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13 June 2012

Mrs M Davis  
Headteacher  
St Margaret's Church of England (Aided) Junior School  
Seaview Road  
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EX39 1EL

Dear Mrs Davis

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 24 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 five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is satisfactory.

**Achievement in PSHE**

Achievement in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Pupils work well together in class; they express their opinions with confidence and listen to each other's views. Their good social skills are developed further in Year 6 where all take on responsibilities such as playground leaders and buddies, librarians and office leaders.
- Although pupils' personal and social skills are developing well, their knowledge and understanding of social and health issues are more limited. Consequently their views are sometimes based on partial evidence.
- Pupils' awareness of health-related issues is stronger in some areas than others. They have a good understanding of the value of healthy food and exercise; are aware of the harmful effects of smoking but are less clear about the effects of drugs and alcohol or how to resist peer-pressure. All

understand well the importance of maintaining good friendships and they know who to go to if they have any worries. Older pupils know about the physical and emotional changes during puberty.

- During Anti-Bullying Week, pupils learn about the effects of bullying and their responsibilities to challenge it. However, their understanding of the impact of different types of bullying such as homophobic or racist language is limited.
- Pupils' economic awareness is developed through an enterprise activity in Year 6 and work on managing pocket money and shopping in Year 3. Pupils who manage the stationery shop and council leaders with responsibilities for charity fundraising have particularly good opportunities to learn about money management.

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

The quality of teaching in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Lessons are well planned and managed; relationships are respectful and behaviour in the classroom is good. Teachers use a range of resources, including interactive whiteboards to engage pupils' interest effectively.
- Teachers know their pupils well and very good support is provided for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they can access the curriculum. Teachers develop well pupils' emotional literacy so that they are able to understand and express their feelings.
- In the best lessons expectations are high but in the weaker lessons the higher ability pupils are not sufficiently challenged. In these lessons the range of questioning techniques is limited and there is an insufficient focus on developing pupils' subject knowledge.
- Assessment is at an early stage of development. While it identifies well those pupils requiring extra support it does not always provide feedback on how to improve and strive for excellence in PSHE.

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

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is planned to match pupils' needs and is informed by the views of pupil focus groups as well as local health and social data. Provision for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable, is particularly strong.
- Work on healthy eating, exercise, safety and positive relationships is effective and reinforced through extra-curricular activities such as cooking club, the healthy schools group and playground buddies/leaders. External agencies such as the lifeguard and fire services make a valuable contribution.
- The PSHE programme helps towards pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although their awareness of social and cultural diversity requires continued and sustained development.

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

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Leaders and managers are aware of current developments in the subject and have ensured that all curriculum statutory requirements are met. PSHE is well resourced in terms of materials, management time and training opportunities.
- Improvement planning is informed by the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. However, the assessment of learning in PSHE is at an early stage of development, and the focus on key issues such as drugs and alcohol, and challenging stereotypes is not yet sharp enough to ensure rapid improvements in pupils' awareness and attitudes.
- School policies relating to substance misuse and sex and relationships education are up to date, comprehensive and inclusive. However, policies relating to equalities and inclusion require updating to ensure that they meet the requirements of the 2010 Equalities Act by including all groups of pupils.

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

- improving pupils' knowledge and understanding of the effects of drugs and alcohol and how to resist peer-pressure
- further developing pupils' awareness of stereotyping and the impact of prejudiced-based bullying and language
- ensuring that work is sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of higher ability pupils
- updating the school's equalities policies to ensure that they are inclusive of all groups of pupils.

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

**Janet Palmer**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**