

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 0207 4216855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



07 June 2007

Mrs B Linthwaite
Headteacher
Newcomen Primary School
Trent Road
Redcar
North Yorkshire
TS10 1NL

Dear Mrs Linthwaite

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 22 May 2007 to look at work in Physical Education (PE).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PE, the visit had a particular focus on the continuity of learning between key stages.

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 children, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of children's reports and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is good.

- When children enter the Foundation Stage their physical skills are well below average. They make good progress in the Reception classes and many pupils achieve the expected level in their physical development before they enter Year 1. Nevertheless, standards remain below the national and local authority averages.
- Pupils continue to achieve well as they go through the school. Most pupils reach the expected level by the end of Year 2. In Year 6, pupils achieve at

least average standards and some exceed them. The school believes that standards in some aspects of PE are higher, notably in games, but are not as high in dance. Achievement in swimming is good; all pupils in Year 6 have achieved the National Curriculum swimming standard.

- Achievement in PE and sport is contributing significantly to pupils' personal development and well being. Older pupils know about the effects of exercise on their bodies and why it is important to keep fit as part of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils enjoy PE and sport and in all lessons their attitudes and behaviour are very good. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take leadership responsibility and participate in a number of tournaments and competitions.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Consistently good teaching is enabling pupils to make good progress. The three lessons observed had a number of strengths. They were planned well and skilfully resourced. Lesson objectives were made clear to the pupils and the pace of learning was brisk. All four strands of the PE programme of study were included and pupils were encouraged to evaluate and improve their performances.
- The emphasis on independence, taking responsibility and cooperation was particularly strong in the Year 6 lesson. Teachers used demonstrations well to support their explanations and pupils were managed very effectively; a very strong aspect of the lesson in Year 3. Developing pupils' speaking and listening skills was a key feature of the lesson in Reception. In two of the three lessons, the contribution made by teaching assistants to pupils' learning was very good. One aspect of teaching that requires strengthening is ensuring that all more able pupils are sufficiently challenged.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning well during lessons and they ask pupils to share their good performances. More formal assessment procedures have been introduced recently to enable teachers to judge pupils' achievements at the end of a unit of work. Currently pupils' progress is not tracked from year to year and attainment levels are not recorded, except in swimming. Teachers' reports to parents provide information on some achievements in PE but do not indicate whether pupils are working at an appropriate level or how they might improve.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Pupils have at least two hours of physical activity each week with lesson time supplemented with daily 'wake up and shake up' sessions. The curriculum map illustrates how the full range of PE activities are organised for pupils over the year. All aspects of PE are covered and the emphasis

on outdoor and adventurous activities is particularly strong; older pupils have the chance to take part in activities such as caving and canoeing. Good links are also made with other subjects such as geography; for example, with pupils trekking along the River Tees.

- The introduction of a published scheme of work ensures that teachers cover all aspects of PE and that suitable progression and continuity is ensured. Gymnastics training has strengthened the curriculum and helped teachers become more effective in teaching this aspect of PE.
- A good extra curricular and team sports programme is offered to boys and girls and 'huff and puff' activities are available for pupils at lunchtimes. Accommodation and resources are generally good and are expected to improve following planned building work.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management in PE is good.

- Subject leadership is effective and focussed on improving provision. The subject leader knows the strengths in PE and which aspects require improvement. This knowledge has been used effectively to introduce changes in planning and assessment which are proving beneficial. A clearly set out action plan identifies priorities for improvement but does not focus sharply on impact and outcomes for pupils.
- Monitoring and evaluation includes observing lessons and this is helping to identify weaknesses in teaching and learning. Not enough emphasis is placed on gathering pupils' perceptions about PE to inform future improvements. Good use is being made of the school's involvement in the PE, school sport and club links (PESSCL) programme. The subject leader recognises improvements are required in tracking progress and in securing a more effective transition programme with the partner secondary school.
- A useful team approach to subject management has been established and a subject committee meets termly with a member of the governing body to discuss and evaluate the quality of provision. The subject leader clearly recognises the potential that PE and sport have for transforming pupils' lives, consequently they are given a high profile in many displays around the school.

Subject issue – Continuity of learning between key stages

- Good emphasis is placed on children making a smooth transition from the Foundation Stage into Key Stage 1. Many practical activities are planned for pupils throughout Years 1 and 2. Teachers recognise the importance of building on from the early year's development of pupils' physical skills.
- Transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 is more focussed on pupils gaining an experience of PE on taster days rather than developing curriculum continuity and an understanding of teaching and learning in Years 6 and 7. Currently, there is little information passed between schools about pupils' standards and achievement in PE.

- Participation in the PESSCL programme has provided some positive links with the partner secondary school. For example, junior sports leaders help run festivals and tournaments held at the secondary school.

Inclusion

- All pupils are fully included in lessons and teaching assistants often focus their support on pupils who may require additional help. Less emphasis is placed in lessons on challenging more able pupils to reach higher standards. Pupils who are talented at sport are included on the school's gifted and talented register and they are encouraged to develop their particular strengths in local and regional teams and clubs.
- Good use has been made of a sports coach and involvement in the PESSCL programme to help improve provision and engage pupils in a wider range of physical activities. The school has achieved national healthy schools status and the caretaker is currently undergoing 'bike-ability' training so that safe cycling courses can be offered to pupils.
- A positive emphasis is placed on involving girls in sport with football, cheerleading, and gymnastics organised to increase girls' participation in after school clubs.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- tracking progress in PE to enable the subject leader to monitor standards and achievement as pupils move through the school
- strengthening transition from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3 through the transfer of information on pupils' achievements, and through gaining a better understanding of curriculum organisation and teaching approaches across the phases
- improving teaching in aspects of PE in which it is less effective, such as dance.

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

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector