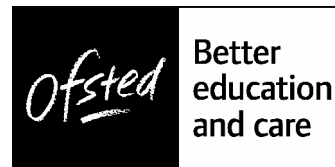


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20 February 2007

Mr J Clark
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Dear Mr Clark

Ofsted survey inspection programme 2006/07- physical education

Survey on the impact of the Physical Education School Sport and Club links (PESSCL) strategy on improving the standards of swimming in schools.

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 17 January to look at work in physical education.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on swimming and the impact of the PESSCL strategy in improving standards.

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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports and observation of two part lessons.

The overall effectiveness of swimming provision was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in swimming and physical education (PE) are good.

- The vast majority of pupils make good progress in swimming and attain the expectation to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Most pupils achieve this by the end of Year 4 due to good teaching. Good

opportunities are provided for those pupils not meeting the expectation by the end of Year 4, with intensive programmes for Year 5 pupils and 'top up' programmes for Year 6 pupils.

- Pupils make good progress in developing their gymnastics skills for balancing.
- Pupils enjoy gymnastic and swimming lessons. Behaviour is good and pupils work co-operatively. They are all engaged, enthusiastic and work diligently to improve their performance.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Swimming teachers are well qualified, the pace of lessons is brisk and work is clearly matched to the needs of individual pupils. A good range of flotation aids and teaching methods are used with beginners to quickly build pupils confidence in the water.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well. Lessons are well planned and translated into effective teaching that help the majority of pupils make good progress in swimming and gymnastics. More able pupils are not consistently challenged to achieve their best.
- Teachers use question and answer techniques particularly effectively to help pupils understand the steps in learning balancing skills. Pupils are given effective opportunities to evaluate and improve their own and others' work for improvement.
- Where assessment leads to good intervention with individual pupils or the whole class during lessons this also supports good progress. However formal assessment of pupils' progress only occurs in swimming, at the end of their block of work.
- Links with the PESSCL strategy have enabled good opportunities for staff development to improve their subject knowledge.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Pupils have good opportunities to access the local authority swimming programme, which covers all requirements of the PE National Curriculum.
- The PE curriculum is broad and enables pupils to make good progression throughout the school. The school does not meet the government target of two hours PE and school sport; however this has already been identified as an area for improvement.
- There is a good programme of enrichment opportunities with a mix of both competitive and club activities, however most of these are for pupils in Years 5 and 6. This programme has been extended through links with the PESSCL strategy. Pupils comment particularly favourably on the 'golden mile' challenge.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- Although there has been turbulence in the leadership of PE, this has not had a detrimental effect on teaching, learning and development of the subject. Senior managers in the school have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in PE and give good support to the subject. However there is no written action plan to support development further.
- Management of the swimming programmes is good. Good records enable clear identification of pupils who will benefit from the additional opportunities to enable them to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school.
- Schemes of work to guide teaching are clearly written, progressive and make good links between activities: for example, how to dodge a defender in hockey and football. However there is limited reference to the four aspects of the National Curriculum to support formal assessment of pupils' progress.

Subject issue: impact of the PESSCL strategy on improving the standards of swimming in schools.

- The PESSCL strategy has had limited impact on improving swimming standards at the school as provision and standards were already good.
- The Borough provides a secure swimming programme that enables the vast majority of pupils at the school to meet the National Curriculum expectation of swimming 25 metres by the end of Year 6.
- Good use is made of the intensive and top up sessions for the few pupils that did not meet the expectations. The top up scheme is particularly beneficial to a small but significant number of pupils from black minority ethnic backgrounds who join the school at different times of the year and have not previously accessed swimming.
- PESSCL is starting to have a good impact in the school particularly with increasing extra curricular activities and staff development opportunities.

Inclusion

- All pupils are fully included in PE and swimming lessons. Pupils with disabilities have good support from teaching assistants when they are swimming which enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils identified as gifted or talented have good opportunities to attend the local sports college academy and dance activities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- work towards implementation of two hours high quality physical education and school sport
- develop assessment opportunities using the four aspects of the physical education National Curriculum to better support planning especially for more able pupils
- write an action plan to support further development of the subject.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop physical education 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

Judith Rundle
Her Majesty's Inspector