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27 January 2012

Mr S Conroy
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Conroy

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 11 January 2012 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 three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is average. The school does not assess pupils' progress in Key Stages 1 and 2. Consequently, leaders do not have a clear view of pupils' progress as they move through the school. Lesson observations showed that pupils' attainment in all year groups is broadly average and their level of fitness is satisfactory. By the end of Year 6, most pupils attain the expected level in swimming. Discussions with pupils show that they have a sound understanding of how to eat healthily and the effects of exercise on improving health and fitness.
- Pupils say that they enjoy PE, and especially games. This is reflected in pupils' positive attitudes and their enthusiasm to take part in after-school

sport and activity clubs. Year 6 pupils are keen to organise games and other activities for pupils at lunchtime and some very enthusiastically help teachers in after-school cheerleading and gymnastics clubs. In lessons, pupils work together well and show a good regard for their own safety and that of others.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- Strong relationships between teachers and pupils and good use of praise help to raise pupils' self-esteem and build their confidence. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and benefit from the support they receive from teaching assistants. More able pupils are encouraged to extend their skills by participating in local sports clubs. The school reports that specialist coaches are sometimes very successfully used to promote pupils' learning in dance.
- Most teachers understand the value of PE and their enthusiasm for the subject is communicated well to pupils. All lessons provide pupils with a range of physical activities. However, activities are often not vigorous enough or sustained for long enough to promote significant improvements in pupils' physical fitness and skills.
- In a few classes, information and communication technology (ICT) is used to promote learning through illustrating key skills and techniques, and to enable pupils to evaluate how they can improve their own performance and that of others. However, the use of ICT to promote learning in PE is not well developed throughout the school.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum in PE is satisfactory.

- All pupils have swimming lessons in Year 3, with additional swimming sessions for Year 6 pupils who cannot swim at least 25 metres. Physical activity is promoted well in the Early Years Foundation Stage through use of the school grounds. Although activities such as rock-climbing and canoeing are provided through residential visits, the extensive school grounds are not used well enough to promote pupils' learning in outdoor and adventurous activities.
- Pupils receive two hours of PE each week, which is supplemented by a range of well-supported extra-curricular sports clubs. Many pupils take part in inter-school competitions and tournaments. However, although all pupils take part in the annual sports day, there are few intra-school tournaments.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- The subject leader is committed to establishing high-quality provision in PE. Her enthusiasm inspires pupils to want to participate. She has a sound understanding of the school's strengths and has implemented clear plans for improvement since her appointment. However, procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are not fully in place.
- Good partnerships have been established with local sports clubs and schools to promote competition and help pupils to develop their skills. General resources are good and the school grounds provide an excellent resource for promoting learning through PE and sports.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that procedures to enable the subject leader to assess pupils' progress and monitor the quality of teaching are fully in place
- ensuring that pupils are provided with activities which are vigorous enough and sustained to have a significant impact on improving their physical fitness and skills
- increasing the number of opportunities for pupils to experience competition through intra-school tournaments
- making better use of the school grounds to promote pupils' learning in outdoor and adventurous activities
- making better use of ICT to illustrate key skills and techniques and to enable pupils to evaluate how they can improve their performance and that of others.

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

Roy Bowers
Her Majesty's Inspector