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Mrs S Cornall
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Cornall

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 21 September 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 school staff, the School Sport Coordinator and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' reports; and observations of three lessons and children in a Reception class playing and learning outdoors.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Pupils attain satisfactory standards overall. Attainment in swimming is below average with under half of pupils reaching the distance expected for their age by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils understand the purpose of exercise and its importance as part of a healthy lifestyle. They gain skills and understanding of games and gymnastics at a satisfactory rate. They evaluate their own and each other's performances helping to improve performance.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage make good progress in their physical development because there is plenty of opportunity for physical play and learning indoors and outdoors and staff ensure that pupils are suitably challenged.

- Pupils enjoy lessons and behaviour is good. A good proportion of pupils in Key Stage 2 take on leadership roles leading activities at playtimes for their peers and younger pupils.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- Teachers have a sound subject expertise. They pay good attention to keeping pupils safe and developing pupils' understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. At times, the pace of learning slows when teachers spend too long talking about techniques or the activities planned do not give pupils enough opportunity to practise and improve the skills being taught or to be physically active.
- Teaching assistants work effectively with lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities so that they make progress similar to other pupils in the school.
- Planning sets out clear learning outcomes but these are not always shared with pupils to support their development of skills. Teachers build on prior learning but do not always ensure that more able pupils are challenged sufficiently. Teachers include satisfactory opportunities for pupils to review their performance and that of others.
- Pupils' progress is recorded regularly; the subject leader monitors pupils' progress and takes appropriate action if there are pupils who underachieve. This information is passed on to the new staff at points of transition between classes and schools.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is satisfactory.

- All pupils experience at least two hours of PE or sport each week. The proportion of pupils involved in at least three hours PE is improving year-on-year but is still below the national target and the local average.
- A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is provided for pupils but there is limited provision for pupils in Key Stage 1.
- The local authority schemes of work provide a secure basis for progression. The taught curriculum covers the full range of activities, including outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming. However, the amount of time allocated to teaching swimming has been reduced significantly this year.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- There has been significant improvement in PE over the last 18 months and, as a result, PE has an improving profile within the school. The subject

leader is providing enthusiasm and drive and has well-focused plans for improvement based on secure monitoring of provision and outcomes.

- Improvements made over the last year include the increased proportion of pupils involved in extra-curricular sport and competition; a significant increase in the proportion of pupils taking on leadership roles, with plans to involve younger pupils, and improved playtime experiences. Involvement with the School Sport Partnership has been strengthened and is now making an increased contribution to improvements through, for example, professional development in dance. These improvements have yet to impact fully on improving pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' experiences at playtime have been improved considerably and are well-organised making the most of equipment available, staff and pupil play leaders. The introduction of 'virtual challenges' has been very successful in motivating pupils and providing wider scope for intra- and inter-school competition with a series of physical challenges posted on the School Sport Partnership's website. Pupils complete the tasks at break times and record their success.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- finding ways to raise attainment in swimming
- increasing the proportion of pupils involved in extra-curricular activities, particularly in Key Stage 1
- ensuring a good pace to learning in all lessons giving pupils plenty of opportunity to be physically active and practise and improve skills
- ensuring that ongoing assessment informs teachers' planning so that teachers build additional challenge for more able pupils in lessons.

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

Gillian Salter-Smith
Additional Inspector