

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs J Haigh
Headteacher
Dovedale Primary School
Dovedale Avenue
Long Eaton
Nottingham
NG10 3HU

Dear Mrs Haigh

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 6 February 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with physical skills that are typical for children of this age. They make satisfactory progress throughout the school and by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 their attainment is average. Discussions with pupils show that they have a sound knowledge and understanding of how to eat healthily and the effects of exercise on improving health. Observations show that pupils have a satisfactory level of physical fitness.
- The school has only recently started to assess pupils' attainment and monitor progress. Consequently, although leaders have a general overview of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 6, they do not have an evaluation of any variation in pupils' progress from year to year or of different groups, such as gender or ability. Over the past three years, only

approximately two thirds of pupils who left school at the end of Year 6 were able to swim the expected 25 metres. The school has started to implement plans to increase this proportion.

- All pupils spoken to say that they enjoy PE and feel that it is a very popular subject. In the lessons observed, pupils showed good regard for safety. They worked together effectively, completed their tasks with enthusiasm and behaved exceptionally well.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory.

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are strong and supportive. Lessons are calm and orderly. Pupils are keen to develop their skills and participate in the activities. However, in some lessons teaching does not focus sharply enough on helping pupils to improve their skills and add greater control to their movements. All lessons engage pupils in moderate physical activity but often it is not vigorous enough or sustained for long enough to have a significant impact on improving pupils' fitness and health.
- Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs are included in lessons and benefit from the support they receive from teaching assistants. More able pupils are encouraged to extend their skills through links with local specialist sports clubs.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is underused to promote learning in PE through illustrating key skills and techniques, and enabling pupils to evaluate their own performance and that of others.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum in PE is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is well-balanced and covers all areas of activity in the National Curriculum. The school uses a variety of schemes which provide teachers with extensive planning information. Activities such as rock-climbing and archery are provided through residential visits. All pupils are timetabled for two hours of PE each week and this is supplemented by a programme of up to 15 minutes each day of additional physical activity for pupils up to and including Year 4.
- Pupils say that they enjoy taking part in the variety of extra-curricular sports and activity clubs. Some pupils represent the school in sports teams, but there are few opportunities for all pupils to take part in intra-school competitions. Some pupils in Key Stage 2 act as Olympic ambassadors and enjoy developing their leadership skills through organising competitions to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Olympic Games.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- The subject leader, supported well by senior leaders, is committed to establishing high-quality provision. With guidance she is beginning to develop her monitoring and evaluation skills and have a greater understanding of her role in raising pupils' achievement. Senior leaders and the subject leader have accurately identified the main strengths and areas for improvement and have begun to implement a system for assessing pupils' attainment and checking on their progress. However, this is not fully in place.
- Specialist teachers from the local high school are used well to provide training for teachers. The Year 6 Olympic ambassador scheme has raised the profile of PE in the school. General resources are good and the school grounds provide an excellent resource for promoting learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that the subject leader's monitoring and evaluation skills are fully developed and the system for assessing pupils' attainment and checking on their progress is fully established
- increasing the proportion of pupils who can swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6 to at least 90%
- ensuring that in all lessons activities focus sharply on helping pupils to improve their skills and add greater control to their movements
- ensuring that pupils are provided with activities which are vigorous enough and sufficiently sustained to have a significant impact on improving their fitness and long-term health
- increasing the number of opportunities for pupils to experience competition through intra-school sports tournaments
- making better use of ICT to illustrate key skills and techniques and to enable pupils to evaluate their own 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