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Mr Lester
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Lester

Ofsted Survey Inspection Programme: Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during our visit on 14 June 2007 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in our initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on:

- how the PSHE curriculum meets the specific needs of pupils in your local area, and how progress was tracked and assessed?
- what contribution PSHE makes to the future economic well-being of your pupils?

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 should we wish to cite specific aspects of practice we will contact the school first. 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 yourself and the deputy headteacher, the PSHE and Healthy Schools co-ordinator, Behaviour Champion, head of the nurture group and pupils from Years 6, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons, and lunch with the school council.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good.

- Knowledge and understanding are good. Pupils know what is meant by a balanced diet and how to keep healthy, although they do not always put this into practice. Older pupils have good knowledge of the dangers of smoking and alcohol and the changes that occur during puberty.
- They are aware of peer group pressure and have practised strategies to deal with this.
- Pupils are less secure in their knowledge of citizenship.
- Personal development is good and pupils are acquiring a sense of responsibility. They enjoy circle time and have positive attitudes towards PSHE. They behave sensibly and are developing the confidence and the vocabulary to discuss their personal feelings.
- Pupils show care and support towards each other, and are able to follow the routines which have been set up to help them learn. However, this is not yet consistent and the most challenging pupils still have to be sent out of class to the Behaviour Champion.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good.

- Staff are dedicated and hard working. They all act as excellent role models for pupils and build very good relationships with them. They have high expectations of behaviour but expectations of learning are not always as high.
- Planning is generally good and provides appropriate activities which stimulate and engage pupils. Where planning is not as good, there is not enough focus on measurable learning outcomes, and the lesson is too dominated by the teacher.
- Assessment is satisfactory. Skills and attitudes are assessed well, but there is no formal system for tracking the progress of knowledge and understanding in PSHE.
- Outstanding support and guidance is provided for all pupils and especially for those who are experiencing difficulties. Pupils feel safe and secure in school.

Quality of curriculum

The curriculum is good with some outstanding features.

- The PSHE curriculum permeates the whole school ethos. Teachers know the pupils and their families well so there is a good match of content and activities to meet pupils' needs.

- The school has gained the Healthy School Award with three local enhancements. This has had a positive impact, and enabled the school to address thoroughly the *Every Child Matters* agenda.
- The playground is an active place organised by the pupils themselves. This encourages healthy, physical activity and inter-personal skills.
- Visiting speakers are well planned into the curriculum at key points to supplement and reinforce provision and are much appreciated by pupils.
- The school provides a range of high quality enrichment and extra-curricular visits, clubs and experiences which compensate for the relatively deprived backgrounds of the pupils.
- All pupils feel their opinions are valued and listened to, through the excellent work of the school council which plays a powerful part in the life of the school.
- There is insufficient emphasis on the knowledge and understanding aspects of the PSHE curriculum.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management are good.

- PSHE has very high status in the school as a way of meeting the extensive needs of the pupils.
- The high quality of display work throughout the school covers every aspect of the *Every Child Matters* agenda and enhances learning.
- There is an outstanding sense of teamwork in the school with all communicating well and working together for the sake of the pupils.
- Links with outside agencies are effective in winning support for the school.
- Planning is not always coherently focused on learning objectives.

Subject issue: How well are pupils prepared for future economic well-being?

This aspect is good.

- Pupils are well prepared for adult life. They learn social skills, team work, cooperation and appropriate behaviour. Some innovative work has taken place with Liverpool University in raising the aspirations of older pupils.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

- The school is committed to providing for the full range of needs and abilities and so children who are 'Looked After' are given additional

help. Staff strive to ensure that all are included in activities and none are disadvantaged.

- Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into the life and work of the school, and achieve as well as other pupils. The one or two with English as an additional language are given extra support. All pupils are made aware of and appreciate the diversity of multi-cultural society.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- planning the PSHE curriculum coherently with more emphasis on knowledge and understanding
- planning lessons more carefully with clear, measurable learning objectives which can be assessed.

We hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE in the school.

As we explained in our previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Jones
Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools