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Mrs Hardisty
Headteacher
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Bamber Bridge
Lancashire
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Dear Mrs Hardisty

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 July 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 are making satisfactory progress overall in understanding their health, including the benefits of nutrition, sport, and regular exercise. They feel safe in school because of the caring, nurturing ethos and the effective personal support from teachers and adults. They have a satisfactory understanding of the practical aspects of road, water and cycle safety.
- Pupils enjoy learning about money-management, developing their skills of financial capability and looking at productive ways of raising funds for the many good causes they support.

- Pupils are aware that bullying is unkind and upsetting but are not yet fully aware of all the different types of bullying that may take place; they are however, well prepared to deal with cyber-bullying. They generally know about drugs, alcohol and tobacco misuse but would like more practical strategies to resist peer-pressure.
- Pupils learn gradually about physical development and changes that take place, first in animals and later in the human body, as they prepare for puberty. Some pupils would benefit from this information sooner, especially aspects of gender-specific changes.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Teachers follow the PSHE schemes of work. In the better lessons learning is centred on lively and interesting tasks with good opportunities for questioning and shared talk. However, opportunities for independent learning and research are sometimes missed.
- In some lessons teachers tend to talk for too long with the result that pupils become passive listeners. In a minority of lessons the level of pace and challenge was limited, especially for pupils of lower ability, who could make more progress.
- Assessment, monitoring and recording of progress are not completed systematically which affects the planning for progression in subsequent lessons.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Statutory requirements for sex and relationships education are met in a thoughtful and caring manner. Pupils follow an appropriate spiral curriculum which largely meets their needs.
- Teachers and pupils value the themed weeks. Money week, Health and the Olympics weeks and the contribution of external visitors, such as the police and fire service, help to provide realistic experiences.
- Some themes are covered in-depth, for example, feelings and relationships, physical health and safety. However, other topics such as the different types of bullying, emotional safety and the effects of substances are not covered as comprehensively.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Leaders are genuinely committed to the well-being and achievement of pupils and to the subject and want the best outcomes for all.

- The monitoring of teaching and learning in the subject, including assessment and progress is not as rigorous as in other subjects and does not inform improvement planning.
- While staff teach the subject with confidence, recent subject-specific professional development to help teachers plan for learning and progression has been limited.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that pupils learn about the different types of bullying and develop strategies to resist peer-pressure
- developing and embedding systems for assessment, monitoring and recording pupils' progress in PSHE to ensure progression
- improving the monitoring of teaching and learning in PSHE in line with other subjects to help identify subject-specific training requirements.

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

Mary Lanovy-Taylor
Additional Inspector