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Mr S Allen
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Allen

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: physical education (PE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 2 November 2010 to look at work in PE.

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 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' reports; and observation of five lessons and other activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Children start school with underdeveloped physical skills. Most make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and a large majority reach the expected level in physical development by the time they enter Year 1; although in 2010 attainment overall was below the national average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. The school's most recent assessments show that a majority of pupils are working at the expected level for their age. About three quarters of Year 6 pupils leave the school able to swim 25 metres.
- Pupils' involvement in PE and sport makes a positive contribution to their personal development and well-being. Pupils say that they enjoy physical activities and participate enthusiastically in lessons and at break times. Attitudes and behaviour in the lessons observed were excellent. Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle

and pupils' overall fitness levels are improving following the introduction of fitness programmes in some year groups. Suitable plans are in place to involve older pupils in leading play activities at lunchtimes.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- The quality of teaching observed during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to outstanding. All lessons were organised well and followed a suitable structure. Resources were used very successfully to support pupils' learning, although the effectiveness of the contributions made by teaching assistants varied. Where the teaching was most effective, excellent subject knowledge and precise demonstrations ensured that pupils made good progress. In one lesson, information and communication technology (ICT) was used productively to stimulate pupils' learning.
- Teachers assess pupils well in lessons. They ask pertinent questions to check pupils' understanding and use their observations to check on pupils' responses before making coaching points to help them improve. In the lessons observed, pupils had several opportunities to reflect on their performances and discuss how these might be improved. There is however, potential for increasing the use of ICT to support assessment. The quality of reports written for parents on pupils' achievements is good, particularly for younger pupils.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is satisfactory.

- The curriculum includes all areas of learning and most pupils take part in two hours of timetabled PE each week. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 swim during the year but the time allocated does not enable all of them to reach the National Curriculum standard before they leave. There are good examples of linking learning in dance to curriculum topics and themes. Leaders acknowledge that provision for outdoor and adventurous activities requires extending. Teachers plan their lessons from published schemes of work but the quality of the planning models used is not consistent.
- Although several well-attended sports clubs are offered to pupils, participation rates are relatively low, especially for younger pupils. Positive links with the local sports partnership provide opportunities for many pupils to take part in sports festivals and tournaments throughout the year. There are good proposals to introduce more intra-school competitions to enable a higher proportion of pupils to take part in three or more hours of physical activities during the week.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- Senior leaders have a strong commitment to improve provision in PE and raise pupils' achievement. They know which aspects of provision require

improvement and most of these are set out in a subject development plan. PE and sport have a high profile in displays around the school and pupils enjoy receiving their PE achievement awards. Indoor and outdoor accommodation is excellent.

- Assessment has improved following the introduction of more formal assessment and recording systems this year. Leaders monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and teachers' planning periodically, but acknowledge that a sharper emphasis is required on evaluating the quality of pupils' learning and on monitoring their progress, particularly in swimming.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising attainment and keeping a close check on pupils' progress in swimming
- strengthening the contribution made by teaching assistants and developing the use of ICT in assessing pupils' learning in lessons
- increasing the proportion of pupils participating in three hours or more of physical activities each week.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop PE in the school.

As I 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. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Rob McKeown
Additional Inspector