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Mr Buckley
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Dear Mr Buckley

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 05 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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be good with outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is good with outstanding features.

- Pupils make good progress in acquiring, developing, selecting and applying their skills and outstanding progress when they evaluate and improve their own and others' work. They undertake observation and feedback very seriously and have been taught very well to make pertinent

and helpful comments to support better work. Standards in the Year 5 class observed were above those expected for their age.

- Pupils in the mixed Reception and Year 1 class make at least good progress from low starting points in their physical development. They are given outstanding opportunities to acquire and develop ball handling skills and subsequently to select and apply these skills in small games.
- Higher attaining pupils are challenged well to think independently and find their own solutions to tasks.
- Pupils have outstanding opportunities for personal development in PE as a large number of them are trained leaders for 'huff and puff' activities at lunchtimes and others lead the whole school, plus a number of parents, in the daily 'wake and shake' session at the start of the school day. These pupils are currently training their own replacements for next year. All take their responsibilities very seriously and relish the chance to work with their peers in lead roles.
- The vast majority of pupils say how much they enjoy all aspects of PE, especially when they are trying new activities, learning new skills and making progress. As one boy said 'the best thing about this school is the teachers encourage you to do your best'. All pupils display very positive attitudes to learning. They are eager to participate, and undertake a wide variety of roles. They listen to each other well, cooperate in pairs and small groups, encourage each other to achieve and show genuine pleasure when a friend succeeds.
- Although the school do not hold formal assessment data on pupils' progress, photographic and video evidence and the amount of success achieved at festivals and tournaments indicate the high standards attained by the majority. The school have already identified the use of assessment as an area for improvement on the subject action plan and have good plans in place to tackle this swiftly.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good with outstanding features.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge that has been improved through a broad range of professional development opportunities. The subject leader has used her specialist skills extremely well to lead training days for the whole staff on the delivery of PE and has undertaken team teaching and coaching with individual staff to improve their subject knowledge and confidence to deliver high quality PE lessons.
- Teachers use subject knowledge highly effectively to help pupils make progress and understand their next steps in learning. Although staff make effective assessments during lessons that lead to high quality intervention with individuals and groups, the lack of assessment at the end of each unit of work is a missed opportunity to plan future work to meet pupils' needs even more closely. Staff do however have formally planned opportunities to exchange information on individual pupil's progress at the end of the year.

- An excellent range of teaching methods are used to motivate and engage pupils in tasks. Lessons are thoroughly planned and matched well to meet the needs of different ages and abilities, based on the teacher's knowledge of the group. Questioning techniques to include all pupils, check their understanding and help them to think independently are outstanding, especially in the mixed reception/Year 1 class.
- The pace of learning is good overall. Occasionally activities go on for too long and pupils are not moved quickly enough to the next stage of learning for their capability.
- Pupils have good opportunities to use stop watches in athletics although limited use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning.
- Teaching assistants are very well deployed to support individual pupils or groups. They have good questioning techniques and are fully engaged in lessons.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- The curriculum offers an outstanding programme at both key stages. It is extremely well organised to ensure continuous progress and consolidation of learning. All pupils have a minimum of two hours planned PE which is increased further when they are able to use the on site swimming pool.
- Commercial schemes of work have been carefully selected to meet the needs of pupils in the school. The subject leader has taken a strong lead in supporting teachers' planning, adapting schemes further and making helpful suggestions to ensure pupils receive high quality lessons. Staff very effectively select skill development ideas from one scheme and supplement these with activities from other sources.
- Excellent links are made with other subjects where possible, such as when studying the Tudors and learning their dances. However it is links with science that are a real strength. One display showing a model and explanation of the heart and circulation, linked to PE, is well above expectations for this age and closer to GCSE level work.
- Pupils in Key Stage 2 have an outstanding range of opportunities for club, competition and festival participation. The majority of pupils have represented the school in external events. The vast majority of activities are provided by a small number of experienced staff with subject expertise. The subject leader is selective in the use of external coaches and this ensures that good use is made of their expertise to support and extend school curriculum provision.
- The whole school 'wake and shake' sessions at the start of the day are an outstanding way to bring the school and parents together with shared physical activity.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management in PE is outstanding.

- The subject leader is a trained PE specialist and makes outstanding use of her knowledge and expertise to ensure continuous improvement of provision. She has excellent understanding of the strength and weaknesses of the subject and has set an exceptionally high standard for further improvement. The subject action plan is clearly prioritised to bring about further improvement including the use of assessment. Her excellent organisation skills enable teaching and learning to be very well supported across the school.
- The subject leader has used her expertise extremely well to provide professional development for staff and improve PE experiences for pupils since the last inspection.
- You provide outstanding support for the subject leader that enables secure monitoring and evaluation of provision, as well as your own expertise in teaching and extra curricular activities. As a result, PE has a prominent role within the school and children cannot speak highly enough of the opportunities both in lessons and during extra curricular.
- There is excellent deployment of equipment and facilities. It was a real pleasure to see so many pupils using the large adventure apparatus at every possible moment. The library system for the loan of 'huff and puff' equipment at lunchtimes enables pupils to make independent choice and is a terrific opportunity for all to become involved in active play.
- The school have fully embraced the school sports partnership that has helped provide additional equipment and activities.

Subject issue – Continuity of learning between Key Stages

- The transition between pre schools and the Foundation Stage is smooth because of the excellent links made to exchange information. The move between Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 is outstanding as a wide range of information is exchanged between teachers and a few are in a mixed age class where work is planned very well to meet their individual needs.
- Transition activities between Key Stages 2 and 3 include very good opportunities to exchange information on individual pupil's achievements, needs and interests although no final assessment data is exchanged on PE.
- The school sports partnership is planning to introduce a common assessment form for PE based on the levels of attainment and traffic light system to indicated achievements. This is currently planned to cover whole class attainment and does not indicate individual achievements.

Inclusion

- All pupils are included in PE lessons and all make at least good progress from their starting points.
- All staff have very high expectations of pupils' verbal input to evaluate work, performance levels, listening to each other and taking responsibility for a large number of roles in PE.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- introducing formal assessment procedures as quickly as possible to support even further individual progress and attainment
- considering ways of using ICT to support learning especially when pupils observe, evaluate and feedback to improve their own and others work.

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