

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

Textphone 0161 618 8524
T 08456 40 40 40
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

Direct T 0207 421 5642
Direct F 0207 421 6746
Mark.Hogan@ofsted.gov.uk



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Mr Sheridan
Pensby High School for Boys: A Specialist Sports College
Irby Road
Heswall, Wirral
Merseyside
CH61 6XN

Dear Mr Sheridan

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Moving through the system

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 8 and 9 October to look at work on developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your school and careers education. We also looked at how well arrangements are made to support pupils during their transition into secondary school.

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 made included: scrutiny of relevant documentation including national achievement and attainment data, discussions with staff and pupils and visits to eight lessons.

Overall, your work in developing the future economic well-being of pupils in your school is good. As a result of the school's work, most learners develop a good level of self-confidence and have many opportunities to work in teams, often for the benefit of their younger counterparts. Pupils are used to taking initiative and their leadership skills are developing well. Older pupils make good progress in their financial literacy and in their understanding of career, further and higher education options open to them. They practise their decision-making skills in all areas of the curriculum and collaborate well with their peers, for example, to support children less fortunate than themselves in Morocco.

Features of effective practice:

- Pupils' achievement in the core subjects of English and mathematics is improving markedly, particularly in Key Stage 3, and standards are rising. In lessons observed during the visit, pupils made good progress in researching what is required for entry into a range of careers and they have a good awareness of what is needed if these pathways are to open up for them. Personal development is good too and the school is very successful in raising the self-esteem of those in its care.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and there are examples of outstanding practice. There is a good range of teaching methods to meet individual learning needs.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

and information and communication technology is used well as a teaching and learning tool. Teachers have good, and sometimes outstanding, subject knowledge of how to foster the economic well-being of their pupils and they plan in detail to bring this about. High expectations and sophisticated questioning challenges pupils to do their best and pupils respond positively, behave well and are generally fully engaged in the activities. There are many opportunities for pupils to use and benefit from their classmates as a resource. Strong relationships between teachers and pupils and between pupils themselves are a major strength.

- The curriculum comprises an increasing number of elements which make a positive contribution to pupils' economic well-being. In addition to key aspects of a wide range of subject areas, there are also discrete courses in personal finance and business education. The variety of enterprise activities for all years is well regarded by pupils, who also speak highly of the many opportunities they have to develop their leadership skills. Careers education is good and pupils also benefit from a Year 10 work experience scheme, the impact of which is followed up as part of coursework assignments in Citizenship. The formal curriculum is augmented by a range of interviews for pupils, sometimes delivered by Connexions staff to ensure that they have adequate information with which to make their option and sixth form subject choices. The school has completed a detailed audit and is correct in its view that its provision for pupils' economic well-being is becoming increasingly embedded across the curriculum.
- Leadership is good and staff at all levels have a strong commitment to inclusion within the school. The senior team has been both proactive and innovative in restructuring the pastoral and academic leadership teams and recognises the effect that pupils' personal development can have on their academic progress. Pupils' economic well-being is taken seriously at all levels and there is good liaison between academic staff, those responsible for work-related learning, careers and citizenship and those with a specific pastoral brief. As a result of the school's work, there is consistently an above average number of pupils who stay in education after the end of Year 11.
- Processes for transfer and transition across key stages, from primary school upwards are a strength of the school. The support and guidance for pupils moving into Year 10, and also into the sixth form, are outstanding. The advice pupils receive on option choices includes the possible impact on their sixth form programmes and on entry to higher education.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, include:

- The underdeveloped use of management information that the school gathers at transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 in order to maximise its benefit to pupils.
- Insufficient discrete careers education in years 7 and 8.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop economic well-being in the school.

As I explained, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.



Yours sincerely

Jim Kidd
Additional inspector

