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Mrs Evans
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Evans

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 08 October to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PSHE, the visit had a particular focus on:

- how the PSHE curriculum meets the specific needs of pupils in your local area, and how progress is tracked and assessed; and
- the contribution made by PSHE to the future economic well-being of your pupils.

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, analysis of pupils' work and observation of lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is outstanding.

- Pupils enjoy their work and have positive attitudes towards PSHE.
- From reception to Year 6, pupils make outstanding progress in developing their subject knowledge and understanding.

- Pupils are able to talk about their understanding of issues such as relationships and feelings.
- They are confident when expressing their feelings and when responding to questions. The school has been very successful in identifying those pupils with low self esteem. The intervention programmes the school has implemented have helped the pupils to develop their self-confidence and to play an active and informed role in the school.
- Pupils' knowledge of the key aspects of a healthy lifestyle is excellent. Their enthusiastic participation in the daily exercise sessions reflects their positive attitudes to personal health and well-being.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The quality of PSHE teaching is outstanding.

- Teachers' subject knowledge is exceptional as is their lesson planning. They employ an excellent range of teaching approaches so that they are always appropriate to the needs of the pupils.
- The teaching encourages creativity. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were encouraged to use a wide range of resources to illustrate feelings. They were extremely inventive in the use of paper, card, paint and colour to express their ideas.
- Assessment practice is good. The PSHE coordinator has introduced a system of key criteria against which pupils are assessed. Teachers understand the criteria and how they should be used.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding.

- The PSHE curriculum has a clear structure and content and is well matched to the assessed needs of the pupils.
- The school has recently achieved healthy schools status and this has influenced the planning of PSHE.
- The PSHE curriculum and its associated policies meet statutory requirements in relation to drug use and misuse and to sex and relationships education.
- The high quality of the joint planning and the leadership of the coordinator have ensured that PSHE is most successfully taught through other subjects. The links are particularly effective with physical education and science.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are outstanding.

- The quality of development plans and scheme of work are excellent.
- Monitoring and evaluation procedures are very effective. Both you and the coordinator undertake regular lesson observations. Judgements made are both detailed and accurate.
- The coordinator recently successfully completed the national Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training programme. The positive impact of the CPD is apparent in the excellent quality of the policies, schemes of work and, most importantly, the teaching and learning.

Subject issue: How well are pupils prepared for future economic well-being?

Provision for economic well-being is excellent.

- Through the curriculum and other activities, pupils have access to a wide range of experiences such as membership of the year and whole school councils, acting as play leaders, leading the daily fitness sessions and participating in the reading schemes.
- As a result of such high quality provision, pupils understand what it is to be a good learner. They work very effectively in teams. They act sensibly and are effective in the management of their own learning.
- Pupils' social skills are excellent.

Inclusion

Castle Cary is an inclusive school.

- The school's values embrace inclusion and the values of the school are reflected in the PSHE curriculum and procedures.
- The PSHE coordinator and the teachers understand how well different groups do in PSHE, making sure that particular no pupils are disadvantaged and promoting their participation in PSHE. They have effective strategies for promoting good relationships and managing behaviour.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- making use of the wide range of evidence of pupils' achievement gathered by teachers for assessment of pupil' progress
- the more frequent involvement of pupils in the assessment of their own work.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE 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

Peter Griffiths
Additional Inspector