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Mr M Catchpool
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Catchpool

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 17 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 three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with physical development that is typical for children of this age. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment in PE is average. This indicates that pupils' progress is satisfactory overall.
- Pupils demonstrate a satisfactory level of physical fitness. The school's records show that over the last three years approximately 80% of pupils have been able to swim a minimum of 25 metres by the end of Year 6. The school recognised that this was too low and is now using a specialist teacher to improve the skills of those who have not met the required standard. There is currently no assessment of pupils' progress between different year groups or for different groupings of pupils, for example by gender or capability. In the lessons observed, the progress of all groups

was never less than satisfactory, although the more able pupils made least progress because there was less challenge.

- PE makes an effective contribution to pupils' personal and social development. In the lessons observed, pupils showed a good regard for their own safety and that of others. Pupils spoke confidently about how safety was enforced in lessons by the teachers and observed by the pupils. They knew the benefits of a good warm-up and cool-down and demonstrated a good knowledge of how to keep fit and healthy through a balanced diet and plenty of exercise; they said that this was learned in science and reinforced in PE lessons. Pupils say that they all enjoy PE, especially swimming and gymnastics. In the lessons observed, pupils behaved well and, when the pace of learning was good, they completed their tasks with enthusiasm.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and lessons are calm and orderly. Lessons have good structure which focuses well on systematically building on pupils' learning through a clear progression of skill development. However, sometimes the pace of learning is too slow and pupils are inactive for too long. Although all lessons begin with a warm-up, it is not always vigorous enough to make any significant improvement to the level of pupils' fitness. Occasionally, non-performing pupils are not engaged purposefully in roles which would help them make progress in different aspects of PE. Teachers know the pupils well and are able to use curriculum materials to match the work to pupils different levels of attainment. However, teachers have only recently begun to assess pupils' attainment in PE, and the work given to pupils sometimes does not provide enough challenge for a few of the most able.
- Pupils are given opportunities to evaluate their own learning in lessons and that of others and some teachers use information and communication technology well to enable them to do this. For example, brief recordings of pupils' gymnastics sequences are shown to the class and evaluations are made, with suggestions about how to improve.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is well balanced and covers all areas of activity in the PE National Curriculum. All pupils are timetabled for two hours of PE each week and any time lost from this allocation is regained through additional brief activity sessions. Pupils in Key Stage 2, especially in Years 5 and 6, have opportunities to increase their time spent on sport and PE by taking part in some of the after-school sports clubs. Although Key Stage 1 pupils have the opportunity to join in with the organised lunchtime sports activities, there are few after-school sports clubs available for pupils of this age.

- Some pupils in Key Stage 2 are trained as young sports leaders and help organise sports activities and support for younger pupils at lunchtime. However, there are few opportunities for other pupils to develop their leadership skills in lessons or as part of a dedicated programme.
- The schemes of work give an extensive range of information and show clearly how pupils' learning can be developed over time. They are used well by the teachers when planning lessons.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- The subject leader is enthusiastic to raise the profile of PE in the school and improve provision. She has a good understanding of current developments in PE and school sport, is aware of the strengths in the subject and has a good knowledge of what needs to be done to improve. However, because she is newly appointed to a leadership role, her skills in monitoring and evaluating are not developed well enough for her to have a rapid impact on raising pupils' achievement. You and the school sport partnership are supporting her well.
- The system for assessing pupils' attainment in PE and checking on their progress is not fully developed. Teachers have received training on how to assess pupils' attainment accurately and are becoming more confident in matching the work to the needs of the pupils.
- The school sport partnership plays an important role in providing training and support for teachers and the subject leader. It has extended opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular provision, sometimes through liaison with local sports clubs.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the quality of teaching in PE is consistently good or better by:
 - improving the pace of learning in lessons and ensuring that pupils are active and engaged in physical activities throughout the lesson
 - using assessment information more carefully to ensure that all groups of pupils receive sufficient challenge, especially the more able
 - ensuring that non-performing pupils are engaged in purposeful PE activity during lessons.
- improving the curriculum by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils in Key Stage 1 and lower Key Stage 2 to engage in extra-curricular sports activities
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to develop their leadership skills.

- improving leadership and management by:
 - providing opportunities for the subject leader to develop skills of monitoring, evaluating and improving the school's work in PE
 - ensuring that the system for assessing pupils' attainment and progress is developed fully.

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

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector