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30 November 2010

Mr Paul Fox
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Fox

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 18 November 2010 to look at work in PSHE.

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 you and other staff with responsibility for PSHE; discussions with two groups of pupils and a group of parents; scrutiny of relevant documentation; and observation of three lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils develop good personal and social skills as they move through the school. They are polite, courteous and confident to talk to visitors on a range of sensitive issues.
- They show respect for their peers and the adults in the school and display a caring attitude towards each other.
- Pupils know how to lead healthy, active lifestyles and many get involved in community sports activities outside school.
- They develop good enterprise skills and engage in real-life financial activities.

- Pupils understand the basics of sex and relationships, drugs and alcohol education, but are not able to expand their knowledge in sufficient depth.

Quality of teaching of PSHE

The quality of teaching of PSHE is good.

- Staff know the children well. These good relationships ensure that pupils are confident and eager to respond in class discussions.
- Teachers plan a good range of progressive activities that builds on prior learning and consolidates key values.
- Assessment in PSHE is developing and used by all staff to measure emotional development.
- Teaching assistants are used well to monitor and support individuals to develop their social skills, especially the more vulnerable.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is good.

- The PSHE curriculum is well-mapped across the school and ensures coverage of appropriate topics.
- Parents report that the residential visits are a key aspect of PSHE and develop independence and confidence in their children.
- PSHE permeates many areas of the whole school curriculum including physical education, assemblies, science and religious education and is central to the tangible enjoyment that pupils show in lessons and around school.
- Sex and relationships, drugs and alcohol education does not feature regularly enough in the scheme of work.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- The subject leader for PSHE has good subject knowledge and has undertaken recent and relevant training.
- The school has a clear vision for the development of PSHE based on an accurate self-evaluation of its effectiveness.
- Good partnerships with the local authority and other local schools have led to plans to discuss and implement change.
- PSHE has a high status within the senior management team and the subject leader is well supported.
- The PSHE action plan is currently a list of actions which lack clear and measurable success criteria.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the PSHE action plan contains a few key priorities with measurable success criteria that will impact on outcomes
- ensuring that sex and relationships, drugs and alcohol education are visited more frequently in the scheme of work.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE 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 HMI
Her Majesty's Inspector