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Mr McGeachie  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr McGeachie

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

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 11 October 2006 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PSHE the visit had a particular focus on working with parents.

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 yourself and the senior leadership team, the 'inclusion/special needs/child protection' team, two lunchtime supervisors, and a group of pupils from Years 3 to 6; scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of parts of four lessons (including 'circle times') and lunch with pupils from Years 5 and 6.

I undertook to provide a brief written report on 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 was judged to be Satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Pupils make satisfactory progress and standards achieved in PSHE are broadly in line with national expectations.

- As they move through the school most pupils become increasingly confident, developing their self esteem. They are well behaved as they move around the school, and follow instructions in class.
- They believe that they have a say in what happens to them and think that they are safe and well cared for in school. Inspection findings agree with them.
- Levels of attendance are inadequate for too many pupils. Others respond positively to the 'early bird' weeks.
- The morning breakfast club and lunchtimes are social occasions and pupils mix well together; when playing outside they are livelier!
- Pupils understand about how important it is to be healthy and they enjoy their food. The school 'worry box' provides the stimulus for raising issues of concern and pupils appreciate the anonymity this affords them. Many pupils benefit from the opportunities provided for them to act as peer mediators and playground friends.

### Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning of PSHE is satisfactory.

- Teachers know their children very well, taking the lead from the headteacher. They ensure the subject is taught in a safe and supportive environment where pupils know they will be listened to, and where they can listen to each other. Teachers' commitment to PSHE is good, as is their mastery of the subject.
- However, their assessment of the progress pupils make over time lacks rigour.
- In lessons the materials used are well selected. Teachers focus on the important issues for pupils and the school but do not evaluate how successful they have been.
- Reporting to parents on pupils' work in all aspects of PSHE lacks the appropriate detail. Teachers use the 'washing lines' in the classrooms well to clearly signal rewards for good performance, leading to the well considered 'golden time' during Friday afternoons.

### Quality of curriculum

The PSHE curriculum is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is relevant to the needs of all pupils and its content is age appropriate. It meets statutory requirements.
- The displays around the school reinforce well the messages about improving behaviour and taking responsibility.
- The school's reward system is well known by pupils and it encourages the appropriate responses.

- There is a good focus on eating healthily and pupils know how important it is to keep fit-though they say that there are not enough opportunities to play games and sport.
- Teachers have insufficient knowledge and understanding about PSHE provision as pupils move on to the next stages of their education.
- Gifted and talented pupils benefit from working with the School Council on the 'citizenship' project that is well supported by governors.

## Leadership and management

The Leadership and management of PSHE are satisfactory.

- The team of teachers work hard to create a climate within the school that is supportive of all pupils. Inspection evidence confirms they are successful in doing so.
- The school prioritises the development of pupils' personal and social skills, though it does not evaluate or record the progress they make in the relevant aspects of PSHE rigorously enough.
- Effective team working ensures that all opportunities are taken to reinforce 'messages'.
- Work with parents is ongoing, but there is scope to do more on important aspects of the subject.
- While management of the subject is satisfactory overall school leaders have yet to monitor and evaluate the impact of the various aspects of provision.

## Subject issue-working with parents

Work with parents and carers is developing. They are very supportive of the very successful morning club, often enjoying breakfast alongside their children and taking advantage of the school bank which they help to organise and manage. More might be done by some parents to improve pupils' attendance.

## Inclusion

The school is committed to providing for the full range of needs and abilities. Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully integrated into the life and work of the school, and this contributes to their personal and social development. The school's new leadership and management structure is very focussed on this 'inclusion' agenda. This is a school where every child really does matter. Commitment and care pervades all its work.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- to develop more rigorous methods of assessing pupils' achievement in PSHE
- to inform parents about children's progress in all aspects of PSHE

- to establish effective links with local secondary schools regarding pupils' progression in PSHE

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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Henry Moreton  
Additional Inspector