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Mr P Bell
Principal
The Grantham Sandon School
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Dear Mr Bell

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 pupils, during my visit on 31 October and 1 November 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 staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of seven lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is good.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is good.

- Pupils understand about healthy lifestyles. They know they should eat five fruit and vegetables each day and that they should not eat too many crisps or cakes. They know exercise is important for their health and most participate enthusiastically in the wide range of physical activities provided for them.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. They know how to cross the road safely and some older pupils are able to use public transport independently.
- They understand about the dangers of smoking and that drugs are bad for them, but they are less clear about the physical and mental effects of

alcohol. Older pupils know the safe sex message and methods of contraception.

- Pupils have a limited understanding of the different forms of bullying. However, those spoken to during the inspection all felt safe and secure in school and had trusted adults to turn to if they needed help.
- Pupils are able to handle money and are taken on trips to the shops to buy things. The more able can write shopping lists and identify items they would need to buy regularly. They understand the concept of the future and older pupils have carried out career planning.
- Personal development is outstanding. Pupils are friendly and polite and willing to make every effort to communicate. They can make sensible choices, listen well, take turns, ask interesting questions and are supportive of each other. They enjoy participating in their lessons and taking on responsibilities around the school.

Quality of teaching in PSHE education

The quality of teaching in PSHE education is satisfactory.

- Teachers know the pupils well, maintain warm and productive relationships and manage behaviour well. Teachers and learning support assistants are skilled practitioners and use a wide variety of methods to enable all pupils to communicate and learn.
- Lesson planning is sometimes too complicated and does not match the activity to the stated learning objective, or sets tasks which are not age appropriate. Although a good range of resources is used, these are not always suitably adapted to meet the needs of pupils.
- Pupils' progress is carefully assessed and monitored and detailed reports are sent to parents.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE education is good.

- Pupils have ample discrete curriculum time. PSHE education is also embedded across the timetable from the Early Years Foundation Stage to the sixth form because pupils are learning independent social and communication skills.
- A strength of the curriculum is the wide range of external speakers and the use of multi-agency working to support individual needs. This helps to ensure that pupils with profound and multiple special educational needs and/or disabilities are included in activities and participate well.
- The exciting range of extra-curricular activities provided, including residentials, trips abroad, horse-riding and running a coffee shop, enhances the provision for PSHE education and enables pupils to develop their independent living skills.

- The extensive use of work-experience and a very well-managed transition programme ensures that all pupils go on to positive destinations such as college and employment.
- Detailed schemes of work are supported by valuable long-term planning. A weaker aspect is lesson planning which sometimes does not meet pupils' needs fully.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

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

- PSHE education has a high status in the school and the support from the senior leadership team is outstanding. As a result, PSHE aims and values are at the heart of learning.
- The PSHE coordinator is a senior member of staff and is an experienced specialist in this area. She is ably supported by a lead teaching assistant. They have conducted monitoring and reviews across the school but their conclusions have been a little generous.
- Action plans are in place with appropriate targets for improving provision.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- enabling consistency of teaching through more focused lesson planning and a better match of tasks and resources to pupils' needs
- ensuring that pupils know about different forms of bullying, why they are wrong and how to resist them.

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

Margaret Jones
Additional Inspector