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Miss B Long
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Long

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 17 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 three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils' personal development is outstanding. They are very confident and reflective, tackling thought-provoking questions with ease. They have a very good understanding of their feelings and how they affect their thoughts and behaviours. Pupils care for each other and respect different points of view. They share their thoughts within a welcoming, calm and trusting learning environment.
- Pupils have a good understanding of a healthy diet and the importance of regular exercise. They know how to recognise stress in themselves and others, and how to get help if needed. They understand the dangers of smoking, alcohol and other drugs. They have also learned how to resist peer-group pressure through the use of role-play.

- Pupils have learned how to stay safe, both in school and in the local area. They also know how to use the internet safely and have very good understanding of bullying in its different forms and how to deal with it.
- Pupils have a good understanding of changes to their bodies as they approach puberty and they are well informed about the emotional aspects of future adult life.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to manage a budget and have practised their skills when raising funds, for example to buy additional classroom resources, which they have requested.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is good.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilled in planning interesting and relevant activities that provide pupils with variety and keep them engaged. In an outstanding lesson about the relationship between feelings, thoughts and behaviour, the teacher ensured that all pupils were fully involved and that the tasks were suitably challenging for all abilities. However, in some lessons, teachers need to ensure that the level of work is more closely matched to all pupils' needs.
- Teachers are very skilled in ensuring that all pupils are fully included and many opportunities are in place for pupils' differing emotional needs to be met, in a very caring and supportive environment. Teachers know how to teach all aspects of PSHE, including those that are more sensitive, and they ensure that pupils have mature attitudes. Teaching assistants are highly skilled and make a significant contribution to lessons and other activities.
- Teachers make regular use of assessment to plan their lessons and usually ensure sufficient challenge. Teachers know their pupils well and accurately assess when they need additional help and support. However, assessment is not used to help pupils know what they need to do to improve.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is good.

- The curriculum links well with other subjects to make learning more interesting and relevant. The use of topics and projects are particularly effective – for example, the development of personal and social skills through 'Forest School' activities.
- Pupils and staff are consulted and have significant influence on the areas included in the programme. The range of enrichment activities is outstanding, including: a residential trip to Brecon, many opportunities for sporting activities, and cookery lessons.
- Curriculum planning is thorough and takes good account of local needs. However, gaps in some year groups have resulted in pupils missing some steps in their education. This is now being rectified.

- Very good opportunities exist for pupils to develop their social and emotional skills, and a good programme for financial capability helps them to develop money-management skills. The 'Healthy Schools Award' has helped develop pupils' understanding of healthy eating and the importance of exercise.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is addressed in a variety of ways. For example, pupils have made prayer cushions linked to the development of their personal qualities.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is good.

- Leaders have a clear and enthusiastic vision for PSHE which is well informed and has led to improvement in provision. The subject is valued by pupils and staff, making a significant contribution to pupils' learning overall.
- Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and the quality of lessons are developing well and leaders have an accurate understanding of areas that require further development.
- Leaders are well trained and up-to-date, and effectively share their expertise with other teachers who, in turn, feel confident and well supported.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing the planning of PSHE to ensure that pupils' current learning builds on learning in previous years
- developing assessment procedures to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve.

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

Susan Orpin
Additional Inspector