all subjects. Students make good, and often excellent, progress.
- Teaching is consistently good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers are passionate about their subjects and have excellent subject

knowledge. They are often able to draw on their own business and other experiences to add relevance to lessons. Very good use is made of modern technology to enhance teaching and learning in some lessons.

- Classroom relationships are very positive and students feel confident about asking questions and seeking clarification. Teachers deploy an appropriate range of teaching and learning strategies and often make effective use of current news items to make lessons lively and interesting. Students enjoy discussions and are keen to contribute their own ideas.
- Students receive high quality feedback on their written work and regular assessment keeps them well informed about the progress they are making in their studies. Students find their teachers accessible and helpful and valuable extra support is provided for those who are experiencing difficulties. Students taking BTEC and NVQ courses are particularly positive about the support they receive from their personal tutors.
- Courses are well resourced and students make good use of the departmental materials on the college intranet. Students taking level 2 business administration courses gain considerable practical experience from working in the departmental business centre and by supporting Year 11 students from schools taking courses at the college.
- Quality assurance arrangements are thorough and effective. Departments are well led and managed. There is a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses which is based on performance data, classroom observations and the views of students.
- Support for the professional development of staff is a particular strength. This includes whole college and departmental training sessions, external provision and peer observations of teaching. The college's teacher training courses have provided good support for part-time teachers with considerable business experience but without teaching qualifications.

Areas for development, which we discussed, included:

- sharing the outstanding practice that exists in teaching and assessment across subject areas
- providing more enrichment opportunities in economics and business studies for students to engage with employers, take part in competitions and meet leading practitioners
- extend the provision of data projectors in classrooms to enhance teaching and learning.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop business, administration and law courses in the college.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your LLSC and will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of the half-term following the inspection. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

David Butler  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools