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Mrs Glenys Lees
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Lees

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on Friday 28 September 2007 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, pupils and parents, scrutiny of relevant documentation, observation of three lessons and of outdoor play at lunchtimes and in Foundation Stage.

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards are broadly average.

- From a below average start, pupils make good progress in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and 2. They reach nationally expected standards in Year 2 and Year 6 and a few pupils reach higher standards in games and athletics. Girls and boys achieve similarly. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities achieve especially well.
- Pupils make good progress in acquiring skills and understanding of games. They plan gymnastic sequences in line with expectations for their age. Pupils gain confidence in recognising good performance. Pupils understand how to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

- Standards in swimming are below average. Many pupils, often those with Asian backgrounds, have very limited experience of swimming before they start lessons in Year 5. These pupils do not often meet the national expectation for swimming by the end of the year-long course of swimming lessons.
- Physical education makes a very strong contribution to pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy lessons and behave extremely well. Most pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, develop good levels of confidence. Many older pupils develop good leadership skills.
- Above average numbers of pupils take part competitive sports and extra-curricular activities.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Almost all PE lessons are taught by the subject leader. During the visit, class teachers taught the observed lessons because the subject leader was unavoidably absent.
- Teaching and learning are good and result in pupils making good progress and achieving well. Strong features of teaching include teachers' very good relationships with pupils; very well managed classes; high levels of physical activity in games lessons; good guidance on how to improve in games especially. Teachers and teaching assistants ensure that all pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and make good progress.
- Children in the nursery benefit from enthusiastic and lively activities that help them to listen and follow music and actions at a good pace.
- Detailed lesson planning sets out clear progressions in acquiring, developing, selecting and applying skills. Lesson activities often include pupils in evaluating their own performance and that of others, making good use of information and communication technology to do so. However, lessons plans do not always identify these skills nor do they identify how pupils will develop knowledge and understanding of health and safety. Lesson planning does not often identify what more is expected of the more able pupils. These gaps in planning are not helpful to class teachers especially on the occasions when they teach the PE lessons.
- Assessment is carried out regularly and informs teachers' lesson planning, making sure, for example, that work is revisited where it is necessary. It is not always clearly focused on the four different strands of PE. Pupils enjoy using filmed material to support their analysis of performance.

Quality of the curriculum

An outstanding curriculum meets pupils' needs and interest very well indeed.

- Much careful thought is given to providing effective support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children whose physical

development is particularly below that expected are identified from an early age. Teachers and support staff pay particular attention to developing their motor skills in lessons and at play.

- The recently introduced programme to support Key Stage 2 pupils with weak gross motor skills has had a positive effect on their personal development and progress. The programme is about to be extended to include a wider range of pupils.
- All pupils experience at least two hours of high quality PE and school sport each week and the school is working towards increasing this for all pupils.
- The curriculum experienced in lessons includes a good balance of activities and, in Year 6, offers all pupils the opportunity to develop leadership skills.
- An above average number of pupils from all age groups benefits from an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
- Pupils' experiences in PE are greatly enriched by visiting coaches, dancers, gymnasts, and a residential visit for Year 6 pupils.
- Talented pupils are identified and are encouraged to develop their skills and talents in local clubs. Pupils have been particularly successful in football and athletics.
- A great deal is done to develop pupils' understanding of healthy living aided by the many experiences offered during the annual Healthy Living week.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are good.

- The deployment of a full-time specialist teacher to teach physical education across the school is a reflection of the school's very strong commitment to providing high quality PE and school sport for all pupils. The school recognises the value of PE and school sport in promoting their personal development and academic achievement.
- The subject is very well led with enthusiasm and great commitment.
- The school has worked very effectively with the local school sport partnership. This has led to an increased range of activities within the curriculum and out of school hours, and greater participation in high quality opportunities.
- The subject leader teaches most lessons but there are occasions when lessons are taught by class teachers. Whilst worthwhile professional development, particularly in relation to leadership, is experienced by the subject leader, it is less clear how the skills of class teachers are developed.
- The school has an accurate understanding of its strengths and areas for improvement within PE arising from robust systems of self-evaluation.
- Good attention is paid to ensuring the health and safety of pupils and staff, but risk assessment has not been carried out for every area where PE activities take place.

Subject issue

- The arrangements to support continuity of learning between key stages are good.
- Well planned schemes of work support pupils' good progress from age three to eleven.
- Information on pupils' progress is passed on from year to year and helps to inform planning. For example, at the end of Foundation Stage, children whose physical development is particularly weak are identified and they receive extra support.
- Pupils are well prepared for the move to secondary school. Many events, organised within the local school sports partnership, give pupils the opportunity to visit secondary schools and work with the teachers. The secondary schools are informed of pupils' individual talents and achievements and their levels of achievement at the end of Year 6.

Inclusion

- The school's approach to including all pupils is outstanding.
- Girls and boys are equally enthusiastic and committed to PE activities. An effective programme of support for some pupils in Key Stage 2 with gross and fine motor skills has resulted in the enhancement of these pupils' personal and physical development.
- Teaching assistants and teachers offer sensitive yet challenging support for pupils with disabilities, tailoring activities to meet individual needs. They ensure a good balance between support and developing pupils' ability to learn independently.
- Talented pupils are identified and encouraged to take part in local clubs and competitions.

Areas for Improvement, which we discussed included:

- finding ways of providing opportunities for all pupils to reach National Curriculum expectations in swimming
- ensuring that more able pupils are fully challenged in all lessons and that work is well matched to pupils' abilities
- develop lesson planning and assessment systems to include all strands of the National Curriculum
- ensuring that all teachers continue to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of teaching PE
- complete risk assessments for all working areas.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop physical education 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

Gillian Salter-Smith
Additional Inspector