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Mrs N Armstrong-Boyle
Headteacher
St Paul's Catholic Primary School
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Dear Mrs Armstrong-Boyle

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 2 February 2012 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 four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is outstanding.

- Pupils of all ages are aware of emotional and mental health and well-being. They learn how to manage worries and feelings and know how to ask for help. Friendship, respect for others and positive relationships are highly visible around school. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe and older pupils happily accept responsibility for younger pupils as mentors. Pupils are rightly proud of their outstanding learning and achievements.
- Pupils have a very good awareness of the physical and mental changes associated with puberty and are well prepared by the school. Pupils feel very secure because their emotional needs and maturity are considered carefully.

- A very well planned programme of financial awareness and business enterprise offers practical opportunities for pupils to consider money management. Pupils are very aware of different types of work and the careers they might choose in the future.
- Pupils have a good understanding and awareness of drugs, alcohol and tobacco. They know the difference between legal and illegal drugs and the harm that can be caused. They also have excellent strategies to resist peer-pressure.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is outstanding.

- Teachers are confident and committed to PSHE. This is reflected in their planning and delivery of very interesting and creative lessons where the focus is on active learning. A wide range of resources is used imaginatively to provide practical experiences where possible.
- Questioning is used very effectively to determine understanding and deepen thinking. Paired and group work are planned to support discussion and to provide opportunities for pupils to challenge their own and others' opinions and to think about issues for themselves.
- Teachers regularly monitor pupils' progress using an assessment scheme the school has devised based on the expected learning outcomes at particular ages. Pupils' outstanding learning is reflected in their enthusiastic approach to the subject and also in the high quality of their written work, which is often beautifully presented. Pupils also complete regular self-assessments which are shared with parents and carers.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is outstanding.

- The curriculum is creatively planned and provides rich, lively and exciting learning opportunities. The use of cross-curricular opportunities, especially in science, religious education and literacy and numeracy, strengthens the breadth of the subject and provides meaningful experiences.
- Age-appropriate sex and relationships education is carefully planned and involves the school nurse providing external, professional support so that issues relevant to pupils are sensitively handled.
- The provision of business enterprise with ethics, financial management, work-related learning and careers education is exceptional; pupils of all ages benefit and are well prepared for the next stage of their education.
- Safety education in all aspects is strong. The school encourages emergency personnel to visit to offer practical activities that develop very good knowledge and skills.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is outstanding.

- The subject is central to the school's ethos and vision to promote pupils' personal development. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and there is a feeling of happiness and enjoyment throughout the school.
- The leadership of the subject is extremely strong and involves a dedicated team who continually seek to develop and improve the subject. The monitoring of pupils' progress, subject provision and teaching and learning is very rigorous. Improvement planning includes achievable actions and success criteria.
- Some school policies need to be updated to make sure they are fully inclusive of all groups.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- updating school policies to ensure that all groups of pupils are fully included.

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