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Mrs Graves
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Dear Mrs Graves

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 02 July 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 two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is good.

- All children reach expected standards by the end of key stages and many work beyond this by the end of Key Stage 2. The vast majority of children are able to swim the expected 25 metres by the end of Year 6. Most achieve better in games than other aspects of PE because of the predominance given to this in the curriculum.

- Children make good progress in acquiring, developing, selecting and applying skills. The majority have well developed abilities to observe and feedback accurately to each other especially in the Key Stage 1 class. More emphasis is placed on developing the quality of movement in games than other activities.
- Children have very good understanding of developing healthy lifestyles especially what foods are good for you and why it is important to exercise.
- Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and make satisfactory progress in acquiring skills.
- Behaviour is exemplary in lessons and in the playground. Children take exceptionally good care of each other in the mixed age classes and when working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They work cooperatively to help each other achieve. They show genuine enthusiasm and pleasure when someone succeeds.
- Children have good opportunities to select equipment at playtimes and lunchtimes to practise their skills. They all say how much they enjoy PE especially when they are 'learning new things'.
- Older children are good role models for younger ones in the class.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Staff have good subject knowledge that is used well to extend children's learning especially when using the evaluation and improvement strand of the National Curriculum. Good use is made of PE terminology for the different age groups and to make older children think more in depth about the tasks they are completing.
- Teachers are particularly effective at planning work to meet the needs of different age groups in one class and at asking questions appropriate to mixed age groups to ensure that all are engaged fully.
- Teachers and teaching assistants make good use of assessment in lessons and subsequently intervene to help children make good progress in the learning. Good reference is made to previous work to help children understand the links and how much progress they have made.
- Lessons have good pace; children are engaged and enthusiastic about PE because of the well planned range of activities and resources.
- Teaching assistants and support teachers play a full and active role in lessons and are deployed extremely well to support individual children or groups of children from different ages or abilities.
- Very good relationships enable high expectations to be consistently set for children, who listen to each other and work together to improve each others' work. The evident trust that has been created between staff and children enables them to accept constructive comments for improvement.
- Occasionally expectations are not high enough for higher attaining children who could be challenged more in lessons.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good overall.

- The curriculum is more balanced at Key Stage 1 than Key Stage 2 where children are not receiving their entitlement to gymnastics. In Key Stage 1 there is a well planned programme that is progressive in skill development and enables good consolidation of knowledge and understanding in gym, dance and games. Key Stage 2 children have very good opportunities in games, swimming and dance but are limited by the size of the hall in developing gymnastics skills, especially the use of apparatus.
- The subject action plan makes good reference to finding solutions for the delivery of gymnastics including the use of other local schools and working with an expert from the school sports partnership. However, as this was also a weakness at the last inspection it needs to be tackled with urgency.
- All pupils have a minimum of two hours planned PE time and frequently receive more.
- The school make excellent use of external coaches to extend both the curriculum and extra curricular activities, particularly games. These opportunities are also used effectively for teachers' professional development, especially increasing subject knowledge and confidence to deliver different aspects of the PE programme.
- A very good range of extra curricular and enrichment opportunities are offered to children including residential experiences for outdoor adventurous activities.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management in PE is good.

- As the subject leader for PE, you have good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject. You have set a clear direction for improvement and the action plan is prioritised well to tackle the lack of gymnastic opportunities and improve provision, including strengthening links with the school sports partnership.
- The PE policy is clear and succinct. You make good use of a commercial scheme of work that is adapted by teachers very well to meet the needs of mixed age classes.
- Assessment information is comprehensive in the Foundation Stage and includes useful evaluations for Key Stages 1 and 2 based on learning objectives. Teaching assistants and support teachers play a major role in observing and assessing progress during lessons. Information is transferred effectively to reports with the majority referencing the strands of the National Curriculum. However only a few set targets for future improvements.
- Staff have experienced increased opportunities to access professional development since involvement with the sports partnership.

Subject issue – Continuity of learning between key stages

- The transition in PE between the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is excellent because children are in the same class and the teacher has very good awareness of their needs and abilities.
- No information is passed between the primary school and secondary partner schools. This is a missed opportunity to support continuity of learning as the school holds good information on levels of attainment, curriculum and out of hours participation in activities.

Inclusion

- The school makes excellent provision for the inclusion of all children especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Good links are made with parents to enable continuity of support and raise expectations for participation and progress.
- All staff have high expectations for both verbal input and performance in lessons from all pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- tackling the lack of gymnastics opportunities for Key Stage 2 children with urgency
- considering more consistent use of reports to set targets for improvement
- finding ways to share the assessment information and achievements of pupils with partner secondary schools.

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

Judith Rundle
Her Majesty's Inspector