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Mrs B McGowan
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs McGowan

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 14 November 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 four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. They understand the concept of a balanced diet and why some foods are less healthy than others. They understand the importance of exercise for keeping healthy and reducing stress. Pupils understand the dangers of substance misuse but they are less clear on how to resist peer pressure.
- Pupils have very little understanding of the physical and mental changes associated with growing up. They have covered very few aspects of the school's sex and relationship education (SRE) policy.
- Pupils know how to keep safe in a variety of situations. They understand the importance of warming up before sports and washing their hands before eating or preparing food. They have some knowledge of how to

keep safe on the internet but do not fully understand how to apply safety settings when using social networking sites.

- A strong focus on emotional well-being has led to pupils' good awareness of how to deal with stress. They have a good understanding of their own and others' feelings and the effects of bullying. Pupils understand well the negative effects of racist bullying but are less clear why homophobic bullying is wrong.
- Older pupils know about managing money but have a weaker understanding of the workplace, workplace skills and enterprise.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Lessons are well managed and teachers use a range of methods and resources including circle time and drama. However, some teachers try to cover too many objectives in one lesson and the PSHE objectives are lost.
- Work in pupils' books is well presented and carefully marked by teachers but some lessons lack pace and challenge, particularly for the most able pupils.
- Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to express their feelings and opinions in lessons but not all follow ground rules to ensure that all pupils remain emotionally safe when discussing sensitive topics.
- The assessment of pupils' social and emotional development is very strong in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The school plans to learn from this good practice to improve PSHE assessment in Key Stages 1 and 2 where it is at an early stage of development.
- Teaching assistants are well deployed to help pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities who are encouraged to participate fully in lessons.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is strong on developing pupils' emotional intelligence, their understanding of relationships and how to stay healthy. However, there are gaps such as SRE which is barely adequate.
- The current cross-curricular approach and curriculum mapping does not ensure that teachers build on pupils' previous experiences to further develop their understandings and deepen their learning. For example, awareness of medicines and safety are covered in Year 1 but drugs education is not continued until Year 5. The school is aware of this and has improvement plans in place.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Leaders and manager are aware of the requirements of the subject and are beginning to make improvements. Development planning builds on strengths such as assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage but misses some crucial and statutory requirements such as the need to embed SRE in the curriculum.
- The school ethos is supportive of PSHE which is well resourced in terms of materials and leadership training. However, insufficient time is given to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the curriculum is comprehensive and coherent across the key stages
- improving the curriculum for sex and relationships education
- improving the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in PSHE to ensure that pupils' needs are met, particularly the most able.

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

Janet Palmer
Her Majesty's Inspector