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Mr I Holden
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Holden

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 1 December 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 six lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils have an impressive knowledge and understanding of food groups, their body, health and exercise and the benefits of positive relationships. They understand the connection between mental and physical health and are able to talk about their worries and feelings. They enthusiastically join in sporting, dance and gardening activities as part of a strong extra-curricular programme.
- Pupils have a good awareness of drugs, alcohol and tobacco and especially remembered the information given from the annual visits of the Life Education caravan.

- Pupils are aware of puberty and body changes although they would like this information sooner. Older pupils have many opportunities to take responsibility, such as acting as buddies to younger pupils and helping them to read. Pupils appreciate the rewards given for punctuality, being elected to the school council and being selected for school teams.
- They have a clear understanding of risk, safety on the roads and also on the internet, including cyber bullying. Pupils recognise peer-pressure and know how to resist it with a range of strategies. Pupils were able to talk about how circle time was used to help them share thoughts and ideas in a safe way.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is good.

- The quality of lesson planning is a strength of the school, with clear learning objectives, differentiation of tasks and high expectations for all pupils. Teaching assistants have specific responsibilities planned into lessons, often to support practical activities and to work with the teacher as a team.
- A broad range of teaching strategies used with good examples of questioning, active learning, talk partners, group work and some independent learning. Teachers use imaginative ideas to make learning interesting and fun, such as role play which really enthuses pupils.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology and resources to enhance pupils' interest and learning.
- Assessment is now starting to develop and includes a more formal approach to monitoring and tracking progress with age-related expectations. However, no evaluation of impact has yet been completed.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is good.

- The curriculum is broad and varied and PSHE is a central element. It involves discrete lessons, assemblies, cross-curricular themes and special weeks that focus on anti-bullying, health and cultural events.
- Extensive use of external agencies provides a lively and exciting curriculum. These include, the Life Education Caravan, the oral health team, fire service and police.
- The Healthy Schools programme has had a positive impact on healthy eating and the promotion of exercise. The social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) materials are used well and have had a positive impact on pupils' learning and emotional well-being.
- The school nurse delivers the Growing Up programme in the summer term of Year 6 although this may be too late for many pupils who would benefit from earlier information.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is good.

- PSHE has a high profile in the school and is led and managed effectively.
- Staff have created a happy learning environment which is highly inclusive and where pupils' make good progress because they are secure and their needs are met.
- Self-evaluation is broadly accurate with some good features.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- implementing a system of PSHE assessment and evaluation to inform improvement planning
- ensuring that pupils are taught about puberty and body changes earlier to better prepare them.

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

Mary Lanovy-Taylor
Additional Inspector