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Mrs A Merrills
Headteacher
Sir Jonathan North Community College
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Dear Mrs Merrills

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: economics and business education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 8 and 9 February 2011 to look at the development of economics and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability for all students.

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 included: interviews with staff and students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of parts of 13 lessons plus other activities including a tutor period and an assembly.

Sir Jonathan North Community College does not offer formally assessed courses in economics and business. These judgements therefore refer to the development of all students' economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability. The overall effectiveness of this area of the whole-school curriculum is outstanding.

Achievement in economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability

Achievement in economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability is good.

- Students are very well prepared for the next stage in their lives and for the world of work. They leave this 11 to 16 school as confident and responsible young citizens who have the skills to successfully manage their future adult lives.

- Students are articulate, thoughtful and very focused on achieving well. They speak confidently about what they want to do in the future and what they need to do to achieve their goals.
- As a result of the well-planned whole-school provision, students are very well informed about the world of work, have good awareness of personal financial issues, such as the importance of budgeting and how taxation will impact on them, and have developed excellent enterprise-related skills. Their economic and business understanding is not as well developed.

Quality of teaching of economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability

The quality of teaching of economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability is good.

- Teachers of a wide range of subjects have a clear commitment to, and understanding of, how their subjects contribute to preparing students for the next stage of their lives and the world of work.
- The promotion of independent learning skills, good communication skills and the need to work effectively in teams is evident in all lessons observed.
- Teachers delivering the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) programme have a high level of confidence and expertise in this area and ensure that learning activities and resources provide plenty of opportunities for students to develop relevant enterprise, personal finance and work-related skills.

Quality of the curriculum in economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability

The quality of the curriculum in economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability is outstanding.

- The curriculum provides outstanding opportunities for all students to develop work-related learning, personal finance, enterprise and employability skills. Provision for economic and business understanding is not yet outstanding.
- Provision is exceptionally well coordinated across a variety of different aspects of the curriculum. This includes discrete citizenship and IAG lessons, assemblies and tutor group sessions, the exceptionally well organised Year 10 work-experience programme and a wide range of extra-curricular activities such as Young Enterprise and Dragons' Den-type projects. In addition, a cross-subject audit identifies coverage of key issues across a range of mainstream subjects such as design and technology, information and communication technology and science.
- The provision ensures that the most vulnerable and low ability students have well-designed, personalised programmes that enable them to develop important work-related, personal effectiveness and personal finance skills and to access appropriate progression routes.

- Specialist college subjects make a major contribution to the development of a range of enterprise and work-related skills.
- The school has an extensive range of partnership links which provides very good opportunities for all students to visit businesses and local employers and to welcome visitors from a wide range of professions and occupations. These links contribute exceptionally well to enhancing students' awareness of business and the world of work.
- There is an excellent focus on challenging work-related stereotypes in this all girls school, for example through the strong links with a local engineering firm and the National Space Centre.

Effectiveness of leadership and management of economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability

Leadership and management of economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability are outstanding.

- The whole-school provision for enterprise education is exceptionally well planned and coordinated and it is clear that staff work very well together to deliver this.
- Leaders in the school have a very clear vision about the importance of preparing students for the world of work. They are passionate about, and totally committed to, this vision.
- Learning outcomes are clearly identified and there is a shared understanding of what all students need to achieve and the skills they need to develop by the time they leave school. Some assessment of students' progress and measures of impact are in place but these are areas that are still developing and the school recognises that these are areas for further development.
- Self-evaluation, including students' feedback on provision, ensures continual revision of this aspect of the curriculum in order to ensure that it meets the needs of all students very well.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- reviewing and extending current systems for assessing students' progress in relation to this area of the curriculum
- developing provision for promoting students' economic and business understanding so that it is of equivalent quality to other elements of this whole-school provision.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop economic and business understanding and enterprise and financial capability in the school.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Gwen Coates
Her Majesty's Inspector