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Mrs J Buckland
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Buckland

Ofsted 2011–12 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 1 April 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is inadequate.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Pupils are confident, reflective and considerate of each other. They work together well, listen to each other thoughtfully and value the contributions of others.
- Pupils have a secure knowledge of different emotions and they are able to identify and discuss their feelings openly.
- Pupils are making satisfactory progress in learning how to stay safe. For example, they know which areas of the school are potentially hazardous. They also know how to deal with potentially risky situations outside of school, such as what they should do when crossing the road and how to seek help in an emergency.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of what makes a healthy diet and they know which foods they should eat in small amounts. They know how

important exercise is and play energetically. Most take part in after-school sporting activities.

- Older pupils have a limited knowledge about how the body changes at puberty and the importance and value of family relationships.
- Pupils have a basic understanding of the dangers of drugs, including tobacco and alcohol.
- They have a little understanding of the world of work. Older pupils are unsure about the skills needed for different types of employment and have not learnt how to manage pocket money.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is inadequate.

- Teachers have good relationships with pupils and provide good care, guidance and support.
- Teachers make good use of questions to help pupils develop and extend their ideas. However, opportunities for pupils to build on each other's ideas are missed, and they are expected to listen for too long. Discussion with pupils indicated that they often have too few opportunities to discuss, or think for themselves.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to lessons by providing specific help to individuals and groups of pupils.
- Lesson objectives lack clarity and some lessons are not sufficiently focused, so discussion wanders away from relevant issues. Work is not always well matched to the age and abilities of the wide range of pupils in the class, resulting in some pupils being insufficiently challenged.
- Although there are plans for assessment, little is currently taking place.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is satisfactory.

- The programme has been planned to cover a wide range of topics, making some good links with other subjects. However, the overall planning does not ensure that pupils' experiences build on what they have learnt earlier.
- The satisfactory programme for drug education helps pupils to be aware of some of the dangers.
- The programme for sex and relationship education is limited, so it does not give older pupils sufficient understanding of how their bodies and some relationships change when they are approaching puberty.
- The school has achieved Healthy Schools status. The impact can be seen in the way that almost all pupils have a good knowledge of healthy eating and the importance of exercise.
- The programme to teach pupils about the world of work and to manage money is limited and has not been given sufficient priority in the curriculum.

- Good use is made of opportunities to respond to pupils' concerns as they arise and pupils therefore feel highly valued and important.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

Leadership and management in PSHE are inadequate.

- The school has undergone transition, following changes in senior leadership, and the place and purpose of PSHE within the curriculum are insufficiently clear.
- Monitoring and evaluation are insufficient so staff are not suitably clear about areas where further development is needed.
- Little staff training has taken place, so teaching is not informed by current developments in PSHE.
- Parents are supportive and good links exist between them and the school which enhance some areas of the subject. External agencies make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- providing training to improve teaching
- improving the curriculum by planning to ensure that all areas of the subject are sufficiently included
- monitoring provision to identify areas in need of development
- developing assessment tasks.

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

Susan Orpin
Additional Inspector