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Mr M Edwards
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Edwards

Ofsted 2011–12 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 29 September 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; and observation of three lessons, lunchtime activities and Reception children playing and being busy outdoors.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is good.

- Pupils gain skills, knowledge and understanding at a good rate. They have a good understanding of how to maintain a healthy lifestyle. They understand how to keep themselves safe in PE and sporting activities. Pupils have a good understanding of techniques and skills and, through watching each other, help each other to improve. Performance in games and athletics is strong. In swimming performance is weaker and catch-up activity is planned.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards PE and sport are exemplary. They are highly motivated and keen to do well. Pupils from a young age work independently. Older pupils take on leadership roles confidently.

- PE and sporting activities contribute well to the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Pupils' individual plans include specific targets relating to PE. Pupils are included well in lessons and provision is adjusted suitably to match their needs.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- Teachers are enthusiastic and committed to providing enjoyable lessons. Pupils enjoy lessons and say they are fun. Most lessons move on at a good pace with good levels of physical activity.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly secure so that pupils make good progress and improve their skills and knowledge, especially in games. It is not as strong in some areas of dance and gymnastics.
- Video material and digital cameras are being used increasingly well to support pupils' learning and their ability to evaluate performance.
- Adult support is usually well-focused on pupils' needs so that different groups of pupils make good progress, though this good practice is not yet consistent in all lessons.
- Teachers assess pupils' progress effectively. Their planning usually takes good account of pupils' differing abilities so that activities match needs well. However, on occasions, less able pupils struggle to keep up or it is not always clear what more is expected of the more able. In the best lessons, pupils fully understand the purpose of the activities and, with guidance from staff, set their own targets and are usefully involved in assessing their own and each other's learning.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum in PE is good.

- Pupils experience a good range and balance of activities including good opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities and residential experiences.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities involves almost half of pupils in Key Stage 2 and provides well for more able and talented pupils. The school provides good support for individual talented pupils to enable them to pursue their excellence. Provision of out-of-school hours sporting activity for pupils in Key Stage 1 is more limited.
- The curriculum in the early stages of developing links between PE lessons and the stimulating themes and topics planned across subjects. Planning does not yet ensure that all opportunities are taken within PE and sport to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- The outdoor provision for Early Years Foundation Stage children is satisfactory and improving. All children now have regular access to the outdoor activities, but resources are still limited.

- The provision for outdoor play at lunchtimes is exemplary. A very wide range of activities is very well organised and supervised. Older pupils take on key leadership roles and pupils are physically active, happy and safe.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- The school places a high value on PE, sport and physical activity, which is reflected in the strong commitment to improving resources. Recent improvements include additional coaching staff and lunchtime supervisory staff, and improved outdoor facilities such as the 'Trim Trail'.
- Leaders' accurate self-evaluation of strengths and priorities is based on an increasingly useful collection of information on pupils' progress, consultation with pupils and with parents and carers. Pupils' achievement in PE and sport is a priority for the school and the school improvement plan articulates developments clearly. Subject leaders are in the process of further refining the skills needed to monitor this planning and ensure that it leads to improvement in outcomes for pupils.
- The school has worked well with the local school sport partnership. There is a strong commitment to maintain the good level of provision that has enhanced pupils' experiences in recent years.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- improving pupils' attainment in swimming
- providing more opportunities for out-of-school-hours PE and sporting activities for Key Stage 1 pupils
- improving teachers' confidence in teaching dance and gymnastics
- providing support staff with the guidance and skills needed to provide well-focussed support in a full range of activities and age groups.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop PE in the school.

As 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. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith
Additional Inspector