

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mr D A Kirkpatrick
Headteacher
St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Whitelees Road
Featherstall
Littleborough
OL15 8DU

Dear Mr Kirkpatrick

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 20 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 with out 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 is satisfactory.

- Children enter into the Early Years Foundation Stage with physical development that is typical for their age. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment in PE is average. At the end of Year 6, typically 80% of pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres. You and the subject leader are aware that this is too low and have plans to improve.
- Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall but varies significantly from class to class. During lessons, the more able pupils are not challenged well enough, although they are given good opportunities to extend their skills through the wide range of extra-curricular sports activities, numerous competitions organised through the school and participation at local sports clubs. Information from the school shows that some of the most vulnerable pupils make good progress in their academic learning and their

social development because of the specialist sports programme 'From Playground to Podium'.

- PE makes an effective contribution to the personal and social development of all pupils. Older pupils are very willing to help younger pupils play games at lunchtime. Pupils enjoy lessons, behave well and participate enthusiastically in all the activities provided. They have very positive attitudes and are keen to improve. Pupils interviewed were very aware of safety considerations and showed a good knowledge of how to keep themselves fit and healthy through a balanced diet and plenty of exercise.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- The quality of teaching observed ranged from outstanding to inadequate. In all lessons, relationships between adults and pupils were strong. Pupils behaved well and showed a good level of interest in the activities undertaken. Where teaching was outstanding, the teacher focused very carefully on the skills pupils were expected to learn, regularly reminded pupils of how to achieve the skills, involved the pupils in vigorous activity over sustained periods of time and used high-quality ongoing assessment to build on pupils' learning. When teaching was no better than satisfactory, pupils were not challenged, they were inactive for too long and there was too little emphasis on helping them improve their skills.
- In all lessons observed, pupils were given opportunities to evaluate their own learning and that of others. Where the criteria for success were focused on improving pupils' learning, this was very successful. However, it was inconsistent.
- Although teachers are beginning to use information and communication technology to promote learning in PE, it is not used widely enough.

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. On average throughout the year, each class receives two hours of timetabled PE each week. Most pupils in Years 5 and 6 increase their time spent on PE and sports to over three hours each week by taking part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities and through links with local sports clubs. The subject leader is aware that pupils' uptake of extra-curricular clubs and activities in most other year groups is significantly lower and has initiated plans to improve the position.
- The schemes of work give an extensive range of information to help guide teachers when planning lessons. However, they are too long and do not help teachers focus on the main aspects which would improve pupils' learning.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- You and the subject leader have significantly raised the profile of PE and school sport over the past year. Staff are enthusiastic and willing to improve their skills. The number of after-school activities has increased and links with external sports clubs have strengthened. The subject leader has an exceptionally high level of subject knowledge and is very well-informed about current PE and school sport initiatives. Her teaching skills are outstanding but few processes are in place to enable her to share this practice with others in school.
- The subject leader is well aware of the main strengths and areas for development and has already made many significant improvements. She monitors the quality of learning through observations of pupils in lessons, but this is not regular or systematic enough to have a significant impact on improving provision. She has recently implemented a process which will allow teachers to assess pupils' progress and plan for pupils' next stages in learning. However, this is not embedded.
- Strong links with the School Sports partnership play a significant role in extending opportunities for pupils in the curriculum, as part of the extra-curricular provision and 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:
 - providing more opportunities for the subject leader to share her outstanding practice with other teachers
 - ensuring that the subject leader has regular and systematic opportunities to monitor all aspects of provision and outcomes
 - ensuring that information and communication technology is used more effectively to promote pupils' 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

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector