

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6644
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mr J Shield
Headteacher
Witchford Village College
Witchford
Ely
Cambridgeshire
CB6 2JA

Dear Mr Shield

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 and 12 September 2006 to look at work in Physical Education (PE).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of the Physical Education, School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy on standards and provision in PE and school sport.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff, pupils, the school sports partnership assistant (SSP) and partnership development manager (PDM), scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- Attainment in core PE at the end of both Key Stages is in line with the national average. Most year 9 boys showed an awareness of basic attacking strategies in football practices but these were less effective when attempted during a game. Year 9 girls demonstrated accurate

passing and stopping skills in netball and during practices could advise others on how to improve their play.

- GCSE PE results have declined since 2004 following a change of syllabus and some long-term absence in the department.
- Results in the BTEC sport and exercise course in 2006 are well above average.
- For the last three years over half of the pupils in Year 11 have achieved an award in sports leadership.
- Pupils enjoy PE; participation rates are high and many show a keen interest in sport.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Teaching overall is satisfactory and sometimes good, particularly in BTEC lessons.
- Teachers establish positive relationships with pupils, provide ample time to practice skills in pairs and small groups and provide satisfactory opportunities for them to plan and evaluate their own learning.
- Lessons do not always include a range of different activities that meet the needs of all learners.
- Monitoring of GCSE PE coursework is too infrequent and does not provide pupils with advice on how to improve their work.
- Assessment is not used effectively to inform pupils of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- All pupils in both Key Stages receive two hours of curriculum PE each week; many pupils add to this by taking part in the enrichment activities provided at lunchtimes and after school.
- A good range of accredited courses is provided in Key Stage 4 but insufficient guidance is given to pupils about which course is best suited to their needs.

Quality of leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- A recently appointed director of sport and a head of PE department share a clear vision for the subject. They understand the strengths and weaknesses of the department and have already taken prompt, positive action to implement a subject development plan designed to improve provision and raise standards.
- An adequate scheme of work is in place for all areas of activity.

- The department works effectively with a school-based leisure manager and SSP staff to enhance access to sport and promote links with sports clubs in the local community.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in lessons does not take place regularly enough.

The impact of the PESSCL national strategy

The PESSCL national strategy is having a satisfactory impact on improving the quality of provision in PE and school sport.

- Specialist sports college status provides enhanced staffing levels within the department. A PE teacher is employed to provide two and a half days per week of high quality support for primary teachers in its feeder schools.
- Better links with local sports clubs have led to an increased number of sports coaches working in school and an enhanced curriculum and enrichment programme.
- Whilst some professional development courses have been organised by the SSP, limited progress has been made of the PESSCL strategies' 10 outcomes for high quality PE to improve standards.
- The profile of specialist sports college status is not celebrated or promoted well enough around the school.

Inclusion

The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in PE.

- Pupils value being able to approach a school counsellor with their concerns or if they are seeking personal advice.
- Alternative activities such as aerobics and leadership awards have been introduced in Key Stage 4 to maintain interest and participation rates.
- All pupils can use the excellent on-site fitness facilities; a small number of pupils with low levels of personal fitness are given specialist advice on suitable exercise programmes.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improve GCSE PE results
- increase lesson monitoring to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- make better use of assessment to inform pupils of how well they are doing and help them identify what they need to do to improve.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PE and sport in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson
Her Majesty's Inspector