

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



15 February 2012

Mrs G Freear
Headteacher
Convent of Jesus and Mary Language
College
Crownhill Road
London
NW10 4EP

Dear Mrs Freear

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: economics, business and enterprise

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 8 and 9 February 2012 to look at work in economics, business and enterprise.

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 three lessons and a 'fair trade' group meeting.

The overall effectiveness of economics, business and enterprise is good.

Achievement in economics, business and enterprise

Achievement in economics, business and enterprise is good.

- In formally assessed courses, following some years of underachievement, students now make good progress given their starting points. Results are broadly average and rising.
- Part of the reason for the good progress is the commitment to the subject shown by the highly positive attitudes and behaviour in lessons of the large majority of students and their willingness to seek additional support out of lessons. Students are skilled in working independently.
- Throughout the school there is a strong emphasis on raising students' aspirations. Students are aware of the challenges of the current economic climate and the resulting need to excel academically. Students develop very strong employability skills.

- The school's faith-based ethos ensures that enterprise activities raise considerable amounts for charity and in so doing students increase their understanding of inequality and different economic conditions around the world. For example, Fair Trade has a high profile and the Afri Twin project promotes international and economic understanding. These activities make a significant positive contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students' understanding of personal finance is benefiting from increasing coverage in the main school and sixth form.

Quality of teaching in economics, business and enterprise

The quality of teaching in economics, business and enterprise is good.

- Teaching on formally assessed courses is mostly at least good and sometimes outstanding. Students report that lessons are 'always interesting' with a variety of different activities. A range of teaching and learning styles and activities is used effectively. The subject is related to the real world consistently.
- On formally assessed courses, teachers enthuse their students with their passion for the subject. Assessment is used very well and in different forms. Students learn well by teaching one another and assessing and giving feedback on each other's work with clear guidance from teachers. Different work is set that meets the needs and interests of different students although this is not yet done consistently. There is an effective emphasis on developing examination skills. Students are very appreciative of the feedback that they receive from teachers making clear how to improve their work. Teachers devote considerable time to helping students outside of timetabled lessons and this in turn motivates students to work hard.

Quality of the curriculum in economics, business and enterprise

The quality of the curriculum in economics, business and enterprise is outstanding.

- At Key Stage 4, business studies is a popular option, but less so in the sixth form. Courses are regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of students, increase the level of challenge and reflect university and political preferences.
- Formally assessed courses include frequent references to real world events and to the first-hand experiences of students. There is interaction with people from business such as through the major educational visit to Cadbury World or the local business investigation in the controlled assignment. In the sixth form, such opportunities to bring the subject alive are more limited.
- The programme for personal, social, health and economic education has been reviewed and revised. This provides comprehensive coverage of economic and enterprise elements. An effective and strong emphasis on work-related learning is relevant to the different interests and abilities of students. The school's languages specialism makes an important

contribution to economic and business understanding, for example through the international business day in Year 9.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in economics, business and enterprise

The effectiveness of leadership and management in economics, business and enterprise is good.

- In formally assessed courses, the improving achievement at both Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form and current assessment information provide strong evidence of the capacity to improve further. The positive impact on subject leadership of attendance at examination board training is evident in teaching. Support for subject pedagogy is offered through a local school link.
- Effective processes are now in place on formally assessed courses to monitor the progress of students and initiate interventions as necessary.
- Senior leaders are passionate about increasing students' life chances and raising aspirations. Well-planned enterprise education is taken very seriously so that students' progress is reported to parents. There are expert contributions from specialists to the planning of personal, health, social and economic education.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- maintaining the focus on improving the proportion of students attaining at the highest grades on formally assessed courses by ensuring that learning activities always provide sufficient challenge for the most able students
- supporting the relatively small department through developing links with networks of teachers of economics, business and enterprise.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop economics, business and enterprise in the school.

As 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Lyons
Her Majesty's Inspector