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Mr Harrison
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Dear Mr Harrison

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 07 February to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, 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, the assistant headteacher, the PSHE co-ordinator and the Foundation Stage manager, Year 5 and 6 pupils and representatives from the school council, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement

Achievement in PSHE is outstanding

- Pupils have very good understanding of what is meant by a balanced diet and the importance of regular exercise. Most of them apply their knowledge by eating healthy packed lunches and participating enthusiastically in the range of physical activities provided for them.
- They know how to keep themselves safe, and they have learnt about racism and bullying and why these are not to be tolerated. They are not quite as clear about why they should not use homophobic language.
- Older pupils understand about the changes that occur at puberty and about the effects of drugs and alcohol on their bodies. Younger pupils are able to explain their feelings clearly using appropriate vocabulary.
- Children in the Foundation Stage can follow instructions, take turns at speaking and listening, name parts of the body and understand the importance of washing their hands.
- Personal development and behaviour in PSHE lessons is excellent. Pupils feel very safe and secure. They have positive attitudes to PSHE and really enjoy their lessons. As one pupil said "we learn lots and it is good fun".
- Pupils are mature and thoughtful. They listen to each other well and are confident and articulate when presenting their opinions.

Quality of teaching and learning in PSHE

Teaching and learning are good, with some outstanding teaching in the Foundation Stage.

- Lessons plans in PSHE are generally excellent with clear learning objectives, differentiation and assessment activities. Occasionally there are too many learning objectives.
- Staff know the pupils well, and act as excellent role models. There are high levels of care and concern for individual pupils.
- Teachers use a range of active methods which engage pupils well.
- Assessment is good and regular checks are kept on the progress pupils are making in PSHE.

Quality of the curriculum

The PSHE curriculum is good.

- There are high quality schemes of work in place which give good guidance to teachers. Social and Emotional Aspects of learning (SEAL) materials are beginning to be used to provide extra resources for PSHE.
- Pupils have good opportunities for physical activity both at playtime and in lessons.
- The Healthy Schools award has had a positive impact, particularly on the development of a whole school approach to healthy eating.

- The PSHE curriculum is enhanced by a range of after school clubs, excursions, residential trips and regular visits from outside agencies promoting healthy living.
- The school council provides an experience of active citizenship for pupils, as all pupils, not just those on the council, are given the opportunity to express their views.
- Sufficient time is allocated to delivering the PSHE curriculum and circle time but there are a few gaps in coverage.
- There is little liaison with the local secondary schools over the PSHE curriculum, although much pastoral information is exchanged.

Leadership and management of PSHE

Leadership and management are outstanding overall.

- You and your senior leadership team place PSHE at the heart of the work of the school, and PSHE is given the status of a core subject.
- The relatively new PSHE co-ordinator is well supported by the leadership team. She is taking advantage of the opportunity to complete the PSHE certificate course and she has carried out several lesson observations.
- The school has an excellent sex and relationships education policy.

Subject issue: the contribution made by PSHE to the future economic well-being of pupils

Pupils are very well prepared at each stage of transition for their next stage of learning.

- Pupils have many responsibilities across the school.
- Many pupils engage in enterprise activities by raising money for charity, and several have set up a school magazine.
- Older pupils can explain the skills and qualities needed for different jobs, and they study a unit on personal finance.

Inclusion

Inclusion is outstanding.

- Pupils have a good understanding about what is meant by racism and why it should not be tolerated.
- Specific help is provided for pupils who are at an early stage of learning English.
- Sensitive differentiation takes place in PSHE lessons using different groupings, and Learning Support assistants to help pupils with learning difficulties.
- The school has excellent links with outside agencies which support pupils who have been identified as needing specialist help.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving the PSHE curriculum further by ensuring more complete coverage of major aspects, integrating and extending the use of SEAL materials and liaising with the secondary schools over the PSHE curriculum.

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

Margaret Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector