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Ms M Williams  
Headteacher  
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Dear Ms Williams

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 11 and 12 October 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 students, the headteacher of a feeder primary school, a parent-governor and the School Sport Partnership Development Manager. Relevant documentation was scrutinised and students' work analysed. Seven lessons and a range of extra-curricular activities were observed.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

**Achievement in PE**

Achievement in PE is good.

- From a below average starting point, students make good progress and by the end of Year 11 their attainment is broadly average. Year 11 examination results are improving. In 2010, over two thirds of students gained at least a pass in the BTEC First Certificate Award with an average proportion gaining the highest grades.
- A good and increasing proportion of students achieve leadership accreditation and most gain leadership training and experience through the BTEC course. Students contribute to the organisation of many activities in local primary schools and a local special school but their contribution to leading activities in the school is more limited.

- Students know how to maintain an active lifestyle. Almost half of students, but more boys than girls, are regularly involved in out-of-school hours PE or sport. Students enjoy taking responsibility for their learning, for example, when they organise activities as part of the Sport Education programme in Year 8. Students know how to stay safe in lessons and the standard of PE kit is high. Rates of attendance and participation in lessons are high and behaviour is good.

### **Quality of teaching in PE**

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- Students say lessons are fun and challenging. Teachers' enthusiasm is passed on to students and classes are managed well. Teachers have secure specialist subject knowledge that is used to set appropriate activities to engage students and support learning.
- In most lessons, students maintain good levels of activity. In a few lessons, performance is evaluated before students have had sufficient opportunity to practise and improve and the pace of activity and learning slows down.
- Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning in GCSE and BTEC courses but is used only occasionally to promote learning in other classes.
- Systems to assess and support learning are good, particularly in accredited courses. In accredited courses, assessments are moderated carefully and students are involved fully in reviewing their own progress.
- Lessons set out clear learning objectives that are shared with students so that they are clear about the purpose of lessons. In the very best lessons, these refer to different levels or grades that are frequently modelled to students and used to ensure that students are challenged, especially the more able. Students know their target levels and grades. Through good feedback in lessons and thorough marking of work, they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further.
- In Years 7 to 9, lesson assessments have not yet been moderated fully to ensure accuracy. Criteria for assessment, in language that students understand, have recently been introduced. These are not yet embedded to ensure that students are fully involved in self-review. The progress of the minority of students who follow only a core PE programme in Years 10 and 11 is not assessed and monitored.

### **Quality of the curriculum in PE**

The quality of the PE curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is continually being reviewed and adapted to meet students' different needs. The new National Curriculum has been fully embraced so that students are able to choose a pathway from Year 9 to Year 11 to suit their interests and needs. Schemes of work underpin

planning for accredited courses and for core PE in Years 7, 8 and 9, but are not fully in place for core PE in Years 10 and 11.

- A good range of accreditation is offered in PE and sport and leadership. Currently, no accreditation is offered for dance or for dance leadership.
- All students have access to two hours of PE in the curriculum, although students in Years 9, 10 and 11 following the BTEC courses lose some practical time to theory lessons. Around half of students take part in at least three hours of PE and school sport; with an increasing number of recreational activities in a very good extra-curricular programme; this number is improving.
- An outstanding link with a local cricket club has led to high numbers of students playing competitive cricket. Of particular note is the 'Car Park Cricket' project developed by the school and the cricket club whereby the coaches organise cricket-for-all on urban supermarket car parks on Sunday evenings. These have become very popular and well-attended events. The project has won The Youth Sports Trust National award for Innovation.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE**

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- Subject leaders are well informed of current developments and initiatives in the subject. Very strong commitment and enthusiasm are transferred to students and staff.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and based on rigorous monitoring of provision and of students' progress. Subject improvement planning identifies the right priorities although it does not always identify specifically enough what the impact of the action will be on the outcomes for students.
- Effective partnership with the School Sport Partnership makes the most of opportunities for broadening the curriculum and supporting professional development.

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

- using student leaders to support more PE and sporting activities in school
- improving the proportion of girls involved in at least three hours of PE and sport
- providing schemes of work for core PE in Years 10 and 11 and opportunities for accreditation in dance
- ensuring that students' involvement in assessment in lessons is not at the expense of the pace of learning, carrying out more moderation of teachers' assessments and ensuring that progress is monitored in Key Stage 4
- extending the use of information and communication technology in practical lessons to better support learning.

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**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**