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Mr T Bishop  
Headteacher  
St Pius X Catholic High School  
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Dear Mr Bishop

**Ofsted 2012–13 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 22 and 23 May 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, including past students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; an analysis of students' work; and observations of seven lessons.

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

**Achievement in economics, business and enterprise**

Achievement in economics, business and enterprise is good.

- Students are developing very good enterprise and employability skills which are fostered through a range of subjects, work experience and extra-curricular opportunities. This makes an important contribution to their personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). Students are able to work very well in teams to find solutions to real-life problems, they have good presentation skills and are prepared to take appropriate risks, for example, by trying out new ideas and approaches.
- Students are developing a basic understanding of personal finance appropriate to their age. For example, younger students are aware of different forms of payments and their advantages and disadvantages and

older students are able to discuss the possible risks and rewards of buying shares.

- Students have a good grasp of basic business concepts, such as costs, revenues and profits and the factors determining prices. They also have a well-developed understanding of issues relating to the environment and to developing countries. However, their understanding of key economic ideas, particularly in relation to the whole economy, is less well developed.
- In the lessons observed, students demonstrated an enthusiasm for exploring economic and business issues and were often keen to ask questions. They remained focused on the tasks they were set and were keen to share their ideas.

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

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

- In the lessons observed, teachers linked the work in their subjects to real-world examples, including economic and business contexts, and set tasks aimed at promoting students' enterprise capabilities.
- Teachers make good use of resources, including information and communication technology, and set a range of interesting tasks to engage students in learning. In the best lessons, teachers asked probing questions to encourage students to think more deeply and to expand their oral responses more fully.
- The economic and business concepts that students need to grasp to help their understanding of issues are not always made explicit or explored in sufficient depth.

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

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

- The school does not currently teach examination courses in economics and business.
- Economics, business and enterprise education permeates much of the curriculum and is further developed through timetabled PSHE lessons for each year group. A programme of whole-school enterprise days is being re-introduced, starting in the summer term. A well-established programme of vocational education is mainly taught by external providers.
- All students undertake two weeks of work experience in Key Stage 4. Evaluations by students and employers indicate that the placements do much to develop students' self-confidence and employability skills.
- Students have a good range of opportunities to become involved in activities that have an enterprise dimension to them outside of normal lessons. A particularly innovative project is run by the student council which considers proposals and allocates start-up funds to groups of students wishing to set up mini-enterprises within the school.

- There are coherent programmes of study for PSHE, careers education and work experience but there is no overall scheme of work for economic, business and enterprise education across the school. The provision to promote students' understanding of how the economy operates is not as well developed as other aspects of economic and business understanding.

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

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

- Economic, business and enterprise education is seen as important by you and your senior managers and this is reflected in the continued support for the enterprise coordinator post and work experience, as well as the reinstatement of whole-school enterprise days.
- A useful audit has been carried out to identify current provision for economic, business and enterprise education across the curriculum and to ascertain where there are gaps.
- Individual components of students' progress in economic, business and enterprise education are assessed but there is no overall evaluation of the impact of the provision and assessment of students' knowledge and skills.

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

- enhancing the provision to develop students' economic understanding, particularly with regard to how the whole economy operates
- identifying the key concepts to be taught in economics, business and financial education and ensuring that they are progressively developed in the curriculum
- putting in place systems to evaluate the overall provision for economic, business and enterprise education and to assess students' progress.

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

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