

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231  
F 020 7421 6855  
[enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



13 May 2011

Mr W Edgar  
Headteacher  
Gaynes School Language College  
Brackendale Gardens  
Upminster  
Essex  
RM14 3UX

Dear Mr Edgar

### **Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: physical education (PE)**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit from 7 to 9 February 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 students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of eight lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

#### **Achievement in PE**

Achievement in PE is good.

- Students' attainment by the end of Key Stage 3 is above average but relatively few reach the higher Level 6 and above. GCSE results have been rising steadily over recent years and are above average. Observations show that boys' technical and tactical skills in football are high. This is because of outstanding teaching in this activity that enthuses students to participate and enables them to achieve highly.
- Students make good progress overall and achieve well during the Key Stage 4 GCSE examination course. They make strong progress in evaluating their own skills and those of others because of the emphasis placed on this in lessons. No Year 10 or 11 core PE lessons took place during the inspection and the school had no information available about the attainment and progress made by students' in Key Stage 4 core PE.

- Students are given many opportunities in PE and school sport to develop personally and socially, especially through the variety of leadership roles they undertake. Creativity is developed effectively through dance. In all the lessons observed, students behaved well and most participated with enthusiasm. A strength is the way in which students work cooperatively and listen with respect to each others' views and opinions. Students have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle through a balanced diet and plenty of exercise.

### **Quality of teaching in PE**

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- Teaching in most lessons was good or outstanding. Staff have good subject knowledge, are highly committed and motivate students through their positive attitude to PE and their enthusiasm for sport. Relationships between staff and students are strong and help to create a positive climate for learning. Students respond by showing respect and courtesy to the staff and to each other. Non-participating students are routinely required to undertake tasks such as evaluating others' skills and suggesting how to improve. In all the lessons observed, students were given opportunities to evaluate their own learning and that of others. Although in most lessons, the more-able students were challenged well, in a few practical lessons, the needs of some of the higher attaining students were not fully met.
- In practical lessons, opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology (ICT) to illustrate key skills and techniques and for students to analyse how they can improve their own performance and that of others.

### **Quality of the curriculum in PE**

The quality of the PE curriculum is good.

- All students in both key stages have access to a minimum of two hours PE each week and those who choose examination courses have significantly more. The recently introduced BTEC course has increased the opportunities for students to gain accreditation in PE. The school's information shows that students' attendance at the wide range of clubs and sporting activities is high. Students say that they thoroughly enjoy the indoor rowing because it helps to improve their fitness and provides competition against a personal best or against others. The school provides a large number of sports competitions within the school and against other schools, and is especially successful at football.
- The schemes of work in PE are currently being rewritten. However, some of the schemes do not provide teachers with effective guidance on how to develop students' learning progressively in lessons and over time.
- The school offers a wide range of opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills through working with younger students in the school

and in local primary schools, and through officiating and coaching during lessons.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- The subject leaders are committed to improving the life-chances of all students and are very enthusiastic to improve all aspects of the department further. The whole-school initiative to improve students' skills of evaluating their own learning and that of others is having a positive impact in PE. The strong relationships between PE staff help to ensure that good practice is shared regularly. The enthusiasm of staff, the many displays, rewards and acknowledgements of students' success and endeavour contribute towards the strong profile that PE and school sport has in the school.
- In Key Stage 3, students' attainment in PE is assessed each term and the information is used effectively to identify those who are not on course to meet their targets. Lesson observations are carried out by the subject leaders with recommended areas for improvement. However, the assessment data and other self-evaluation information are not analysed carefully enough to help leaders identify any areas of relative underachievement. Consequently, plans for improvement are not focused sharply enough on the areas which will have the greatest impact on raising students' achievement even further.
- In Key Stage 4 examination groups, procedures for assessing and monitoring students' achievements are robust. Students who are underachieving are quickly identified. Support and guidance are put into place, targets for improvement are set, parents informed and additional lessons are organised.
- Engagement with the school sport partnership is strong. Additional specialist sports activities have been financed through the partnership and opportunities for students' leadership development are increased through the links with primary schools. A good range of resources support teaching well. However, the poor acoustics in the swimming pool and the sports hall sometimes makes communication difficult between the teacher and the students.

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

- using assessment and other self-evaluation information more rigorously to identify any areas of relative underachievement and ensuring that plans for improvement are sharply focused on the areas which will have the greatest impact on raising students' attainment
- ensuring that curriculum schemes are complete and provide teachers with effective guidance on how students' learning can be developed progressively in lessons and over time

- making better use of ICT in practical lessons to illustrate key skills and techniques and for students to analyse how they can improve their own performance and that of others.

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**