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Mrs B Holmes  
Headteacher  
St John with St Michael Church of England Primary School  
Moss Side Street  
Shawforth  
Rochdale  
OL12 8EP

Dear Mrs Holmes

**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 3 March 2011 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 staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is good.

**Achievement in PSHE education**

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- From relatively low starting points in the Early Years Foundation Stage, pupils make good progress in personal, social and emotional development. By Years 6, pupils are confident, friendly and articulate. They are keen to express their opinions and take on responsibilities. Older pupils develop very good skills of initiative and self-presentation as demonstrated in the assembly they led.
- Pupils understand how to live healthy and safe lives. They know what makes a healthy diet and understand the importance of fruit and vegetables. They are aware of the importance of exercise and participate enthusiastically in the range of opportunities provided for them.

- Pupils feel safe and well supported and know how to keep themselves safe in and outside school. All pupils complete a first aid course so they know how to react in an emergency. They have a good understanding of why bullying is wrong and how to prevent it. Older pupils know about e-safety and cyber bullying and understand what is meant by racist bullying and why it is unacceptable.
- Pupils know why it is important to protect the environment and recycle because of the work they do in the eco council.
- Knowledge of sex and relationships education and the dangers of drugs and alcohol are less well developed and variable because pupils do not learn in any detail about these aspects until the end of Years 5 and 6. However, they are made well aware of the dangers of smoking.

### **Quality of teaching in PSHE**

The quality of teaching in PSHE is good.

- The high levels of care, guidance and support for pupils contribute significantly to pupils' achievement. Teachers and teaching assistants know the pupils and their families well and act as excellent role models.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and purposeful, so pupils are secure and cooperative. Teachers are encouraging and manage behaviour exceptionally well so that pupils behave well and enjoy learning.
- Teachers actively engage pupils in a range of exciting activities such as cooking, songs and games. As a result, pupils are involved and able to concentrate and apply themselves.
- Very occasionally tasks do not have enough challenge for the most able pupils in the class, or the learning objectives are too complex and unrealistic.
- Assessment is mostly informal but teachers mark pupils' work and report back regularly to parents on the progress that pupils are making.

### **Quality of the curriculum in PSHE**

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is good with outstanding features.

- The curriculum gives pupils outstanding opportunities to practise and apply their PSHE learning in a range of enhancement activities, including being members of the active school and eco council, sports and games, a variety of clubs, residential visits and raising money for charities. Pupils are proud of their responsibilities and carry them out well.
- The Healthy Schools award has had a positive impact, especially on healthy eating across the school.
- Excellent links are forged with parents and every effort is made to involve and consult with them about PSHE. Outstanding use is made of external agencies such as the school nurse, police and fire brigade. For example, the close links made with a school with a high population of Muslim pupils so that pupils are prepared well to work in a diverse society.

- The values of PSHE are embedded across the curriculum and detailed schemes of work and planning are in place. The PSHE curriculum is broad and coverage is balanced well between discrete lessons, cross-curricular themes, and assemblies. However, the planning for PSHE tends to focus on the development of skills and lacks emphasis on pupils acquiring knowledge and understanding in all strands of the subject.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE**

Leadership and management in PSHE are good.

- The subject is given high priority by all. This ensures that PSHE is a fundamental part of the school's happy and caring atmosphere.
- You have an accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement, based on some formal and much informal monitoring, appropriate in the small school situation.
- PSHE is included in the planned curriculum review and is part of the school development plan.
- Access to training for all staff in PSHE-related areas, such as circle time and first aid, is good and has enabled staff to organise a wide range of activities for pupils and parents.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- improving the quality of sex and relationships and drugs and alcohol education for older pupils
- developing a more formal system of recording progress to ensure that all pupils have the required knowledge and understanding.

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

**Margaret Jones**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**