

12 March 2008

Miss Chris
Headteacher
Westgate Primary School
Summerhill Road
Dartford
Kent
DA1 2LP

Dear Miss Chris

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 March 2008 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 assessing the PE contribution to the outcomes of Every Child Matters, particularly being healthy.

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' reports and observation of three lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in PE. Children enter the Foundation Stage with physical skills which are below expected levels. Progress in the Reception class is at least satisfactory and a majority manage to attain the expected level in physical development before they enter Year 1.
- Standards in Year 2 and Year 6 are average. The school's assessment and tracking records show that most pupils in each year group are working at the expected Levels 2 and 4. The subject leaders believe that older pupils' skills in games are stronger than they are in other areas of learning. Records show that progress in swimming is good for Year 4 pupils but last year about a quarter of pupils in Year 6 left the school unable to swim 25 metres.

- Pupils' personal development is enhanced by their involvement in PE. Pupils interviewed and observed in lessons clearly enjoy taking part in PE. They show mostly good attitudes and behaviour, and engage fully in the activities. Pupils interviewed knew about the importance of taking regular exercise to get fit and how this links with other healthy lifestyle decisions, such as eating a balanced diet. Older pupils know about the personal skills they develop when playing sport, such as teamwork and tactical awareness. The school is planning to introduce play-leader training for Year 5 pupils to give them more responsibility and involvement at lunch time.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

- Teaching and learning are satisfactory. All PE lessons are taught by coaches employed through a private company. Three lessons were observed during the inspection and each followed a suitable structure. Lesson plans identified learning objectives but these were not shared explicitly with the pupils. Relationships were good and pupils were managed well. The support given by teaching assistants helped individuals and groups of pupils to participate fully.
- Teaching focussed mostly and successfully on helping pupils to acquire, develop and apply their skills. Demonstrations were used effectively to help pupils adopt correct techniques when catching and throwing. Pupils made satisfactory progress but not enough assessments were made during the lessons to help pupils move on more quickly. Too little emphasis was placed on involving pupils in evaluating their responses and discussing how they might be improved. The lesson for the Reception class did not include enough opportunities for children to develop their independence and creativity.
- Reports written for parents on children's progress in the Foundation Stage are good. In contrast, those written for pupils from Years 1 to 6 are much less informative. Recent improvements in assessment and progress tracking are helping subject leaders to gain a better understanding of pupils' standards and achievement. We discussed how ICT could be used more effectively to support teaching and learning, including assessment.

Quality of the curriculum

- The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. Published schemes of work have been purchased to support teachers' planning in games, gymnastics and dance but not for athletics. It is unclear how these are translated into medium term plans produced by the coaches. Swimming instructors follow a structured swimming association scheme. A curriculum map has been drawn up to show which area of learning is taught in each term and all pupils have at least two hours of PE each week. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have the opportunity to attend a residential visit which involves them in a number of outdoor and adventurous activities.
- Accommodation and resources are adequate. Indoor facilities are very good and once building work is complete, outdoor facilities will be considerably improved. 'Huff and puff' equipment has been purchased for pupils to use at lunchtimes but playground zones are not in place because

outdoor space is currently restricted. Subject leaders acknowledge that more PE equipment is needed to improve the range and number of resources. Teachers organise after-school clubs in activities such as dance and general sports. Overall participation rates are modest and clubs are not available for Key Stage 1 pupils. The school has begun to take advantage of being involved in the school sport partnership to extend pupils' involvement in tournaments, competitions and community sports.

Leadership and management of PE

- The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Subject responsibility is temporarily held by three senior members of staff. A detailed action plan includes the key priorities for improvement. We discussed how it might be improved by adding more detail on how the actions to be taken will impact on pupils' standards and achievement. Primary Link Teacher training has been completed by one member of the subject leader team. Teachers have not considered how they might use the ten high quality outcomes, identified in the school sports strategy, to enhance provision. A newly appointed member of staff with expertise in PE will assume the subject leader role next year.
- Positive improvements have been introduced to assess pupils' standards and to record achievements in Years 2 and 6. A small number of lesson observations have been completed by the senior team and points for improving teaching and learning fed back to the coaches. A very useful and comprehensive collection and analysis of pupils' perceptions about PE has been completed. This has enabled senior leaders to identify gaps in provision and plan further improvements.

Subject issue - PE contribution to the outcomes of Every Child Matters (ECM), particularly being healthy

- Pupils' involvement in PE makes a positive contribution to the outcomes of ECM, particularly being healthy. The school's pupil perception audit revealed that most pupils enjoy taking part in PE. It also showed that pupils understood the impact of PE on their physical and emotional well-being. Learning in PE is linked well to science and personal, health and social education, so that pupils understand about personal hygiene and healthy bodies. Safe cycling classes are available for older pupils and those from Years 4 to 6 swim for one term each year. Clubs organised before school, such as judo, encourage some pupils to improve their attendance. Assemblies are used effectively to reward pupils for positive participation and achievements in PE, when they receive swimming certificates or other sports awards.

Inclusion

- All pupils are included in PE lessons and teaching assistants are deployed effectively to support the engagement of pupils with additional needs. Pupils from particular year groups who are talented at sport are identified and selected to take part in sport-focused, challenging activities organised by the local secondary school. Older pupils are given the chance to attend

a residential visit, with the school ensuring all pupils are included regardless of their circumstances. The school plans to be included in 'top-up' swimming sessions this year to enable more Year 6 pupils to reach the National Curriculum swimming standard before they leave.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- reviewing the way in which PE is taught and deciding how to make the best use of teachers' expertise and the support of outside coaches
- keeping a close check on the quality of lessons and the curriculum provided by outside coaches
- continuing to establish a workable system for assessing, recording and reporting pupils' progress and achievements in PE, including using ICT
- making the most of the school's involvement in the local sports partnership to improve provision and raise standards.

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

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector