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Miss A Francis  
Headteacher  
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Dear Miss Francis

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 8 and 9 March 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 seven lessons and one assembly.

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

**Achievement in economics, business and enterprise**

Achievement in economics, business and enterprise is outstanding.

- Attainment in GCSE and GCE courses is high and students make excellent progress. Attainment and progress are particularly impressive in GCSE business studies, which students begin in Year 9 and complete in Year 10.
- Students on formally assessed business courses have excellent attitudes to learning, are highly motivated and demonstrate the ability to work very effectively in groups, independently and as a whole class. They respond very well to the tasks they are set but are sometime a little reticent to pose their own questions and challenge each other's thinking.

- Excellent economic and business understanding is developed through the course you teach to all Year 7 students and because all students then study GCSE business studies. Enterprise skills and financial capabilities are developed very effectively throughout the curriculum and through an excellent range of enrichment activities. This aspect of whole-school provision makes an important contribution to the development of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

### **Quality of teaching in economics, business and enterprise**

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

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and make effective use of real examples to bring the subject alive and make it relevant. They use a very good range of teaching strategies and resources, including information and communication technology, to make lessons interesting and engage students' interests. They ask challenging questions to encourage students to think deeply but sometimes provide too few opportunities for students to play a more proactive part in lessons.
- Students feel extremely well supported in their learning and find teachers very accessible and willing to help. They are full of praise for the additional support provided after school and in the holidays. Constant reference is made to examination assessment criteria and students are well aware of their aspirational targets and know what they need to do to reach them.

### **Quality of the curriculum in economics, business and enterprise**

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

- Excellent provision of GCSE and GCE courses in business and accounting is in place. GCE economics, which is currently taught outside of normal lessons, will be added in September 2012 to extend the range further. Completion of the GCSE business studies course in Year 10 enables students who choose to do so to gain GCE AS accounting in Year 11. The exceptional provision in Year 7 is built on by all students taking GCSE business studies in Year 9 and Year 10. Many go on to take GCE business in the sixth form and a high proportion of these continue to degree courses in business-related subjects.
- The applied GCE courses are enhanced through strong links with local employers but similar links are less well developed in other GCE courses and in GCSE business studies.
- Outside of the core business courses, very good opportunities exist for students to develop their enterprise learning in lessons, through events such as running Christmas and summer fairs and through voluntary extra-curricular activities. Some, but not all of the enterprise experiences and skills are recorded and assessed through the academy's excellent leadership award scheme and potentially this can be extended further.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management in economics, business and enterprise**

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

- You and your senior leaders are very supportive of economics, business and enterprise education and ensure that it is afforded a high priority in preparing students for their futures. The subject coordinator provides excellent leadership and management for the examination courses. A rigorous annual self-evaluation is based on high-quality evidence. This results in the identification of appropriate priorities and action plans. Students' progress is very closely monitored and an effective programme of intervention is in place when any evidence of underachievement is identified. Sharing of good practice within the department and an effective programme of professional development are in place.
- The very strong and sustained record of success in the subject indicates an excellent capacity to bring about further improvement.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- developing teaching strategies that encourage students to take a more proactive role in lessons
- extending the excellent links that exist with employers and businesses in applied GCE business to other courses
- building on the high-quality programme of leadership awards to include the recording and assessment of the full range of enterprise skills.

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

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.

Yours sincerely

**David Butler**  
**Additional Inspector**