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Mrs J Forrest
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Forrest

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 9 November 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 four lessons and of the playground at break and lunchtimes.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Most pupils make satisfactory progress. They understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and how to keep themselves safe in lessons. Increasingly, they evaluate their own and each other's performances. Although older pupils work independently and plan good gymnastic sequences, other pupils are not yet exploring ideas and experimenting with techniques and tactics confidently. School teams are regularly successful in local competitions. In swimming, not enough pupils attain national expectations for their age by Year 6.
- Children make good progress in their physical development during their time in the Reception class. They have regular formal lessons and staff make the most of a restricted outdoor area and limited resources to give children daily access to outdoor play.

- Pupils enjoy lessons, are enthusiastic and understand the value of PE and sport. They behave well and learn to work well in teams and with partners. Pupils' leadership skills are not yet fully developed. PE and sporting activities make a good contribution to the self-esteem and confidence of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Girls and boys make similar progress to each other.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- Pupils say lessons are fun and they learn new skills. Staff have a secure subject knowledge so that demonstrations and their feedback to pupils encourage correct technique and skills. Some staff lack confidence in teaching gymnastics. Others are still developing an understanding of teaching younger pupils.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well because staff set high expectations; pupils receive much encouragement and well-deserved praise. They ensure that pupils are active throughout lessons. Many tasks are closely directed by adults and there is not always enough scope for pupils to work imaginatively, creatively and independently. Staff encourage pupils to use technical PE language. They question pupils well to help them recall what they know and to develop ideas.
- Pupils know what they are expected to learn in each lesson. Tasks and equipment are usually adjusted to meet pupils' different needs. Targets for the next lessons are discussed with pupils. Systems to assess and record pupils' progress are in place. However, different approaches are being used where classes are taught by more than one member of staff, so it is not clear how this information is used to inform planning to meet pupils' different needs.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum in PE is good.

- The curriculum is well balanced and meets most pupils' needs. It includes good opportunities for residential and outdoor experiences. A good range of extra-curricular activities is well attended. More able pupils are well supported and encouraged to join sporting clubs. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is carefully planned, draws on internal and external expertise and successfully supports pupils' progress and increasing independence.
- Very well planned opportunities for constructive play at morning break-times led by teaching and non-teaching staff, ensure that pupils are happy and secure and actively engaged in a wide range of activities.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- During a current period of transition and shared leadership of the subject, there is a determination to maintain pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of PE and sport. The continuity of provision for PE and sport is a priority within the current school improvement plan. This has led to the school successfully using a private provider for the delivery of a good proportion of the PE curriculum and the extra-curricular programme.
- Monitoring and evaluation of pupils' outcomes and provision in PE are underdeveloped. Nevertheless, the school has identified several highly pertinent priorities such as the need to improve provision and outcomes for swimming, and the need to develop a more coherent and systematic approach to assessment and recording of pupils' progress, so that this information can better inform priorities for the subject.
- The school continues to work effectively with the school sport partnership. A good range of competitive events is planned over the next year. The school continues to take part in these and involves a good proportion of pupils in competitive sport. In some lessons, resources and equipment are limited so pupils are not able to work with suitable equipment that meets their needs.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- raising pupils achievement further by:
 - taking action to raise pupils' attainment in swimming
 - developing pupils' leadership skills
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to work imaginatively, creatively and independently
 - improving staff confidence in teaching gymnastics and adopting strategies suitable for teaching younger pupils
- establishing common approaches to the assessment of pupils' progress and ensuring that leaders monitor provision and outcomes more closely to better inform priorities for the subject
- improving the resources available to ensure that tasks can be matched to needs appropriately and to encourage more opportunities for gross motor skill development in the Reception class.

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