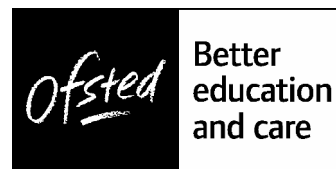


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Ms B Martino  
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Dear Ms Martino

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 31 January to look at work in swimming.

As outlined in my initial letter, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of the PESSCL strategy in improving the standards and quality of provision in swimming.

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 key staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of a lesson and swimming facilities.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in swimming are good.

- Standards are close to the national average and above the local authority average. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls but children of British Asian Muslim heritage make up a large proportion of the group unable to achieve the recommended 25 metres.
- Pupils make good progress because baseline data shows only a small percentage of pupils can swim before commencing the programme in Year 5.
- The great majority of pupils name the different strokes and they understand how swimming can contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Their knowledge and understanding of personal survival, dangerous locations for swimming and life saving techniques is good.
- Pupils unable to swim are confident in the water. Using a variety of buoyancy aids most are able to co-ordinate arm and leg movements to propel themselves.
- Behaviour is excellent and participation rates high. Pupils change quickly, listen carefully to instructions and respond immediately. They work enthusiastically and engage with repetitive physical tasks for sustained periods.

#### Quality of teaching and learning of subject

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- The positive attitudes of pupils ensured learning was satisfactory. Although management and control were strong features of the lesson the class was too big to ensure everyone received sufficient attention and time in the water. Teachers' knowledge of stroke development and personal survival skills is very good but the restricted teaching styles used do not allow pupils to make their own contributions. The pupils themselves say that there is little variety in the work they do each week.
- The class is sensibly split so that tasks can be suitably matched to the different levels of ability but short term planning for their needs is weak. Learning objectives are not provided and there is no clear progression based on assessment of learning.
- The school staff who accompany the pupils to the pool are not used as effectively as they should be to contribute to lessons.

#### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Nineteen hours of swimming are provided for pupils in Year 5 following a weekly programme throughout the year. This extends the work in physical education well beyond two hours per week and ensures continuity in learning. There is a very effective programme delivered by the local authority to teach pupils the importance of safe swimming and survival techniques.

- Pool facilities are very good and there is a wide range of good quality swimming resources.
- Enrichment opportunities for swimming have been extended to include competitions. More pupils would like the opportunity to be involved in competitive swimming.

### Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory in the school but inadequate overall.

- Swimming provision is not part of the school or partnership PE development plan this year but there is a strong commitment by you and your subject leader to further improvement. There is a detailed record for each pupil that measures their progress towards and beyond the National Curriculum requirement to swim 25 metres. Data has also been collected to provide a baseline from which further progress can be measured.
- The enthusiasm and commitment of the subject leader is reflected in the additional time given to organising and helping run competitions.
- A local authority information pack provides comprehensive coverage of all aspects of management and organisation of the programme. Some of the information it contains is dated.
- The school is not familiar with the contents of the Swimming Charter.
- There is no system to monitor teaching and learning in lessons in order that value for money judgements can be made. Findings from the evaluation of lessons undertaken by the local authority have not been communicated to the school.

### Subject issue – the impact of the PESSCL 'Top-Up' programme

- The 'TOP-UP' programme has made limited impact in the school or in the wider partnership. No children in Year 5 in the school attended the after school sessions provided. In the wider partnership 30% of the 335 pupils involved in the programme achieved the 25 metres Key Stage 2 expectation.
- Pupils in Year 6 in 2006 that were unable to meet the National Curriculum requirement, (the main target group for funding), were not given the opportunity to attend the 'TOP-UP' sessions.
- There has been no consultation between the school, the partnership and the local authority to discuss the most suitable approach to delivery of the programme.

### Inclusion

- Planned provision is good, but learning is disrupted by teacher absence. With no replacement, group sizes increase, more time is spent on

supervision and re-organisation and consequently there is less time in the water.

- The syllabus has a focus on skill acquisition and safety techniques with teaching not fulfilling the wider expectations of the Key Stage 2 National Curriculum.
- Three talented swimmers are included on the school register and the subject leader is making appropriate provision to ensure their specific needs are addressed.
- The choice of time for running the 'TOP-UP' extension programme was not appropriate for the majority of non-swimmers in the school. They are of British Asian Muslim heritage and the time identified was when they would normally be expected to attend mosque.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving the quality of teaching and learning in lessons by, writing medium term plans to include learning objectives that refer to all four strands of the National Curriculum
- agreeing a better system to monitor and evaluate learning
- making more effective use of teachers and teaching assistants from the school
- appraising the present approach to delivery and make any necessary changes to ensure 'best value' for pupils
- using the targeted 'TOP-UP' funding to ensure non-swimmers in Year 6 can access a course
- improving communication and defining the roles and responsibilities of the various partners involved in the delivery of swimming.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop swimming 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

I Howard Todd  
Additional Inspector