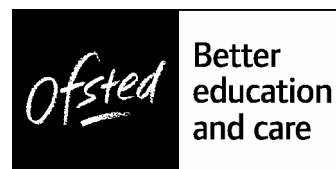


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Miss E Insch OBE  
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Dear Miss Insch

Ofsted subject inspection programme – Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and students, during my visit on 16 October 2006 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, the focus of my visit was on the following aspects: developments since the last inspection and food in schools.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our evaluation and reporting. Any published report is likely to list the names of the institutions visited, but we would not identify individual institutions within the report itself.

The evidence used to inform the judgements I made included: interviews with members of the school's leadership and management team, the Key Stage coordinators, the coordinators for PSHE, CEG and citizenship and members of the catering team, scrutiny of school documentation including the department evaluation form, analysis of students' work, observation of two lessons and discussions with students.

I undertook to provide a brief written version of the main points made in my feedback at the end of the visit, to support development in PSHE. This follows:-

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is outstanding.

## Achievement and standards

Standards and achievement in PSHE are good.

- The students are developing their subject knowledge and understanding and make good progress as they move through the school. They are able to reflect on and discuss their understanding of issues and show considerable respect for the feelings and views of others. They are right in their view that this contributes to the excellent relationships that exist in the school as they show interest in and respect for the views of their friends from other religious and community groups.

## The personal development and well-being of the students

- The students have an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Each week, they participate enthusiastically in PE and sport. The school meets the new food standards required for school meals.
- The choice of meals is wide and all special dietary needs are met. The students select healthy meals and enjoy the social opportunity that lunch gives them.
- As they move up the school they have appropriate levels of understanding of sexual health risks and of drugs and their effects. As well as recognising the signs of personal stress they recognise the symptoms in others providing support and seeking help as necessary.
- Throughout the school, the students have a good understanding of their personal achievements. At key points, such as Year 9 options and Year 11, they are well supported so that they are able to make choices that reflect this good understanding of themselves.

## Quality of provision

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers' lesson planning is good and is based on the detailed guidance provided by the PSHE coordinator. The subsequent lessons set high expectations of the students. Lessons proceed at a good pace with effective use made of a range of appropriate teaching methods that include paired and group work as well as general discussions.
- The students respond enthusiastically to the lessons and are eager participants in all aspects of their learning.

The quality of the PSHE curriculum is outstanding.

- The newly revised curriculum is based on the assessed needs of the students. The programme is planned effectively and provides continuity and progression of learning.
- The quality of the curriculum in the sixth form reflects that of the main school.
- The quality of support and guidance for the girls is outstanding.
- The students receive high quality guidance when making choices. Appropriate support and advice is available to the students on any personal issues they may have. They also support each other most effectively discussing any concerns they have about friends with their tutors.

### Subject leadership and management

The PSHE coordinator provides excellent leadership and management of her team.

- The coordinator has reviewed and written an exceptionally high quality development plan and scheme of work. All statutory requirements are fully met.
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is excellent. Good opportunities have been identified for the training of tutors. This has had a positive impact on their subject knowledge. The team of coordinators for PSHE, citizenship and CEG work well together.

### Inclusion

The students feel that everyone in the school is valued. Relationships between students and with the staff are excellent. Attitudes to learning are excellent. Teaching and the high quality curriculum is well matched to the needs of the students.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing a common approach to assessment in PSHE and citizenship
- considering having the same line manager for the PSHE, citizenship and CEG coordinators
- providing sufficient time for the PSHE team to meet.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Peter Griffiths  
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools