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Dear Mr Harrison

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 05 December to look at work in physical education (PE).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, 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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports, and observation of three lessons and other activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is good.

- By the time children leave the Foundation Stage most have achieved the expected age-related level in physical development. Outcomes vary from year to year but in 2007 standards overall were just below the national average. Not many children achieved the early learning goal. Suitable indoor and outdoor learning opportunities are provided to enable children to develop a range of physical skills.
- The school judges standards to be at expected levels at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. In some areas of learning, such as in dance, they are higher than this. A majority of pupils are able to swim 25 metres before they leave in Year 6 and the 'top-up' swimming programme was used successfully to enable more pupils to meet the national standard last year.

- Most pupils make good progress in PE as they move through the school. In lessons, teachers' planning includes work in all four strands of the PE National Curriculum programme of study. Pupils are less successful in applying the evaluation and improvement strand.
- Pupils' personal development and well-being are significantly enhanced by their involvement in PE and sport. Older pupils are able to talk about why it is important to keep fit and healthy. They also appreciate that teamwork is a key aspect of many sports activities. In lessons, pupils cooperate together well. Behaviour and attitudes are very good.
- Older pupils act as play-leaders supporting break time activities. The school council has also discussed and published playground rules for games. Recent improvements in the school's enrichment programme and links to community sport have augmented pupils' engagement, enjoyment and achievements. Pupils in Year 6 are taking part in a 'schools on the move' pilot which requires them to wear pedometers to record their daily physical activity.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Three good lessons were observed during the inspection. Teachers' planning is very detailed and includes key elements such as learning objective success criteria, assessments and subject vocabulary. Support from teaching assistants is good, particularly for modelling and supporting assessments. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. The pace of lessons is brisk and pupils make good progress.
- Good subject knowledge enables teachers to assess pupils' responses effectively in lessons and guide improvements. Staff are currently recording some assessments of pupils' attainment, but progress is not tracked systematically from year to year. Teachers' reports for parents vary in quality and do not include enough detail on their children's achievements. Information Communication Technology (ICT) was not used to support teaching and learning, including assessment, in the classes observed.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Pupils have two hours of timetabled PE each week. All expected areas of learning are included in the PE curriculum but the school's long-term plan is insufficiently clear about what is taught in each year group. Teachers link PE to other subjects well and pupils were able to talk about how dance had been used to support their learning in mathematics, history and science. The school has gained the 'Activemark' and is currently working towards achieving healthy school status.
- The extra-curricular programme is very good, well supported by dedicated staff and enjoyed by pupils. Boys and girls of all ages take part in many activities and there are good links with community and professional sports clubs. The Arsenal 'double club' is particularly popular. Involvement in the PE, school sport and club links (PESSCL) programme has helped to

improve provision. Pupils also have the chance to take part in several local tournaments and competitions.

- Accommodation and resources are adequate. There is sufficient space for outdoor activities and this is enhanced by having a small astro-turf pitch. The school makes good use of three halls to ensure PE continues if the weather is inclement. There are plans to improve access to the outdoor play space for Foundation Stage children. Some old and heavy gymnastics equipment requires replacement.

Leadership and management

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- The team approach to leading and managing curriculum subjects works well in PE. The commitment and enthusiasm of the staff responsible for leadership in PE are key drivers in bringing about improvements. The subject leaders know how they see the subject developing. The subject action plan identifies suitable priorities but is insufficiently clear about outcomes for pupils and monitoring and evaluation procedures.
- Subject leaders keep a check on teachers' planning and they are also monitoring teachers' assessments. Some lesson observations have been completed recently by senior managers; the subject leaders will undertake more in the next two terms when provision in PE undergoes a full subject review. Staff have benefited from attending training courses to improve their subject knowledge. The school gives PE and sport a very prominent profile and this is appreciated by pupils.

Subject issue – continuity of learning and transition between key stages

- Transition from Year 6 to Year 7 focuses mainly on school familiarisation and pupils' pastoral needs. The family structure of the local sports partnership provides pupils with the chance to visit the partner secondary school. Pupils meet and compete with other primary pupils and Junior Sports Leaders from Years 10 and 11 help run the festivals and tournaments. Currently, records of pupils' achievements in PE are not passed to partner schools and teachers are not discussing or planning for continuity of learning across the key stages.

Inclusion

- All pupils are included in PE lessons and have the chance to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities. Support from teachers and teaching assistants in lessons helps to engage less confident pupils. Partner working and cooperation between boys and girls is particularly good. Talented pupils are recognised and helped to extend their skills in sports clubs outside of school. The school acknowledges that some able pupils could be challenged more and their higher achievements recorded.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- helping pupils to improve their evaluation skills including using ICT to record and discuss their performances
- establishing a workable system of assessing, recording and reporting pupils' achievements in PE, and passing a summary profile of information to 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector