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Mr D Naisbitt
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Naisbitt

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 28 and 29 March 2011 to look at work in economics and business education.

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.

As the school does not provide formally assessed courses in economics or business, the visit focused on enterprise education and the development of economics and business understanding, and personal financial and enterprise capability for all students.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of enterprise education and the development of students' economic and business understanding, and enterprise and financial capability are good.

Achievement in enterprise education

Achievement in enterprise education is good.

- Students are developing good enterprise and personal financial capabilities and basic business understanding as a result of the school's well-planned provision. Their broader economic understanding is not as well developed.

- Students are developing good attitudes to learning and good collaborative learning skills as a result of the strong emphasis on teamworking and problem-solving across a range of subjects. Employability skills are developing well as a result of the good focus on work-related learning across the curriculum.

Quality of teaching in enterprise education

The quality of teaching in enterprise education is good.

- Teaching across a wide range of subjects links learning to real-world contexts well and emphasises the relevance of learning to students' lives.
- Lessons in a range of subjects that include a focus on aspects of enterprise education are well paced, well structured and include engaging activities that encourage students to develop independent and enterprising learning skills.

Quality of the curriculum in enterprise education

The quality of the curriculum in enterprise education is good.

- Students have good opportunities to develop enterprise and financial capability and work-related skills. This occurs through a mixture of regular weekly personal, social, health and economics education lessons, a range of extra-curricular activities and across a range of different subjects. However, there is less focus on promoting students' economic awareness within the school's planned provision.
- The provision is well planned across the curriculum but progression, as students move through the school, is still developing.
- The promotion of enterprise education extends to all students and provision is well matched to students of different abilities and their individual needs.
- A large proportion of students study vocational subjects that include a strong focus on business, financial and enterprise issues. The school's off-site training facility provides opportunities in a range of additional vocational areas for students to develop work-based skills as well as gain appropriate industry-related qualifications.
- Links with businesses and employers are strong and they enhance the curriculum and the development of students' work-related skills. Work experience is an integral part of students' curriculum in Key Stage 4, linking closely to their chosen option pathways and future career and further education choices.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in enterprise education

Leadership and management in enterprise education are good.

- Leaders are fully committed to ensuring that students develop good work-related skills and attributes as well as gain appropriate formal

qualifications. To this end, they ensure a coherent provision for enterprise education that meets the needs of all students. A member of the senior leadership team oversees this provision very effectively, with valuable input from a range of other staff, including the non-teaching Enterprise Coordinator.

- Learning outcomes and assessments of students' progress in relation to enterprise education are evident, as appropriate, in individual lesson plans; and some students follow courses in enterprise education that are formally assessed and accredited. However, there are no overarching statements about what students are intended to achieve in relation to enterprise education, say, by the end of a key stage, and how this might be monitored, assessed and recorded.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- reviewing the provision for enterprise education to ensure that there is sufficient emphasis on promoting students' basic economic understanding
- considering how to monitor, assess and record students' progress in relation to identified learning outcomes for enterprise education
- ensuring that the provision for enterprise education is progressive and builds on students' developing skills and knowledge as they move through the school.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop economics and business education 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