

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



29 September 2011

Mr S Mulcahy
Headteacher
Richard Lander School
Higher Besore Road
Truro
Cornwall
TR3 6LT

Dear Mr Mulcahy

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 20 September 2011 to look at work in PSHE education.

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 senior staff, staff with responsibility for, or associated links with PSHE and two groups of students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work; and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Students are confident to articulate their secure knowledge of sex and relationships and drugs education.
- They know how to resist peer-pressure and have developed good awareness of their own views and values.
- Students have good social skills and know how to speak to visitors. They show respect for all adults and each other.

- They develop considerable self-esteem through involvement in a wide range of high profile projects and competitions, many with external agencies that prepare them well for the world of work.
- Students learn to empathise with those less fortunate than themselves through their extensive charity work and practical support for students in other countries.

Quality of teaching in PSHE education

The quality of teaching in PSHE education is good.

- Teachers plan thoroughly for lessons and use a wide range of resources to stimulate discussion.
- They have good subject knowledge and are aware of the local issues facing students in the community.
- Teachers ensure that lessons contain frequent opportunities for students to discuss issues in pairs and groups.
- The range of questioning strategies used to challenge all students in lessons is limited and does not involve enough students.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Good use is made of outside professional partners who support and enrich key areas of the curriculum. Students value the personal experiences these speakers bring to the curriculum.
- The curriculum is carefully mapped to ensure that key topics such as sex and relationships, and drugs and alcohol education, are regularly revisited each year with age-appropriate levels of challenge.
- The curriculum is well-taught by subject specialists in dedicated curriculum time in all year groups.
- The curriculum permeates all areas of the whole school. The development of the individual is central to the school's values.
- Links and visits to other schools in this country and abroad have a major impact on developing students' attitudes and personal perspectives.
- An appropriate accredited PSHE pathway is followed by those students whose circumstances make them vulnerable in Key Stages 3 and 4.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education is good.

- The subject leader supports colleagues well and ensures they receive appropriate training. All members of the team are involved in subject developments and feel valued.

- You and the senior staff ensure that PSHE education has a high profile across the school. You value the contribution that a range of different subjects makes to students' personal development, for example, work-related learning and enterprise opportunities.
- The good monitoring of teaching ensures that staff feel well supported.
- Departmental improvement plans, while detailed, currently do not focus sufficiently on measurable outcomes.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- expanding the range of questioning strategies used by teachers in lessons to challenge and involve all students.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE education 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

Clive Kempton
Her Majesty's Inspector