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Mr S McClafferty
Headteacher
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Dear Mr McClafferty

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 9 and 10 February 2012 to look at work in PSHE education.

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; and observation of eight lessons one assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Students have an excellent knowledge of how to stay healthy. They have a very good understanding of a balanced diet and the need to exercise. Older students act as sports captains and participation in sporting activities is excellent.
- Students have a detailed knowledge of drugs and alcohol education and issues related to their emotional well-being. Their understanding of sexual development is wide-ranging with a strong focus on relationships and friendship.
- They show an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. In particular, they have a clear grasp of e-safety.

- Students make good progress in developing their financial capability and enterprise skills through managing budgets, young enterprise schemes and understanding about interest rates.
- Older students have an excellent understanding of future career options because of the very effective support they receive throughout their school life. Sixth form students are particularly well prepared for university.
- Students demonstrate exceptional independence and are given many opportunities to develop leadership skills and be part of a team. They are very articulate and confident showing a high level of maturity when working with others.

Quality of teaching in PSHE education

The quality of teaching in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Lessons are well planned and structured with well-focused learning objectives. Teachers have high levels of confidence and very good subject knowledge.
- Teachers use a very wide range of stimulating resources to support learning. These include case studies, scenarios, visual images and well chosen video clips with hard-hitting messages. High expectations from teachers are clearly communicated to students. Thus excellent relationships ensure that students enjoy lessons and behaviour is outstanding.
- Teachers create a safe learning environment and are very skilled in managing discussions on sensitive and controversial issues such as sexual ethics, the impact of war and conflict and the challenges of living in a multi-faith society. This is the outstanding feature of many lessons.
- Students are encouraged to express opinions and listen exceptionally well to others, showing high levels of respect and tolerance. They develop excellent skills of analysis with opportunities to reflect on what they have learnt.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE education is outstanding.

- The curriculum is imaginative and stimulating and provides many opportunities for high-quality PSHE education and wider personal development. There are a plethora of enrichment activities. The subject makes an excellent contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by the many opportunities to think, reflect and take an active part in lessons. Students' contribution is encouraged and celebrated.
- Key elements are regularly re-visited at appropriate times. For example, sex and relationships education and financial capability.
- The school is an inclusive community where students with disabilities and special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them

vulnerable are identified and supported appropriately. A small number of students are selected for the certificate of personal effectiveness (CoPE) course and receive additional support.

- A wide range of partnerships enhances the PSHE curriculum. They include Derbyshire Runaways, Derbyshire Youth Service, Health 4 Life, the Chamber of Commerce and CAFOD.
- Changes to the tutor-based PSHE education curriculum have not yet been fully implemented to ensure that coherence is maintained.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Senior leaders and managers have been very successful in establishing a high profile for PSHE education across the school. The subject is well resourced and meets all statutory requirements. There is whole-hearted commitment from staff and students. As a result, students flourish and the school is a cohesive community. There are striking success stories of students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable showing excellent personal, social and academic development.
- Very effective monitoring and evaluation of the different aspects of the PSHE programme and teaching ensure continual improvement. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and weaknesses and the subject development plan identifies appropriate priorities.
- The excellent coordination of the different strands of PSHE education in the school has led to very effective use of resources and expertise. Strong links with partner schools and external agencies have led to high-quality training for all staff on aspects of PSHE and have reinforced the value the school places on it.
- An excellent track record of innovation is exemplified by the links with a school in Burkina Faso in Africa and the leadership opportunities bestowed to students.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that changes to the tutor-based PSHE curriculum are fully implemented and evaluated.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE education 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

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector