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Dear Mrs Przybek

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 21 September 2010 to look at work in PSHE education.

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 senior staff, the subject leader for PSHE and other staff with responsibility for aspects of PSHE education. Other activities included analysis of students' work and observation of four lessons containing aspects of PSHE education. Discussions were also held with six Year 9 and six Year 11 students.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is good.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is good.

- Boys have good social skills. They are polite, courteous, willing and confident to talk at length with adults. They listen well in PSHE lessons and want to learn.
- Older boys have a good understanding of financial issues that may affect them, such as overdrafts and how to interpret a bank statement.
- They know how to stay safe on the internet and when travelling across the city to school on local buses.

- Boys have an appropriate knowledge of sex and relationships and drug issues. They have learned how to say 'no', to respect their religious community and resist peer pressure.
- They are developing positive self-esteem through the wide range of opportunities the school provides for them. For example, giving presentations to outside agencies. Aspirations are rising, more boys are progressing to further education and every boy has a positive destination by the time he leaves the school.

Quality of teaching of PSHE education

The quality of teaching of PSHE education is satisfactory.

- The quality of teaching is variable depending on the clarity of the learning objectives set by the teacher in planning and how well these are communicated to the boys during lessons. Within citizenship, PSHE is taught by specialists, and in tutor time it is taught by form tutors as part of a daily programme that includes Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL).
- In the best lessons, the pace of teaching is brisk and boys are constantly challenged to respond and explain their answers. In the less successful lessons, teachers talk too much and do not check that the boys understand the work, both during and at the end of the lesson.
- Relationships in all PSHE lessons are strong. Behaviour management strategies are effective and rarely used.
- Assessment in PSHE education is at the early stages of development.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the PSHE curriculum is good.

- The PSHE scheme of work is well mapped across the whole-school curriculum. All staff contribute to its success.
- Good intervention programmes are provided for both vulnerable and able boys who require additional support as part of the daily programme.
- Good use is made of external agencies to provide aspirational role-models, for example, Premiership football referees, successful businessmen and adults who have overcome significant challenges in their lives.
- Careers education and guidance, financial awareness, enterprise skills and interview techniques are key aspects of the PSHE curriculum and support the school's mathematics and computing specialism.
- The use of real-life scenarios across the curriculum prepares the boys well for their future.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The leadership and management of PSHE education are satisfactory.

- PSHE education has a high profile in the school and is overseen well by senior staff.
- The success criteria in PSHE education development plans are too generic and not focused sufficiently on measurable outcomes.
- Form tutors are supported well to deliver the daily SEAL programme by assistant headteachers who also monitor this provision.
- Learning objectives in PSHE schemes of work are expressed as broad aims and are not sufficiently measurable.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the learning objectives in lesson planning and within the scheme of work are measurable and improve outcomes
- ensuring that all PSHE lessons have a stronger focus on learning and that teachers check what the boys have learned during and at the end of every lesson
- ensuring that the PSHE subject development plans have more measurable success criteria

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE education 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

Clive Kempton
Her Majesty's Inspector