

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



17 April 2007

Mrs R Storr
Headteacher
Pye Bank CE Primary School
Andover Street
Sheffield
South Yorkshire
S3 9EF

Dear Mrs Storr

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 07 March to look at work in physical education (PE).

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 staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports, observation of a Year 3 swimming session and a discussion with the partnership development manager.

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

Achievement and standards in swimming

Standards in swimming are below expected levels.

- Pupils in Years 3 and 4 take part in the swimming programme and many of them visit the swimming pool for the first time when they swim at

school. Instructors reported that most pupils were very cautious about entering the water in their first lesson. By the time they stop swimming in Year 4 the school's records show that many pupils make good progress; almost all have achieved confidence in water, a good proportion has started to swim short distances but very few manage to achieve the National Curriculum swimming standard. Although pupils make good progress from the time they first start swimming lessons they do not receive sufficient consolidated swimming time to enable them to meet the expected standard by the time they leave the school. 'Top up' sessions had a limited impact on swimming standards in 2006.

- Having the chance to go swimming contributes well to pupils' personal development and well being. Pupils observed in the swimming lesson clearly enjoyed the experience. Those interviewed appreciate how learning to swim is an important life skill. They knew that swimming can be a contributor to leading a healthy lifestyle and staying fit. Pupils also knew that learning to swim helped to enhance their personal safety.

Quality of teaching and learning in swimming

The quality of teaching and learning in the swimming lesson observed was good.

- Pupils made good progress, building well on the progress made in the series of lessons since the start of term. Swimming is taught by qualified instructors employed by the local authority (LA). Lessons are well structured and follow the LA swimming scheme of work. Relationships between pupils and instructors are good. Pupils listen well and respond positively to the teaching. Pupils are suitably organised in ability groups and follow a detailed skill improvement programme. Teaching assistants and the Year 3 teacher support the sessions well, supervising changing, and encouraging and assessing pupils during the lesson.
- Instructors keep suitable records of pupils' attendance and achievements in swimming. The school also keeps records of pupils' progress and this matches the central record kept by instructors and the LA swimming manager. Little analysis of these records is completed by the school to evaluate the impact of the swimming programme and pupils' achievements. End of year reports are written for parents, providing information on pupils' progress in PE, but no comments are made about achievements in swimming.

Quality of curriculum including swimming

- The school's swimming programme is designed by the LA and instructors follow a prescribed scheme of work. The school has its own copy of the LA swimming manual. The LA organises additional provision for talented swimmers and those who may have learning disabilities, pupils from Pye Bank are not involved in this. 'Top up' sessions in the summer term 2006 were organised by the LA. They were not used to help pupils in Year 6 to

meet the national standard. Instead Year 2 pupils had the chance to swim as part of an introductory programme before lessons begin in Year 3.

- The school has used the PESSCL programme well to improve the quality of provision in PE. All pupils now have two hours of PE, usually one indoor and one outdoor session. The school's curriculum map illustrates which aspects of PE are covered in each term in each year group. Swimming and outdoor and adventure activities are included for specific year groups. The subject leader recognises the importance of ensuring pupils receive a balanced programme. Currently games activities take up a significant proportion of the Key Stage 2 programme.
- The quality of provision in gymnastics and dance has improved following training for staff and the introduction of new schemes of work. This has been organised through the sports partnership. Further training and a revised scheme of work are planned for athletics. The school runs an extensive range of lunchtime and after school clubs. These now cater for pupils in several year groups including those in Key Stage 1. Pupils also have the chance to take part in the festivals and tournaments run by the partnership. There are good links established with community sports clubs and pupils take part in coaching and mentoring schemes.

Leadership and management of PE including swimming

- The subject leader has recently taken on the responsibility of leading and managing work in PE. He has a keen interest in sport and gives good support to all partnership activities. The school's action plan for PE matches well with the local partnership plan and improvement priorities have been drawn up following an audit of current provision. Useful quantitative targets have been set for improvements in outcomes for pupils, including in swimming, although these require regular revision and upgrading. Currently, monitoring and evaluation require improvement and there is no school system for checking pupils' progress and evaluating outcomes in PE. The school has attainment records for pupils' physical development in the Foundation Stage but these are not added to in Key Stages 1 and 2. Although records are kept of pupils' progress in swimming these are not analysed or evaluated to plan for improvement.
- The management of the school's swimming programme is organised by the LA. Currently too few pupils reach the expected swimming level by the end of Key Stage 2. Improving opportunities for competitive swimming features in the partnership development plan but not a target to increase the proportion of pupils achieving the Key Stage 2 national standard.

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

- 'Top up' sessions had a limited impact on swimming standards in 2006.
- The management of 'top up' sessions in 2006 was not systematic or consistent across schools; consequently the impact on improving standards was limited. Currently arrangements for swimming require an urgent review at school and LA level.

Inclusion

- The school manages the swimming programme around the cultural preferences of parents who are Muslims. Many parents are unhappy about their children swimming in mixed gender groups after Year 4. Providing single gender swimming sessions has been considered but suitable arrangements for changing at the pool and employing female instructors and lifeguards for girls' swimming sessions is more difficult to organise. Consequently younger pupils swim instead. Even so, they do not have sufficient consolidated swimming time to enable them to achieve a suitable level.
- Additional sports activities have been organised through the PESSCL partnership and these have improved pupils' engagement in PE and sport. More activities are now available for younger pupils and girls. There is no specific or targeted provision for talented pupils or those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Improvements are planned in lunchtime play provision and older pupils are to be trained as junior play leaders.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- consider how to make the best use of the time available for swimming to enable more pupils to reach the national standard by the time they leave the school in Year 6
- improve assessment in PE, including through using Information Communication Technology (ICT), and teachers' recording and reporting of pupils' progress
- strengthen subject leadership and management to include more monitoring and evaluation of the impact of provision on outcomes for pupils
- consider establishing additional programmes in PE which provide further challenges for talented pupils and more support for those pupils who may have weaker coordination skills.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PE and 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

Robert McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector