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Mrs G Reynolds
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Reynolds

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 Thursday 07 February 2008 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 an interview with you and your PSHE co-ordinator, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, discussion with two groups of pupils, observations of three lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement

Achievement in PSHE is good

- Pupils develop the confidence to speak in front of their peers in lessons and in assembly. They know that their contributions are valued.
- Pupils' personal and social skills are good. They are polite, well-mannered, take on roles and responsibilities in school, co-operate well and care about each other and the school community.
- Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of sex and drugs education, but they do not have sufficient opportunities to practise resisting peer group pressure.
- More able pupils achieve well in PSHE, especially when individually targeted to enter local and national competitions, such as designing a sports logo. Their self-esteem is enhanced, notably when their contributions receive national recognition.

Quality of teaching and learning in PSHE

Teaching and learning are good.

- Assessment in PSHE is good. End of unit assessments both by teachers and self-assessment by pupils clearly show that pupils are making progress. Areas for development annotated in their books, tell pupils how to improve their work. Marking in books also allows pupils to engage in written dialogue with the teacher.
- Teachers plan a good range of activities in PSHE lessons that allow pupils to work independently and respond to pertinent issues.
- Pupils respond well to these lesson activities and enjoy sharing their work with the rest of the class.
- Teaching promotes pupils confidence and self-esteem well.
- Learning objectives for each lesson are too broad.

Quality of the curriculum

The PSHE curriculum is good.

- There is a clear mapping of the PSHE curriculum across all classes. A regular weekly lesson is planned and well-supported with a good range of appropriate resources.
- The curriculum is rich and responsive to specific local need. It supports individual vulnerable pupils well, both in school and through the use of external agencies.
- Good opportunities are provided through assemblies to celebrate achievement in PSHE and these are linked to similar themes taught throughout the school.
- There are insufficient opportunities for role-play in the PSHE curriculum.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- The conscientious co-ordinator leads the subject well, responding to initiatives and enthusiastically supporting staff.
- The PSHE professional development of staff is a regular feature of school in-service training.
- Governors are closely involved in supporting PSHE, some using their professional skills.
- The local authority has supported the co-ordinator well with courses, resource materials, advice, assessment guidance and further development points.
- The school has an accurate self-assessment of the overall effectiveness of its PSHE provision.

Subject issue: economic well-being

Pupils are well prepared for future economic well-being.

Pupils have a strong sense of purpose in what they do. This is especially evident in their personal and social skills, such as writing letters of appreciation, and letters expressing concern about local or national issues. They have made calendars, had their work published in national books, and designed logos that are now being used nationally. Their personal and social skills, their confidence and self-esteem are all good. The school organises a lot of visits to places of interest, and other events are planned which help pupils apply their knowledge to real-life experiences and situations.

Financial awareness is also developed well by pupils costing meals, and researching the financial implications of purchasing items for the school production. This level of confidence has prepared older pupils well for their transition to secondary school.

Inclusion

Inclusion is good.

The increasing number of vulnerable pupils in the school are well-supported, settle quickly and take their place in the well-ordered school environment. All make good progress in their social skills and in their confidence and self esteem. All take part in at least one after school club.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- plan more opportunities for role play in the PSHE curriculum
- break down objectives for units of work into child-friendly language appropriate to each lesson.

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
Her Majesty's Inspector