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Mr G Steele  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Steele

**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 7 and 8 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.

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

**Achievement in economics, business and enterprise**

Achievement in economics, business and enterprise is satisfactory.

- In a small cohort of 10 students, most passed their Level 2 BTEC in 2011. A similarly small group is on target to achieve passes at Level 1 or Level 2 in their Business Administration Apprenticeship course in the current Year 11. A much larger cohort following the BTEC course in Year 10 is making satisfactory progress: students have engaged in effective research to find out about business structures and organisations in their area.
- Across all courses, lower-attaining students, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities, often do well to meet Level 2 pass criteria. However, too few of the more able students reach higher grades. In lessons, more able students often work at the same descriptive level as

others, without moving quickly to apply their knowledge to more challenging tasks.

- Across the school, students' enterprise skills are well developed. They have a good understanding of career opportunities and pathways. In lessons in citizenship and other subjects, students often think broadly about the social and economic effects of government policies, for example to promote better health. However, students have a limited understanding of current economic events and aspects of managing personal finances.

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

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

- Students' progress is carefully monitored in the formally assessed courses, allowing teachers to intervene quickly to keep students on track to pass. In BTEC business in Year 10, the teacher's marking of students' work is very thorough and students receive some excellent feedback on how to improve.
- In lessons, both in the formally assessed and whole-school provision, teachers do not always adapt tasks or their questioning of students well enough to extend greater challenge to the more able students. However, lessons were seen where this was done very effectively, for example in an outstanding science lesson where students debated the moral, social and economic cases for cloning.
- Students in the formally assessed courses have good access to information and communication technology (ICT) to support their learning, enabling them to draw on up-to-date information about real-life businesses.
- Lessons promoting students' economic and financial understanding through the school's citizenship programme are generally well managed and enjoyed by students. However, the subject-specific resources used are not always sufficiently detailed enough to enable students to fully develop their understanding.

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

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

- While numbers following formally assessed courses have been relatively small in recent years, popularity has increased markedly in the current Year 10. Here, BTEC students are particularly enjoying setting up their own Young Enterprise organisations, which help bring their studies to life.
- The Business Apprenticeship students in Year 11 have valued the extended work-experience opportunities they have been given with local employers. Direct links with employers have not yet been established for the BTEC course, but are planned.
- Students' economic and financial learning is disjointed in some years as lessons are alternated frequently with other social, health and citizenship

topics. Good plans are now in place to offer greater continuity of learning through a more 'themed' approach. In mathematics, students are now applying their number skills in a variety of financial contexts.

- Students frequently show enterprise by working in teams to organise a large range of charitable fund-raising events and community development projects. The work of the 'Interact' team, in association with the Rotary Club, has been exemplary in this regard. Students value the guidance they receive on careers and option choices.

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

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

- Leadership of the formally assessed provision is developing in its new position within the ICT Faculty. The head of faculty and subject leader have worked closely together to develop a clear vision and helpful action plans. A rigorous programme of self-evaluation is planned to begin shortly.
- Senior leaders fully support the development of enterprise education across the school. The leader of the citizenship programme has recognised that at present, no method of tracking the development of students' economic, financial and enterprise capabilities is in place, and has designed a system ready for implementation.

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

- raising achievement by increasing the number of students attaining higher levels in formally assessed business qualifications
- ensuring that activities are always adapted well enough to offer sufficient challenge to the more able students in each class
- improving students' economic understanding and personal financial capability
- tracking the development of students' economic understanding, enterprise skills and financial capability as they move through the school.

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

**Ian Hodgkinson**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**