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Mrs A Mitchell
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Mitchell

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 27 January 2011 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 is satisfactory.

- Children enter the Reception class with physical skills that are much lower than expected. By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6, attainment in PE remains low overall. A few display good levels of physical skills, especially in games. In the lessons observed, pupils demonstrated a satisfactory level of physical fitness. However, the school's monitoring shows that some pupils do not participate in enough activities to enable them to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- The school's records over recent years show that very few pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall with no evidence of any significant variation between the progress of different groups. The school sports teams have achieved some success at local level and, in girls' table tennis, at national level.

- PE makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development. In two of the PE lessons observed, they showed very positive attitudes, helped each other when necessary and behaved exceptionally well. Pupils from all backgrounds work together very well in PE and show good regard for their own safety and that of others. They say they enjoy PE and school sport and have a satisfactory knowledge of how it helps to keep them healthy. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities appreciate the efforts made by teachers and teaching assistants to ensure that they participate in as much PE and school sport as possible. The school's play buddies develop their social skills well by promoting exercise and collaborative play for younger pupils.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong and help create a positive climate for learning. When required, most teachers use class management skills very effectively to ensure that noise levels are kept to a minimum and pupils remain on task. Although some effective teaching was observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching overall is not high enough to have a significant impact on raising pupils' achievement in PE further. Where pupils' learning is good, teachers use assessment carefully to plan activities that meet the needs of all groups of pupils and carefully guide them through clear learning steps. In the best lessons, this is combined with a range of activities which makes a significant contribution to improving pupils' fitness. External sports coaches make a good contribution to the quality of pupils' learning, especially in games activities.
- During lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own learning and that of others. However, it is not always effective because they are not clear about the main success criteria for judging learning in the activity.
- 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 satisfactory.

- All pupils have access to the expected two hours PE each week and the majority in Key Stage 2 engage in PE and school sport for much longer through the wide range of extra-curricular sports activities.
- The curriculum covers all areas of activity in the PE National Curriculum and is generally well-balanced. Although pupils take part in swimming lessons in Years 4 and 5, there are no opportunities for those who have not met the required standard to access further lessons in Year 6.
- The school uses the local authority PE scheme of work which offers teachers good guidance on how to develop pupils' learning progressively over time.

- The curriculum has been extended to meet the needs and interests of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Initiatives such as multi-sports competitions, use of hydrotherapy and kurling have been implemented. Adaptations have been made to table-tennis tables and a variety of different equipment is used to help the school to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Curriculum initiatives, such as a skipping workshop, 'run a mile' and 'change for life community walk', have heightened pupils' awareness of the emotional and physical benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- The subject leader ensures that PE and school sport have a high profile in the school. Through the strong local school sport partnership, and links with national sports governing bodies, she has organised additional sports coaches who work with pupils in lessons, at lunchtime and after school. She organises a wide range of extra-curricular activities and ensures that pupils with high levels of attainment are encouraged to attend local sports clubs for further development.
- The subject leader is generally aware of the main strengths and areas for development and has plans for improvement. However, procedures for monitoring and evaluation are not regularly or systematically undertaken and the tracking of pupils' progress is underdeveloped.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that all pupils can swim a minimum of 25 metres by the end of Year 6 and that PE lessons are making a significant contribution to improving pupils' fitness
- ensuring that the large majority of teaching in PE is good or better by:
 - teachers using assessment carefully to plan activities that meet the needs of all groups of pupils
 - guiding pupils carefully through clear steps in learning
- enabling the subject leader to undertake regular and systematic monitoring and evaluation in PE and careful tracking of pupils' progress
- using information and communication technology 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