

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



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Mrs J Taylor
Headteacher
Winteringham Primary School
School Road
Winteringham
North Lincolnshire
DN15 9NL

Dear Mrs Taylor

Ofsted survey inspection programme 2006/07- physical education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 26 February 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 school staff and pupils and scrutiny of relevant documentation. On this visit it was not possible to observe any swimming lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in swimming are satisfactory.

- At the beginning of Year 1, most pupils are unable to swim the expected 25 metre (25m) however, by the end of the swimming programme in Year 2, 60% of pupils are able to swim 25m. The remainder do not access top up lessons. Data collected from a parent questionnaire suggested that 83% of pupils are able to swim at least 25m by the end of year 6 and would mean that standards attained are

broadly average. Within this, there is a wide range of ability with some strong 'club' swimmers and some individuals who struggle with basic water confidence.

- In terms of the relative progress of different groups of pupils, there is no difference between boys or girls, pupils with physical disabilities, or between different ethnic groups.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in swimming is satisfactory.

- The teaching is undertaken by well qualified and experienced local authority trained swimming instructors. The quality of the teaching is reflected in the satisfactory progress the vast majority of pupils make. There are no opportunities for teachers at the school to develop their knowledge and skills of supporting the teaching of swimming.
- Lessons are consistently planned, but are often based on whole group activities rather than individual learning outcomes, which extend opportunities provided for pupils to acquire, practice and refine their skills, knowledge and understanding of swimming working at their own level of ability.
- Teachers establish good working relationships with pupils. There are clear systems and procedures to ensure that pupils work in a safe environment. This builds on the classroom based water safety lessons, which are attended by all pupils. Pupils respond well to the teachers but are not always clear about what they are intended to learn or what to do to improve. Attendance and participation rates are good and most pupils report that they enjoy lessons and gain a real sense of achievement when they make progress. Attitudes to learning and standards of behaviour are also good.
- Assessment practice is not fully in place. The pupils receive a baseline assessment at the beginning of the swimming programme and are grouped accordingly. However, the tracking of pupil's progress throughout the sessions is inconsistent. This means that the school is unable to monitor achievement accurately.

Quality of curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- The programme is well conceived and meets all requirements of the PE National Curriculum.
- Pupils access a weekly swimming lesson in two eight week blocks during Years 1 and 2.
- Provision is inclusive and access is open to all Year 1 and 2 pupils, including those with learning difficulties and or disabilities. This is not supplemented by top up lessons during the rest of their time in the

school. Schemes of work are suitable and curriculum mapping is appropriate.

- The school makes use of the local leisure centre pool. It has a well equipped learner pool and the more able pupils also make use of the main pool. There are good levels of learning aids and resources to support curriculum delivery.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are satisfactory.

- Leadership and management in relation to the provision of swimming within the school are satisfactory. There is a commitment by the school to deliver high quality provision for swimming. However, the communication channels between the partners have not yet developed systems and procedures, which enable a coherent programme to be delivered. Monitoring of teaching and learning does not ensure that pupils achieve well. Data is collected but analysis does not have the rigour to ensure that the school is able to monitor pupils' achievement. This restricts progress within the swimming programme.
- All the respective policies and procedures relating to safeguarding pupil' are satisfied. The programme runs smoothly on a day to day basis.
- The head teacher has a good awareness of the strengths and areas for further development. However, partnership meetings are not fully addressing emerging issues and taking action.

Subject issue - the impact of the PESSCL top-up programme

- The PESSCL strategy is beginning to have an impact on improving the swimming standards attained by pupils. However, the top up programme is not effectively targeting those pupils who have not met the 25m requirement and ensuring that the vast majority of them successfully attain it by the end of Year 6.
- The higher teacher to pupil ratios made possible by the top up funding is also beginning to have an impact on the quality of learning. However, monitoring of teaching and learning and assessment procedures are not being developed sufficiently to ensure that achievement is improving enough. Lessons are boosting the water confidence of many pupils.

Inclusion

- Teachers are supportive and this sets pupils at their ease and gives them confidence.
- There is good evidence that provision is equally accessible to all pupils at the school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving communication procedures between partners
- looking at ways to ensure better liaison between the school and the School Sports Coordinator
- begin to monitor more rigorously the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards
- the quality of assessment procedures and data analysis
- the review procedures to make sure that best use is being made of the PESSCL programme.

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

Roger Whittaker
Additional Inspector

