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Mrs B Hawker  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Hawker

**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 12 and 13 March 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 three lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is good.

**Achievement in PSHE education**

Achievement in PSHE education is good.

- Students are confident and express their views and opinions honestly and clearly. They discuss and work together well, demonstrating that they are learning to disagree, while respecting the differing views of others and managing their feelings.
- Students have good knowledge of drugs, including alcohol and tobacco. They know the risks and dangers and have a good understanding of how to deal with peer-group pressure.
- Students have a good understanding of bullying and they understand what they should do if bullied by others.

- Students have a good understanding of sexual development and the importance of loving family relationships.
- Students have a good understanding of healthy eating and the importance of regular exercise and they are making very good progress in their understanding of mental health, especially how to manage feelings such as anger and anxiety.
- Students are making good progress in learning how to manage their money and they are developing their awareness of the world of work well. Throughout the school, students are very well prepared for the next stage of their education and for their future adult lives.

### **Quality of teaching in PSHE education**

The quality of teaching in PSHE education is good.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and they plan lessons that are relevant and capture students' interest well. For example, in a lesson about managing money, students were learning how to choose the best mobile telephone deal from a range of different options.
- Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace providing a variety of short activities, so students' interest is maintained and they achieve success through small steps in their learning.
- Students are encouraged to learn through discussion and activity, working together with their peers. Teachers ensure that everyone is included and plays a full part in the lesson.
- Teachers use a good range of assessment strategies, making sure students know how well they are doing. They make good use of this information to plan future lessons, but occasionally there is not enough challenge for the most able students in the class.
- Teaching assistants are skilled and readily undertake responsibility. However, at times, their skills are not fully used to help provide for the very wide range of students' differing needs.

### **Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education**

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE education is good.

- The programme is carefully planned and ensures good progression for all students.
- The curriculum is enriched extremely well by a wide range of visitors and trips. The school's specialism in the arts provides many varied opportunities for students to develop their social skills and to enhance their cultural development. For example, during the inspection a school production was taking place, closely supported by the Salisbury Theatre and involving most students in the school.
- The curriculum is designed well to meet students' needs with individual programmes where necessary. The sex and relationships programme has

been very carefully and sensitively planned, so students have a mature and well informed attitude towards the subject.

- Good use is made of well-planned links with other subjects and whole-school events to make full use of opportunities for students to practise some of the skills they have learnt in PSHE education.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education**

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

- Good support from senior staff ensures that the subject is a high priority for the school.
- Leadership is well informed and thorough, with a good record of innovation, including recent improvements to the planning of the curriculum.
- Self-evaluation is accurate and provision is monitored well in a variety of ways, so there is a clear vision about how to develop the subject.
- Very well-developed links with the local community help to make the curriculum more interesting and relevant. For example, students visited a local bank to find out about different savings accounts.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- developing assessment and its use to ensure that all students are suitably and consistently challenged in lessons
- making full use of teaching assistants in lessons.

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

**Susan Orpin**  
**Additional Inspector**