

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



10 July 2007

Mrs Sue Ballard
Headteacher
North Bromsgrove High School
School Drive
Stratford Road
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 1BA

Dear Mrs Ballard

Ofsted survey inspection programme – a comparison of the effectiveness of post 16 providers

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 3 and 4 July 2007 to look at work in level 3 provision.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of level 3 provision was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Standards are satisfactory and improving. Progress made by students is good in view of their relatively low prior attainment on entry to level 3 study.

Quality of teaching and learning of level 3 provision

The quality of teaching and learning at level 3 is good. Teachers successfully promote independent learning in the sixth form. Lesson planning accommodates well students' different learning styles and prior attainment. The guidance and support provided is outstanding; it is much appreciated by

the students. Students are given an effective early introduction to the course work and study requirements at level 3.

The tracking and monitoring of individual student progress is good. Students show good awareness of their progress towards challenging and stretching targets and consider that their individual academic review motivates them to do as well as they can.

Quality of curriculum

The extent to which programmes and activities meet students' needs and interests is satisfactory. Planning is generally effective in taking into account the students' prior attainment and their option choices. The number of available courses at level 3 has grown in line with an increasing number of students opting to stay on at the school for sixth form study.

There are well-considered plans to extend the curriculum at level 3 both as a result of developing collaboration between the members of the 'Forward' consortium, and linked to the school's newly-won status as a media arts college.

Leadership and management of level 3 provision

Leadership and management are good. The school is successfully focused on raising standards.

Self-evaluation is very effective. Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, which successfully informs improvement planning. As a result there is good capacity to improve the quality of level 3 provision. The recently-appointed heads of faculty are developing into their roles well. They are working effectively to raise standards and achievement, and to spread good practice in teaching and learning. However, the analysis of data to drive overall improvement in the sixth form is not yet fully developed. The school recognises that the vocational curriculum in the sixth form is as yet insufficiently broad.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good. Recruitment to level 3 provision is inclusive, reflecting the range of students' prior attainment at GCSE. The school is aware of how individual students achieve. Teachers monitor and track individual students' progress well and take timely action to address under-achievement.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that school data is used more centrally to review overall achievement at level 3, and to inform improvement planning

- embedding further the setting and effective use of individualised learning targets
- implementing in full well-considered plans to extend the curriculum through developing collaborative arrangements between the members of the 'Forward' consortium.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop level 3 provision in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, 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

Russell Jordan HMI
Her Majesty's Inspector