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12 July 2012

Mr R Fugill
Principal
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Dear Mr Fugill

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 4 and 5 July 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; short visits to 12 lessons and activities during the school's Olympic week theme and one assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Students have outstanding knowledge of how to stay healthy and live a safe life. Participation in sporting activities is high in school teams, the Play Football facility, and the Duke of Edinburgh Award, where many sixth form students achieve the gold level. A high proportion of students achieve sports leader qualifications.
- Students have a detailed knowledge of sex and relationships education, and drugs, tobacco and alcohol misuse. This includes domestic violence and for older students the dangers of drinking and driving.
- Students make good progress in developing their understanding and skills in relation to business, enterprise and personal finance. Mock interviews

and understanding of student finance helps to prepare older students exceptionally well for their next steps after leaving school.

- Many elements of the school's work contribute to the students' outstanding personal development. They take on many roles of responsibility with enthusiasm and maturity such as house and sport captains, and peer mentors. Students are able to discuss constructively and respect each other's differences; and examples abound of students whose circumstances make them vulnerable gaining confidence through participation in social activities.

Quality of teaching in PSHE education

The quality of teaching in PSHE education is good.

- Lessons are very well planned; teachers have productive relationships with students and manage behaviour very well. This ensures that students are keen to learn and participate. Learning objectives are clearly explained, so students know what they will be learning and doing.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use a range of well chosen and imaginative resources to support learning. This includes group and teamwork, good use of information and communication technology and discussion of moral dilemmas.
- Teachers create a safe learning environment that enables sensitive and controversial issues to be approached in a mature manner with students listening respectfully to different view points.
- In the best lessons the planned activities meet the needs of different groups and individual students. For example, extension tasks are assigned to challenge the more able students and appropriate support is put in place for those with literacy needs. Independent learning is successful and well managed.
- Detailed systems are in place to monitor students' academic progress and aspects of development related to behaviour, readiness to learn, self-management and independence. Assessment and marking of students' work are variable in both guidance lessons and subject-based PSHE education lessons.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE education is outstanding.

- The curriculum is vibrant, with a combination of discrete PSHE time, cross-curricular work and religious education events days. The curriculum is stimulating and imaginative, providing many opportunities for high-quality PSHE education, supported by a plethora of enrichment activities to promote wider personal development. Outstanding use is made of external speakers, theatre groups and health professionals to enliven the guidance programme.
- The sixth form programme is comprehensive, age-appropriate and tailored to meet the needs of individuals and groups of students. Sixth form

students are well prepared for higher education and future life. They have many opportunities to make a contribution to the school and wider community and are excellent role models.

- Support for students whose circumstances make them potentially vulnerable is extensive. For example, personalised programmes support students' anger management and personal and social development, with many compelling student success stories.
- The subject makes an outstanding and sustained contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This includes links with other countries such as Brazil, multicultural festivals, an extensive range of educational trips, a Muslim girls' prayer meeting and Christian Union group.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

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

- PSHE education permeates the life of the school and senior leaders play a key role in coordinating the subject so there is wholehearted commitment from staff and students. The high profile of the subject is reinforced with displays around the school celebrating students' achievements.
- Very effective monitoring and evaluation of the different aspects of the programme take place but monitoring of the quality of the guidance programme is more informal. Nevertheless, the school has an accurate view of the subject's strengths and areas for improvement with clear priorities for PSHE education in the whole-school improvement plan. Staff are self-critical and open to continued improvement.
- Many examples exist of good practice and innovation in promoting inclusion and personal well-being. Student voice is used well to inform future planning and provision.
- The different strands of PSHE education are coordinated extremely well, bringing together academic and pastoral guidance and leadership.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- formally monitoring and evaluating the guidance programme.

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.

Yours sincerely

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector