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Miss Cleland
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Cleland

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 13 and 14 March 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 wellbeing 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 yourself, the assistant headteacher, the careers/PSHE co-ordinator, a group of Year 9 and Year 10 students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of seven lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is outstanding.

- Students' behaviour and their attitudes to learning PSHE are outstanding.

- Students thoroughly enjoy PSHE, especially discussion, and want to spend more time learning the subject.
- Students have a very good knowledge about how to keep safe and healthy.
- All students are making exceptional progress in developing confidence, becoming independent and taking responsibility.

Quality of teaching and learning in PSHE

The quality of PSHE teaching is good.

- Relationships between teachers and students are outstanding.
- Many teachers are confident in the use of interactive and stimulating activities and their expectations of students are suitably challenging.
- A few teachers are less secure in the use of suitable teaching strategies for PSHE, so at times their lessons lack stimulation.
- The care, guidance and support for students are outstanding, so students feel very safe.
- Assessment is developing, but does not yet clearly show students' rates of progress.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not yet widely used in the subject.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- The PSHE programme is comprehensive, challenging and enjoyable, meeting all students' needs well.
- Other subjects make a strong contribution and links are clearly made, so students perceive skills as transferable. However, this does lead to some duplication at times.
- The lesson time available for PSHE is sometimes insufficient for extended discussion and there is some imbalance of time allocated to PSHE for different year groups.
- The enrichment of the PSHE curriculum is excellent, through a wide range of relevant extracurricular activities and an extensive list of visitors.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- The welcoming and supportive ethos makes a very strong contribution to students' personal development and wellbeing.
- Senior leaders have a clear and accurate view of the strengths and areas for development.
- There is not yet a clear and formal monitoring programme for the teaching of the subject.
- A few teachers lack specialist training and support in the subject.

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

Students are prepared for adult life in an outstanding way.

- Students from Year 7 onwards begin to explore the world of work through careers education. Later their experience is extended through Enterprise activities and work experience. In the Sixth Form, students are prepared for higher education.
- The careers and enterprise education are strengths, providing students with a clear insight into the world of work, motivating them and helping them to understand the skills they will need.

Inclusion

Inclusion is outstanding.

- All students are suitably challenged in most PSHE lessons.
- The harmonious atmosphere and avid discussions between students from a wider range of ethnic backgrounds means they are exceptionally well prepared for life in a multi-cultural society.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- develop more assessment tasks for PSHE.

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

Susan Orpin
Additional Inspector