

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



10 November 2011

Mr D Pover  
Headteacher  
The Burgate School and Sixth Form Centre  
Salisbury Road  
Fordingbridge  
Hampshire  
SP6 1EZ

Dear Mr Pover

### **Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: economics and business education**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during the visit with my colleague, Ian Hodgkinson HMI, on 1 and 2 November 2011 to look at work in economics and business education.

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 parts of eight lessons.

The overall effectiveness of economics and business education is outstanding.

### **Achievement in economics and business education**

Achievement in economics and business education is outstanding.

- Overall attainment in national examinations in economics and business is high and students' progress in these courses is at least good and often outstanding.
- Students on formally assessed economics and business courses demonstrate excellent levels of independent and group-based learning. They are able to think deeply about issues and to challenge each other. Many students have a real passion for the subjects because teachers communicate their own commitment and enthusiasm for the subjects so well.

- As a result of well-planned provision, all students are developing valuable enterprise and personal finance skills and a very good awareness of basic business issues. Basic economics understanding is less well-developed.

### **Quality of teaching in economics and business education**

The quality of teaching in economics and business education is outstanding.

- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and use this exceptionally well to focus on real-world contexts for developing students' understanding. In both formally assessed courses and in enterprise lessons at Key Stage 3, their very well-planned lessons consist of lots of active, engaging and challenging activities. These ensure that students are fully engaged in the learning process. Students listen carefully and take note, not only of their teachers' exposition and questions but of the responses of their peers.
- Assessment is an exceptionally strong feature in economics and business. Teachers refer constantly to assessment criteria during lessons so that students are fully aware, from an early stage, of the skills they need to develop to achieve the higher grades. Skilfully structured activities are used to develop students' higher order writing skills. These are complemented by a very strong focus on encouraging students to contribute extended responses to teachers' questions and engaging them in challenging group discussions. The detailed feedback that students receive on their written work, and the expectation that they will respond to this, ensures that they understand how to improve on their work to meet or exceed predicted targets.
- Teachers have high expectations of their students and constantly encourage them to think hard and perform as well as they can. Students appreciate this and speak very positively about the quality of teaching they receive in economics and business, the support they receive from their teachers and the confidence they gain in their own ability to do well as a result.

### **Quality of the curriculum in economics and business education**

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

- The curriculum for formally assessed economics and business courses is designed to match the needs of students well. Suitable progression opportunities are available between Key Stage 4 and the sixth form.
- The formally assessed provision at Key Stage 4 is enhanced by a number of business links and students are very enthusiastic about how these contribute to their understanding. However, business links and the provision of enrichment activities are still developing aspects of the economics and business curriculum, particularly in relation to sixth form provision.
- The whole-school enterprise education provision provides very good opportunities for all students to develop work-related learning, business understanding and enterprise and personal financial skills. Approaches to

assessment are developing well. The Key Stage 3 enterprise modules are particularly well-planned and imaginative. The economics element of whole-school provision is weaker.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in economics and business education**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in economics and business education is outstanding.

- Subject leaders are having a strongly positive impact on provision and on outcomes for students. Their accurate self-evaluation and realistic action planning is ensuring a continual process of improvement. This is informed by best practice in the sector because of the opportunities they have to share good practice with other schools and to access appropriate professional development courses. Monitoring of students' progress is thorough and teachers respond promptly, positively and effectively to any underachievement.
- You and your senior leaders ensure that this area of the curriculum is afforded a very high priority in preparing students for their future adult lives. Your clear vision and strong support contribute significantly to its success.

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

- developing students' basic economic understanding by ensuring that the economics element of whole-school enterprise education is strengthened
- enhancing economics and business provision, particularly in the sixth form, by developing the use of business links and enrichment opportunities.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop economics and business education 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.

Yours sincerely

**Gwen Coates**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**