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Mr T Gibson  
The Holy Cross School  
25 Sandal Road  
New Malden  
Surrey  
KT3 5AR

Dear Mr Gibson

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 2 and 3 December 2008 to look at work on developing the future economic well-being of students in your school and careers education. I also looked at how well arrangements are made to support students 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: meetings and discussions with senior leaders, teachers and other staff, discussions with groups of students, observation of part of one lesson.

Overall, your work in developing the future economic well-being of students in your school is good. Several aspects of provision make an outstanding contribution to students' economic well-being. A coherent programme for developing economic well-being has been introduced in Years 7 and 10 but this has yet to impact on other year groups. Students make good progress in their understanding of their career options. The guidance and support given in option choices for Years 10 and 12 is excellent.

Features of effective practice:

- Student's outstanding academic progress makes a strong contribution to their economic well-being. Standards of attainment are very high.
- The guidance and support given to students in making option choices during Year 9 and again in Year 11 is exceptional. Students have interviews with senior managers and care and guidance for vulnerable students is effective. The curriculum at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form offers a good range of applied courses to meet the different needs and interests of students.



- The number of activities aimed at developing enterprising young people includes provision for all through enterprise days and a good range of additional activities supporting different groups of students. In Year 10, students follow a coherent programme leading to the certificate in preparation for working life. This is very good but its adoption has not yet had time to impact on older students. Similarly, the new personal, health, social and economic (PHSE) curriculum recently introduced for Year 7 is well planned. However, until it feeds through to all of Key Stage 3, students' learning for economic well-being continues to be inconsistent.
- Work experience provides a valuable insight into the business and adult world. It is well planned by the school with good preparation and follow-up. Students use the work experience for their GCSE English and French coursework as well as in applied subjects.
- New appointments in the leadership and management of provision for economic well-being are beginning to have a positive impact. Good links have been developed with external agencies. Good resources are produced and distributed. However, expertise is concentrated in a small number of teachers while the provision is delivered by generalist form tutors. This leads to inconsistencies in the quality of provision and an over reliance on a narrow range of teaching and learning approaches.
- Sixth form students have a very well developed ability to discuss ethical issues concerning money, trade and social justice. Good opportunities exist to raise their aspirations through external visits and speakers coming into school. However, students lack specific teaching to increase their personal financial capability.

Areas for further improvement, which we discussed, include:

- The consistency of delivery of the PHSE programme delivered by form tutors.
- The provision for personal financial education in the sixth form.

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

Adrian Lyons  
Her Majesty's Inspector

