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Mr A Sharpe
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Dear Mr Sharpe

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: physical education (PE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 2 and 3 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 students, scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work, observation of seven lessons and visits to a range of enrichment activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is good.

- The vast majority of students exceed national expectations by the end of Key Stage 3. Effective teaching and regular participation in sports activities during lunchtimes and after school enable them to make good progress and attain well. Students thoroughly enjoy PE and enthuse about the range of sporting opportunities provided. In games, they work hard to acquire new skills and improve their performance. Most show a good understanding of personal fitness and the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle.
- In Key Stage 4, the large majority of students continue to display positive attitudes and make good progress. Notably, almost all of them attain an award in sports leadership. The percentage attaining a merit or pass award in BTEC sport is consistently very high. GCSE PE results have fallen

from well above national averages in recent years to broadly average in 2011. To address this, additional support in theory lessons is being provided for those at risk of underachieving and all students are encouraged to attend weekly revision classes during lunchtimes.

- A very small proportion of sixth-form students study A-level PE or BTEC sport. Standards are below national averages but based on their starting points this represents satisfactory progress. Most students meet the targets set for them but only a few continue their studies in Year 13.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- Teachers share good relationships with students and set high expectations. Standards of behaviour and PE kit are excellent. Teachers use their specialist knowledge to plan learning in pairs and small groups and to demonstrate key skills and techniques. In a Key Stage 3 basketball lesson, learning was particularly effective when students used cards containing key teaching points to check how well they were doing. They were encouraged to help each other by observing drills and offering accurate advice to improve performance. Interactive whiteboards and video are used well to illustrate learning and stimulate students' interest.
- In GCSE and A-level PE, teachers provide good opportunities for students to learn by themselves and in small groups, and then share their findings with others. Most teaching is good but there are a few inconsistencies. Some teachers do not plan suitable challenges for students of different abilities, or plan too many activities which limits time in lessons for consolidating learning and securing basic skills. Regular assessments provide teachers with an overview of students' progress throughout Key Stage 3 but these procedures are new and not firmly embedded. Currently, they do not extend into Key Stage 4 to complement assessments of students' leadership skills.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum in PE is good.

- In Key Stage 3, all students have two hours of PE. A large proportion of them regularly participate in at least three hours of PE and sports enrichment. A wide range of games and athletic activities is complemented by an excellent programme of after-school clubs, house competitions and fixtures against other schools. Participation rates are very high. Students receive only one hour of PE in Key Stage 4. Approximately one third of students choose to study GCSE PE or BTEC sport. They all pursue and attain an award in sports leadership and use these skills to support others in lessons, assist PE staff and organise events in local primary schools.
- Sixth-form students talked enthusiastically about their weekly PE lessons and the opportunities to use their leadership skills in the local community.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- The subject leader demonstrates the knowledge and ambition to drive further improvements in PE. Good relationships have forged a shared, common purpose among staff to seek improvement and maximise sporting opportunities for students. Excellent facilities are use well and established partnerships with other schools support the development of PE and sport. PE enjoys a high profile in the school; students enthuse about the curriculum and regular competitive fixtures. Their success in sport is widely celebrated.
- Self-evaluation is largely accurate and suitable development plans are in place. Schemes of work are detailed but some, particularly in Key Stage 3, require further updating to illustrate clearly what students are expected to achieve and how this is accurately assessed. The subject leader and his line manager regularly monitor lessons but do not focus their observations on those staff that need additional support and training to help them match the consistently good teaching elsewhere in the department.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- updating schemes of work to illustrate clearly what students are expected to achieve and how this is accurately assessed, and ensuring that these procedures become firmly embedded throughout Key Stages 3 and 4
- correcting the recent dip in GCSE PE results by ensuring that additional support in theory lessons is suitable targeted towards those at risk of underachieving and by ensuring that they regularly attend lunchtime revision classes.

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

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector