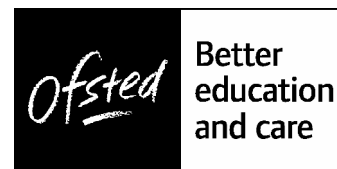


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Mr C Garroway
Acting Headteacher
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Dear Mr Garroway

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Monday 02 and Tuesday 03 October 2006 to look at work in physical education (PE).

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

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 and children, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's reports and observation of seven lessons.

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged to be inadequate.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is inadequate.

- Standards are below those expected in the activities of PE observed during the inspection (games, gymnastics and dance). This accords with the assessment data produced by the school. It represents a

significant decline in standards and achievement since the last inspection in June 2003.

- Pupils in Year 8 perform and apply skills in team games at the level expected for their age and very few work beyond this standard.
- Knowledge, skill and understanding across the four aspects of the attainment target are weak. Progress is inadequate when set against pupils' capability, their performance in Year 5 and national expectations.
- There is no observable difference between the performance of boys and girls.
- Pupils enjoy PE and participation levels are high. With the exception of a very small number of younger boys they behave well. They show good concentration during lessons and participate enthusiastically.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Teaching is satisfactory overall and allows almost all pupils to make progress in performance skills but insufficient attention is given to other requirements of the National Curriculum. For example, opportunities for selecting and applying ideas and improving knowledge and understanding of fitness and health are under-developed. Control and management of pupils are strong features of teaching but tasks for younger children are not always suited to their age and ability.
- Teachers' secure subject knowledge supports learning objectives and effective use is made of time to check outcomes.
- Assessment of pupils learning does not feature in day to day planning and there is no provision for a range of tasks matched to individual and group needs.

Quality of provision

The quality of the curriculum is inadequate.

- Although the school offers two hours of curriculum PE and the programme is broad, it is not well balanced. There is too much emphasis on providing invasion games, such as football, taught in short blocks of time.
- The school fails to meet the statutory requirement to teach swimming and to carry out and record regular health and safety checks.
- There are few schemes of work to provide progression and continuity in learning. Where they do exist they are not consistent in style or expectation to support teachers planning effectively.
- Pupils have limited opportunities to take part in a suitable range of extra curricular activities. They would like to have more intra and inter

school competitions. The residential experience offered in Year 7 is particularly appreciated.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- The new head of department is committed to improving standards and provision but it is too early to measure the impact of new initiatives. In the few weeks in post she has prepared a new staff handbook to ensure consistent practice together with a development plan to address many of the weaknesses. The development plan shows a clear vision for improvement and is sensibly linked to findings from the School Sport Co-ordinator (SSCo) programme audit.
- The workload generated to bring about the necessary improvements in the department and to operate effectively as the SSSCo for four partnership schools is unrealistic within the development plan timescales.

Subject issue – PESSCL Programme

- The school is part of the East Bedfordshire SSSCo extension scheme that commenced at the beginning of the autumn term 2006. It is too early to see any impact on provision.
- The relationships between the SSSCo programme and opportunities within the wider PESSCL strategy have not been clearly presented to senior managers in the school. Despite this, the manager of the partnership recognises the need for the school to take ownership of the programme and has provided suitable opportunities for this to happen.

Inclusion

- All pupils are included in PE lessons with the necessary support for those with learning difficulties.
- There was one good example of the curriculum being modified to address the needs of a talented performer in tennis but this was an exception. Extra curricular clubs provide competition opportunities for some higher performers in major team games. There are very few names on the gifted and talented register and teachers are not clear about the criteria for selection.
- The school has no record of pupils' involvement in outside clubs although a significant number benefit from these opportunities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure that teaching and assessment incorporates the use of the four stands of the National Curriculum and that pupils understand what they must do to improve their work
- make effective use of the time and funding provided by the PESSCL programme to bring about improvements in the quality and provision for PE
- monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in lessons more rigorously and set targets for attainment in the improvement plan.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop physical education in the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Howard Todd
Additional Inspector of Schools