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Dear Miss Newton

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Wednesday 11 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 three lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is good.

- Standards are well above expected levels for swimming in Year 6 and above the expected level for gymnastics in Year 2. In invasion games (football) standards are slightly above the expected level in Year 4 and similar to the expected level in Year 6. The Foundation stage profile indicates that children in reception achieved at or above the expected level for physical development when they entered Year 1.

- Pupils make very good progress in Key Stage 1, Years 3 and 4 and satisfactory progress in Years 5 and 6.
- The PE curriculum has a strong focus on skill development and improving knowledge and understanding of fitness and health. By Year 2 all pupils can perform rolls with good form and body tension and 80 percent successfully achieve forward rolls. By Year 6 all children can swim the expected distance of 25 metres unaided.
- Pupils are not so good at describing what they have done and how improvements can be made to their own and others' work. They enjoy physical activity and in lessons that engage their interest they become engrossed in what they are doing, participate enthusiastically and give good support to each other.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall.

- The quality of teaching is variable between good and inadequate. In good lessons the secure subject knowledge of the teacher ensures progress in learning. Suitable tasks are provided to improve skills and demonstrations are used effectively to show expectations. Good use is made of information and communications technology.
- Insufficient attention is given to questioning pupils to deepen their knowledge and understanding and in using their ideas and suggestions to progress lessons. Despite being in mixed age classes there is no use of assessment to provide tasks suitable for different ability levels.
- When teaching and learning were inadequate it was because the pace was too slow, tasks repetitive, the class leader had very limited understanding of the PE National Curriculum requirements and poor attitudes of some pupils distracted others.

Quality of provision

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- More than two hours of curriculum time are allocated to PE and the programme is broad and balanced. The time allocated to swimming is well in excess of the minimum required.
- A good range of extra curricular clubs adds variety and interest in PE and extends achievement further. The pupils enjoy competitions with other schools and they particularly like the residential trips that are provided. They would like more competitions and Key Stage 2 classes would like the opportunity to use large gymnastics apparatus in the hall.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The subject co-ordinator has benefited from attending professional development courses and the opportunity to meet colleagues at meetings provided through the School Sport Co-ordinator (SSCO) programme.
- From the self-evaluation undertaken, there is a good understanding of strengths and weaknesses in PE. A development plan has been provided to address many of the shortcomings and there is good capacity to improve.
- Insufficient attention is given to checking and supporting the work of adults other than teachers who are responsible for delivery of a high percentage of the games curriculum. No clear picture emerges as to how their work is used to cover the four National Curriculum strands or how their observations of pupils' work feed into assessment for learning and reporting.

Subject issue – PESSCL Programme

- The PESSCL programme is making a significant impact in the school. It has raised the profile of PE and is providing time for the subject co-ordinator, other teachers and classroom assistants to widen their subject knowledge and understanding of high quality learning.
- There has been a large increase in the number of extra curricular activities provided. Data provided by the SSCO shows that attendance at these activities is very high.
- Criteria for measuring how the strategy is improving standards and achievement in pupils' learning, particularly at the time of transfer from primary to secondary school, are not yet in place.

Inclusion

- There is a high level of involvement with physical activity and health promoting initiatives suited to all pupils in the school. Classroom assistants provide excellent support for pupils with learning difficulties to access the PE curriculum. There is no similar provision for gifted and talented pupils.
- Insufficient attention is given to planning and providing progressive work in mixed age classes.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- to continue to refine procedures for recording assessment of progress in PE and share targets for improvement with the pupils
- to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning in lessons and make procedures for vetting lessons taken by other adults more robust
- to plan work that ensures progression in mixed age classes and across the school.

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