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Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Camp

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 27 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 and one assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils have a good understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Older pupils act as sports leaders encouraging and organising a range of physical activities at lunchtimes and the outdoor swimming pool ensures excellent participation by all year groups in the summer term.
- Pupils demonstrate a good knowledge of how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For example, they have strategies to deal with stranger-danger and can take steps to be safe while online. However, they are less confident in their knowledge of legal and illegal drugs, harmful household products and medicines.

- Pupils have good understanding of bullying, including racist and disablist language. They develop many strategies to resist peer-group pressure, including the use of older pupils who act as peer mediators.
- Pupils' understanding of the physical and emotional aspects of sex and relationships education is satisfactory.
- Pupils have a good understanding of business, enterprise and managing money. Business Week encourages all year groups to plan and develop a business product with opportunities to practise budgeting and working out costs. The quality of some business projects is excellent.
- Pupils' personal and social development is good. Older pupils have many opportunities to take on leadership activities and work collaboratively. Pupils are able to express their ideas and show respect for others' feelings. They enjoy being buddies to younger pupils and school council members from all year groups deliver assemblies on important PSHE themes.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is good.

- Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, are enthusiastic and confident. Sensitive issues are managed well and pupils are encouraged to investigate and revisit their viewpoints.
- In the best lessons, pupils' thinking is challenged and questioning is a very powerful tool to engage pupils and provide opportunities to reflect. In a lesson on negative stereotyping, pupils were given thought-provoking pictures which enabled them to think about the role of the media; their personal stereotypes were challenged on religious dress, sexuality and eating disorders. A powerful lesson on economic trade enabled pupils to have a very high-level discussion on how goods are made and provided opportunities to reflect on working conditions of people where labour is cheap.
- A broad range of high-quality resources is used to stimulate and enhance learning. Pupils who are disabled and with special educational needs benefit from the support of teaching assistants.
- Pupils' learning and progress are assessed using a variety of methods, ranging from learning logs to monitoring sheets.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is good.

- The curriculum is broad and consists of a breadth of enriching opportunities within and beyond the formal curriculum. The subject is vibrant and is supported by work in the 'creative learning journey' folders. These capture the strong focus on social, moral, cultural and spiritual development which impact on pupils' learning, enjoyment and achievement.

- Pupils are enjoying and benefiting from the school's international focus. For example, African and China day and the developing links with Nepal. This is a key improvement since the previous inspection.
- The school has achieved the Healthy Schools Award which has made a valuable contribution to pupils' understanding of healthy lifestyles and provides a wide range of engaging activities such as 'craze of the week'.
- Good use is made of external agencies and specialists to enhance the curriculum and make learning more interesting and fun. Examples include the Firehouse Production Company and Crucial Crew.
- The curriculum meets the needs of pupils whose circumstances have potentially made them vulnerable through targeted support and resources such as the nurture clubs, lilac room and the trained worker on 'chatter matters'.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is good.

- This is a very inclusive school community where pupils have a range of complex needs. To help meet these needs PSHE is given high prominence with a strong focus on personal and emotional development.
- The overview of the subject is accurate and action-planning is focused to bring about further improvements. Many opportunities are available for staff to develop their professional expertise.
- Good focus by the link governor ensures effective monitoring and evaluation of the subject. Visits by the governor support and celebrate the work of the school and help to identify next steps for improvement.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that sex and relationships education is reviewed to ensure much earlier coverage for pupils
- reviewing and evaluating the programme for drug education, harmful household products and medicines to ensure that pupils understand the key messages.

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

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector