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Mrs Julia Dodson
Headteacher
Acocks Green Primary School
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Dear Mrs Dodson

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 Tuesday 04 December 2007 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 you and your deputy, the Healthy Schools co-ordinator and the inclusion manager, discussion with a parent support worker also a governor at the school, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of four lessons and discussion with three groups of pupils.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PSHE is good with some outstanding features.

- Pupils develop good personal and social skills as they move through the school. Their knowledge and understanding of eating healthily is particularly impressive.
- Older pupils talk with confidence and are able to: explain changes that happen to their bodies; explain the difference between legal and illegal drugs; and have an appropriate knowledge of different political issues such as the name of the prime minister and where parliament meets.
- They have developed personal strategies to resolve conflicts and are comfortable to turn to an adult to intervene if appropriate.
- Pupils have fewer opportunities to practise strategies for resisting peer pressure through role play situations.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The overall quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers work hard to prepare detailed PSHE lessons each week that contain a range of interesting activities. However, learning objectives are too broad and not sufficiently referred to throughout lessons.
- Assessment is thorough and regular, and ensures pupils make progress.
- Teaching assistants are highly trained and effective in supporting individuals or groups of pupils who require specific or differentiated support.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the PSHE curriculum is outstanding.

- The PSHE curriculum is rich and draws on a very wide range of exciting resources such as the new 'Heartstart' materials that develop a progressive awareness through the school of first aid.
- Schemes of work are thorough and detailed. Regular assessment opportunities are built into every half term unit of work. Pupils' knowledge is measured at the beginning and the end of every unit.
- The extra-curricular activities are popular and oversubscribed and allow pupils to develop active lifestyles through a range of well-organised clubs.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are outstanding.

- The co-ordinator has amassed a very wide range of quality resources that have been incorporated well into the schemes of work.
- Inspirational and open leadership supports all staff well. Collaborative work with colleagues and staff training opportunities ensures that all staff are confident to use new resources and adopt new approaches to teach PSHE.
- The leadership is constantly rising to the challenge of change and adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of new initiatives.

The contribution made by PSHE to the future economic well being of pupils.

PSHE makes a good contribution to pupils' future economic well being. They grow in confidence and self-esteem and can communicate well with adults. They can express their opinions and are developing a breadth of understanding of political and global issues. However, enterprise and financial management skills are currently less well developed.

Inclusion

Vulnerable pupils are identified and supported well by the inclusion manager and a range of external agencies. Carefully designed programmes demonstrate that social skills intervention programmes are successful and pupils re-integrated into the main school well.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure that all lesson planning has a sharper focus on measurable learning outcomes and that learning objectives are regularly re-enforced throughout the lesson
- develop more opportunities for role-play as part of learning activities.

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

Clive Kempton HMI
Her Majesty's Inspector