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Mr Barker
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Barker

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 May 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 a whole-school assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Pupils enjoy their work in PSHE and make satisfactory progress across the key stages. They develop a wide vocabulary in which to describe and express emotions, and work together well in groups and independently. However, their factual knowledge and understanding often lack depth.
- Pupils have a sound understanding of healthy lifestyles. They know which foods are beneficial and which to restrict; why they should eat healthy snacks and the importance of exercise for physical health.
- Pupils' understanding of aspects of relationships education is developed well in circle-time with an emphasis on friendship and mutual support. They say that they feel safe in school and know who to go to for help and support.

- More limited is pupils' understanding of the physical and social impact of the misuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs, although they do develop some basic knowledge in science lessons. However, they have not practised how to resist peer-group pressure.
- They have a clear understanding of aspects of risk such as road, fire and water safety, take part in anti-bullying week and have good knowledge of how to stay safe on the internet.
- Pupils are making satisfactory progress in their understanding and skills in relation to enterprise, financial capability and the world of work; this is developed through their participation in an enterprise activity and a timetabled week which focuses on money management.
- Older pupils have a basic knowledge of sex and relationships education but not enough is done sufficiently early to prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Lessons are characterised by good relationships, strong discipline and efficient classroom organisation. Teachers ensure that tasks are well matched to the ability of pupils and teaching assistants are deployed effectively.
- Over-reliance on Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials means that lessons are not always well planned. As a result, learning objectives are not always purposeful or matched to the activities that are carried out.
- Teachers use a range of techniques, such as computers, role play, games like the 'blush-o-meter' and external speakers, which involves and engages pupils in their learning.
- The development of PSHE-related skills is monitored and assessed well using SEAL assessment sheets, but these data are not used in planning and do not include the assessment of factual knowledge and understanding.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is satisfactory.

- PSHE is currently taught as SEAL themes, mainly by the subject leader who is a teaching assistant, and is supplemented by circle-time led by class teachers. Consequently there are gaps in provision and limited reference to the wider PSHE curriculum. However, well-developed plans and schemes of work which cover the whole of the curriculum are in place for next term when there will be a weekly discreet PSHE lesson.
- Circle-time is used well to debate and respond to current issues within individual classes. Anti-bullying week and food focus week effectively highlight different aspects of PSHE. The Healthy School accreditation has

had a positive impact, particularly with regard to awareness about healthy eating.

- A wide range of clubs and sporting activities is provided, and those who attend learn social skills such as teamwork and safety awareness. Some pupils take on responsibilities that help to develop their leadership skills, such as monitors or as members of the very active school council which has recently participated in the process of interviewing for a new deputy headteacher.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is satisfactory.

- PSHE in the school is at a point of transition. You are making welcome changes, and all policies related to PSHE are currently under review.
- The subject leader has enlisted well-targeted support from the PSHE adviser at the local authority. She has used this external help extremely effectively to produce new schemes of work and a wide-ranging and ambitious development plan to improve provision.
- Teaching and learning in the subject are not systematically monitored to inform improvement. However, monitoring is now planned and leaders have carried out an accurate audit of provision which has formed the basis of the development plan.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- implementing the planned schemes of work so that all aspects of the PSHE programme are covered in sufficient depth
- ending the over-reliance on SEAL materials and ensuring that class teachers plan lessons effectively with clear PSHE objectives
- ensuring that rigorous monitoring of PSHE teaching and pupils' progress in all aspects of the subject inform improvement planning.

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

Margaret Jones
Additional Inspector