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Mr D Brunwin
Headteacher
St Mark's West Essex Catholic School
Tipton Road
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Dear Mr Brunwin

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Business education (good practice visit)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 05 February 2009 to look at work in business education. The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. Published reports may 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: interviews with staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of parts of four lessons.

Features of good practice observed

- The strong commitment senior and other managers have to promoting business and enterprise education for all students.
- The very good provision of business-related examination courses at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form to meet the needs of the full range of learners.
- The positive attitudes students have to learning which was reflected in their excellent behaviour in the lessons observed and the mature way they conducted themselves in meetings.
- The integration of the Young Enterprise programme in business-related courses to provide students with valuable practical experiences as well as the opportunity to take additional qualifications.
- The effective use of business mentors to support work in enterprise education.
- The good opportunities students have to take responsibility and manage projects, for example, by involvement in the student

council and the Harlow Youth Council and through running charitable events and social activities.

Areas for development, that we agreed, included:

- ensuring that students' understanding of economic and business ideas is fully developed when they undertake enterprise activities
- building on current practice in the assessment of students' capabilities in business and enterprise to identify where they need to make improvements.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop business education in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority/local Learning and Skills Council and will be published on Ofsted's website.

Yours sincerely

David Butler
Her Majesty's Inspector