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Mr P Burdekin
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Burdekin

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 19 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 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' reports; and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is good.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with physical development that is typical of their age. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, their attainment in PE is above average. Pupils demonstrate good levels of physical fitness. At the end of Year 6, nearly all pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres. A few pupils are chosen to attend the local swimming development group and have a high level of swimming skills.
- Pupils' progress is good. Lower attaining pupils are challenged well in lessons and are sometimes supported effectively by skilled teaching assistants. Higher attaining pupils are given 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.

- PE makes an effective contribution to the personal and social development of all pupils. In all the lessons observed, pupils thoroughly enjoyed the activities undertaken, willingly supported each other and behaved exceptionally well. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards PE and want to improve. The pupils interviewed were very aware of safety considerations in PE 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 good.

- Teaching is consistently good. All teachers value PE and school sport and communicate this effectively to pupils. Relationships between adults and pupils are strong and supportive which helps to promote a purposeful learning environment. Teachers plan lessons that make learning in PE very enjoyable. The most effective teaching combines a high level of physical activity with careful emphasis on skills development. However, teachers do not always expect pupils to work hard over sustained periods of time to improve their fitness and skills.
- Teachers' ongoing assessment of pupils during lessons is good. They respond well to pupils' individual needs as the lesson progresses. Pupils have opportunities to evaluate their own achievement and that of their peers.
- Although teachers are beginning to use information and communication technology to promote learning in PE, it is not used widely.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is good.

- All pupils have access to the expected two hours PE each week through a curriculum which is well balanced and covers all areas of activity in the PE National Curriculum. The schemes of work have been written with support from the School Sports partnership and provide teachers with good guidance on how to develop pupils' learning over time.
- Good links with local sports clubs provide pupils with many opportunities to extend their skills and to participate and compete at higher levels. These links and the wide range of extra-curricular sports activities enable a high proportion of pupils to take part in at least three hours of PE and school sport each week. The vast majority of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 take part in competitive school activities and in some sports, especially cricket, the school is very successful. Although pupils are encouraged to try their best and be proud of winning, they are also expected to show a high level of fair play and respect for their opponents.
- Although some activities help to promote pupils' leadership skills, these are not developed fully.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- You have established a strong ethos where all staff value the contribution that PE and sport make to the pupils' personal, social and emotional development, and their well-being. The subject leader supports you well. She is committed to improving the quality of PE and school sport and has helped to ensure that pupils' active participation has a high profile in the school. She is aware of the main strengths and areas for development, has written plans for improvement and provided support and guidance to staff when required. 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. Although teachers assess pupils' levels of attainment, the assessments are not focused on National Curriculum levels.
- Pupils' opinions about the quality of the provision are sought, valued and acted upon. They say that they would like to know the progress they are making against National Curriculum levels. The subject leader has plans to tackle this through staff training.
- 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 subject leader has regular and systematic opportunities to monitor all aspects of provision and outcomes in PE
- ensuring that teachers assess pupils' attainment in PE against the National Curriculum levels and use this information to inform pupils regularly of their progress
- ensuring that pupils are provided with more opportunities to promote their leadership skills
- 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