

<b>School, LA Visiting School contact/lead</b>	Haydon School	<b>Consultant Post</b>	Bill Stoneham
	Social Science Faculty		Consultant
	Caroline Whitehead (CNW) - DHT	<b>Date of Visit</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> – 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2010.

**Purpose**

To undertake a review of the social sciences faculty.

**Activities****Pre-Review Analysis:**

The faculty offers an array of courses at Key Stage 4 and Post 16. At Key Stage 4 both BTEC and GCSE options are offered and Post 16 options are available at Levels 2 and 3.

RAISEonline data for 2009 outcomes shows that most indicators are broadly favourable but attainment on entry is broadly satisfactory but possibly declining. At the start of Key Stage 4 attainment is marginally above average, but by the end of Key Stage 4, levels of attainment are significantly above average. RAISE gives an overall picture of at least good progress and possibly better than this.

GCSE results in business studies are above average, as are the results in sociology. Both subjects have a higher level of entry than that found nationally.

No sixth form PANDA was available pre-review, but the faculty's own evaluation of outcomes at all levels suggests that attainment is at least above average in many subjects at A2. There might be some glitches at AS level especially in business studies and possibly psychology. From the data offered it would appear that attainment on entry to most Level 3 subjects is broadly average. Thus, a preliminary assessment is that students who complete A2 courses of study make at least good, possibly outstanding, progress with many gaining grades higher than those predicted based on prior attainment.

**Day 1:**

- Initial meeting with Angela Appleby (ACA) – head of faculty – who gave an overview of the faculty highlighting the many strengths but also indicating areas for development.
- The initial meeting with ACA was followed by a series of departments. This included:
  1. Chris Telford (CT) – psychology;
  2. Caroline Whitehead (CNW) – economics;
  3. Tom Boddington (TB) – business education;
  4. Clare O'Neil (CO'N) – Law and politics.
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**Outcomes, actions and next steps agreed****Report:****Overall Effectiveness:**

The social sciences faculty is successfully offering students in all subjects an **outstanding** level of education. The outcomes in Key Stage 4 are the sixth form are **outstanding**.

**Attainment and achievement:**

Evidence from RAISEonline and other sources indicates that students, on average, commence their GCSE and equivalent studies with prior attainment that is marginally, but not significantly, above average. During Key Stage 4 they make exceptionally good progress in their studies so that by the end of their courses attainment is well above average. This represents outstanding progress. Course completion rates are high but a challenge in the

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business/economics course is for more students to gain A\*/A grades.

Prior attainment on sixth form courses is variable. On AS courses it is broadly average but for some A Level courses it is higher but not significantly so. The faculty acknowledges that on some AS Level courses outcomes are skewed because of the number of U grades, but this issue is being addressed. What is clear that the many students who complete two years of sixth study and complete their A Levels overall gain grades that are in excess of those predicted based on their GCSE performance. With the exception of general studies, the A Level outcomes are consistently high, with all subjects adding significant value. The issues in general studies have been addressed. The overall outcomes are outstanding because of the degree of progress made and the number of students who are gaining high grades. Evidence gained from the review clearly showed that present Year 13 students are working at very high levels and their work is significantly above the national average level for their age group.

### Teaching and learning:

Learning in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form, is **outstanding**. During the review 18 lessons were observed. Learning was at least satisfactory in all lessons, with learning being graded as good in 11 and outstanding in six. In many of the lessons where learning was graded as good, the judgements were at the top end of the scale. Progress is outstanding for all students, including higher attaining students because they benefit from such consistently high quality and demanding teaching. Some of the teaching offered can be described as inspirational; evidence was seen for this in law and psychology, while a Key Stage 4 economics lesson was taught with great maturity by a young and experienced NQT. All staff have high expectations of the students and they are prepared to challenge their knowledge and understanding. Learning is enhanced by the opportunities given to the students to work independently or collaboratively. Lessons are thoughtfully planned and involve tasks that are interesting, engaging, challenging and successful in promoting high quality learning. Staff have excellent subject knowledge and this is used to enliven the lessons and enthuse learning. In many lessons, staff are willing to take calculated risks and challenge the students' knowledge and understanding. Such strategies are successful in helping the students to develop as independent learners. AfL is also used with much skill and the students are given considerable opportunities to self and peer-evaluate their work. The students clearly enjoy the work. They respond well to the many challenges set and in discussion sessions they show much maturity and sensitivity in their comments. It is also pleasing to see students from many different minority groups working together and enjoying each other's company. Level of cohesion are high and this too makes a significant contribution to learning and progress.

All lessons were jointly observed. The co-observers were accurate in their gradings and were able to identify key features in the lessons, as well as identify where improvements might be needed and how they could be achieved..

Other factors contribute well to the outstanding outcomes. For example on the BTEC courses the personalised learning sheets are a good innovation that are successful in encouraging the students to assess their own learning. Staff use these sheets with consistency and the students take the responsibility of completing their comments seriously. Faculty monitoring procedures are secure and thorough and have led to improvements, for example in the delivery of the general studies course.. Staff also cover the **ECM** agenda well. Students are expected to take responsibility and enjoyment and achievement are to the fore. A particularly impressive aspect is the contribution being made to **Strand 5 of the ECM agenda**. The students are presented with excellent opportunities to develop their future economic well-being. Literacy and numeracy are generally promoted extremely well. Though there are some inconsistencies in the way staff promote key words and subject specific vocabulary, literacy is effectively enhanced through extended writing, including writing for different audiences. The students' presentational skills are

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regularly fostered by lesson activities and it was clear that the students take pride and care in their work.

One significant area of inconsistency was identified. Staff tend to use many different terms to describe the learning they anticipate during the lesson. Some refer to 'aims' or 'learning aims', while others use 'LOs', but there are variations in what 'LO' actually stands for. For the sake of consistency it would be helpful to the students if the same terminology was used by all but, more importantly, if the precise and specific learning anticipated during the lesson was always made clear at the start and referred to during the course of the lesson. Often, the learning referred to at the start of the lesson is rather vague and lacks precision.

### Curriculum:

The quality of the curriculum offered in both Key Stage 4 and the sixth form is **Outstanding**. The curriculum has been thoughtfully planned and innovations made. Though it was not possible to look at some of the changes in detail, the introduction of BTEC courses has made the curriculum even more relevant to the needs of the students. The CCLD course, in particular, is a successful innovation and a pragmatic approach to delivering general studies has been adopted. Other interesting developments are apparent including the provision of ASDAN courses and taster exercises for younger students. The sixth social sciences curriculum is varied and offers considerable choice. It meets the students' needs extremely well.

### Leadership and management:

The high quality outcomes indicate that this is an exceptionally successful faculty characterised by **outstanding** leadership and management. The head of the faculty manages and leads her staff in an exemplary manner. Her understanding of the strengths of the faculty, and where work is still needed, is of the highest order and her ability to analyse outcomes and highlight where improvements need to be made are fundamental in securing continual improvement. She is supported by an exceptionally strong and dedicated team. The commitment shown by staff is most impressive; staff are passionate about helping and engaging the students in their studies.

One particularly remarkable feature is that high quality teaching and learning consistently occur in far from ideal classrooms. During the review some classrooms were excessively hot and the working environment was of such a poor standard that an OfSTED team might deem the situation to be a safeguarding issue. Conditions in one law lesson were especially taxing. Despite this the quality of learning in the lesson was exceptionally high.

### Points for development:

- gain consistency across the faculty by ensuring at the start of every lesson staff use the same terminology in describing what is expected in the lesson and that the expected learning is stated precisely and succinctly;
- ensure greater consistency in the way staff display key words, key concepts and subject specific language;
- ensure that there are no health and safety or safeguarding issues in the classrooms.

### Recommendations to school

Recommendations contained in report above.

### Date of next visit: N/A

**Date** 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2010

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