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Mr M Rodaway
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Dear Mr Rodaway

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 10 and 11 October 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 students' work and observation of four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good and standards are above average.

- Students in Key Stages 3 and 4 make good progress. Almost all students reach at least the standards expected for National Curriculum PE by Year 9.
- Around 20% of each year group follows the GCSE course as part of core PE lessons. Results are usually above average and reflect students' good progress and achievement.
- Students' achievement in A Level is satisfactory. AS results are below average. Too many students do not succeed in gaining a grade and around half of the AS students do not continue to A2. A2 results are

broadly average with few students reaching high grades, reflecting the below average attainment of students when they start the course.

- Standards are particularly good in games. Students are able to evaluate their own and other's performance well. They acquire and develop skills at a good rate and select and apply their skills well. Students know what types of activity help to maintain a healthy lifestyle but are not always sure how much exercise is needed.
- Sports teams achieve success at local and county level in football, rugby and badminton. Individual students achieve considerable success, sometimes at national level in swimming, athletics, handball, basketball, football, badminton and basketball.
- PE makes a strong contribution to students' good personal development. The majority of students enjoy lessons and have a positive attitude to learning in PE. A recent concern about the lack of participation by older students has been tackled, in part, by broadening the range of activities within the curriculum in order to interest and motivate all students.
- Students in the sixth form and other year groups have been successful in taking on leadership roles, often supporting activities with primary age pupils successfully.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

Teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject particularly of GCSE and A-Level courses.
- Students following examination courses appreciate the way that teachers explain theory within the context of practical activities and sporting situations helping them to understand complex theories and concepts.
- Teachers give clear demonstrations and explanations of activities and often ask probing questions that challenge students.
- Students respond well to teachers' high expectations of behaviour and learning. Relationships are very good and lessons are very well managed and run smoothly.
- Teachers identify objectives for learning in each lesson and make clear to students what is expected of them. Objectives usually relate to acquiring and developing skills and selecting and applying skills and strategies. They do not always cover the other strands in the National Curriculum when it would be appropriate to do so.
- Learning takes place at a good pace and activities build up skills, knowledge and understanding progressively. Activities are well matched to students' needs so that all students, including the more able are challenged.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning in GCSE and A Level theory. It is used less frequently to support learning in more practical situations.
- Students are regularly involved in peer and self-assessment. They are beginning to understand what the next steps in learning are in different activities. They have not been set challenging individual target levels in National Curriculum PE.

- The department assess students regularly in each activity but they do not record progress within all the different strands of the National Curriculum.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- A good programme of extra-curricular opportunities, mainly in games and athletics activities, is well attended by over a third of students. The Duke of Edinburgh award scheme is popular among older students.
- Many students have the opportunity to take part in competition through the broad range of inter-house sporting competitions.
- Older students follow leadership courses successfully.
- The school meets the national target for involving students in two hours high quality PE and school sport each week for Year 7 and 8. It is not yet meeting the target for older students. The proportion of students meeting the target has increased this year with a broadening of the range of activities offered out of school hours. These have included rock climbing, mountain biking, skateboarding and dance, in preparation for a dance festival.
- The curriculum for Key Stages 3 and 4 is traditionally focused on games activities. The PE, school sport and club links (PESSCL) strategy is helping the school to develop and broaden the curriculum. Table tennis is being introduced this year and there are plans to broaden the range of activities further as local facilities become available, for example for orienteering and cycling.
- Schemes of work support planning for Key Stage 3 work and lessons for GCSE and A Level are well planned. There is limited planning to underpin progression in Key Stage 4 for students not following the GCSE course.
- The school offers GCSE PE and AS and A2 Sports Studies but there are few opportunities for vocational accreditation for students age 14 to 19.

Leadership and management of PE

Leadership and management of the subject are good.

- The contribution PE and sport make to the school's overall ethos, and the achievement and personal development of all students is highly valued by school leadership. This strong commitment is reflected in the considerable funding gained and allocated to improving the outdoor facilities and resources which are currently in a poor condition.
- The senior leaders and the head of subject have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement within the subject. Systems used by senior leadership to evaluate performance in the subject are robust and challenging targets are set for students following examination courses.
- Leadership of the subject is good. A strong, enthusiastic and highly committed PE team help to maintain students' good achievement.

- Systems of self evaluation within the subject are in the early stages of development. Nevertheless, they have led to identifying the right priorities for improvement. Appropriate plans are in place and being acted upon to bring about improvement. Analysis of students' progress in examination courses is secure, but there is not yet enough emphasis on analysing students' progress in National Curriculum to fully inform developments.
- Detailed risk assessments are in place for working areas and activities.
- There is good capacity to improve further. The department has brought about improvements to the curriculum and approaches to assessment. These have led to greater involvement of students in PE and sport and have improved learning in lessons. Resources used to teach GCSE and A-Level have been improved and are of very good quality.

Subject issue

Action taken within the subject to assure continuity of learning between the key stages is satisfactory.

- The continuity of learning from Key Stage 2 to 3 is well supported by the school sports partnership. The work of coaches and the school sport co-ordinator with primary pupils and staff has helped to raise standards, for example, in rugby.
- Primary age pupils take part in many sporting events held at Mosslands School, helping them to become familiar with their surroundings, staff and students in preparation for the move to secondary school.
- Information on pupils' achievements in primary school PE is not available to staff in the secondary school.
- Information on students' progress in Key Stage 3 and 4 is available to teachers and is used to help set challenging targets for students following examination courses.
- Students are well informed by PE staff of what is involved in accredited course in GCSE and A-Level but some students are not well guided by staff as to the suitability of the A Level course to meet their needs and abilities.

Inclusion

- Students with learning difficulties achieve well in physical education and sport.
- More able and talented students are encouraged to extend their skills through involvement in school activities and in the many local sporting clubs with which the school has well established links.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work well together to adapt activities and ensure that students with physical disabilities make progress in lessons. The school has allocated additional resources to ensure that these students have adequate support in PE lessons and experience activities suitable to their needs.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure more older students take part in at least two hours of high quality physical education and school sport per week by broadening extra-curricular provision, and providing more opportunities for accreditation and vocational opportunities
- improve the use of assessment information to ensure that progress in all elements of the National Curriculum is tracked and that challenging targets for individual students in National Curriculum PE are set
- strengthen systems of self-evaluation within the subject to better inform priorities for improvement
- develop the use of ICT to support learning in more practical situations.

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

Gillian Salter-Smith (Mrs)
Additional Inspector