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Mr A Puttock
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Puttock

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 10 and 11 March 2008 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial discussion and introductory 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 students (including sixth form students) in your local area, and how progress is tracked and assessed; and the leadership & management offered in the area
- the inclusive contribution made by PSHE to the future economic well-being of your students.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting. 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 and a deputy headteacher, the Life Studies and Citizenship co-ordinators, the Director of Sport, a range of senior and middle curriculum managers, students from Years 9, 11 and the sixth form, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of tutorials, citizenship lessons and school assemblies. A visit to the Teenage Life centre was included.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is judged to be outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is outstanding.

- Students know what is meant by a balanced diet and how to keep healthy. Students have very good knowledge of the dangers of smoking, drugs and alcohol. Students are secure in their knowledge about what it means to be a good citizen and show wide understanding of global issues.
- Students' developmental understanding of sex and relationships issues is outstanding.
- Personal development is outstanding. Behaviour is good and students have very positive attitudes to PSHE.
- Students enjoy PSHE. They work well together and are able to listen, reflect, discuss and present their own opinions confidently.
- Post-16 achievement in PSHE reflects the outstanding strength of tutor support and embedded cycles of care and guidance.

Quality of Teaching and Learning of PSHE

The quality of PSHE teaching and learning is outstanding.

- Co-ordinators have very good subject knowledge. Well developed schemes of work exist and the team-leaders act as managers to the large tutor teams and purposeful role models to the students.
- Teaching in KS4 uses a range of learning styles including planned access to information communication technology (ICT) areas. The quality of teaching and learning is regularly monitored by the co-ordinators and also recorded.
- All the teachers observed made very good use of lesson planning and facilitated students' engagement in discussion and problem-solving.
- Assessment is good overall. It uses the end of Key Stage statements for Year 9. The school has innovated with tracking and recording students' progress in PSHE and citizenship – trialling different forms.

Quality of curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding.

- The school has gained the Healthy School Award and this has had a positive impact on lunchtime, healthy eating, and the curriculum. A vocational initiative has been started in catering and GCSE technology teaching in Food has developed co-curricular materials linked to healthy cookery.
- The school has already made very good progress, in writing a substantial review document on PSHE and citizenship for wider consultation and decision-making.

- Cross-curricular elements and sports specialist status offer excellent support to the core personal development curriculum. Extracurricular contributions by media and performing arts, and continuing dialogue with Dorset police, assist student understanding of health, personal security and safety.
- A wide range of extracurricular activities such as Duke of Edinburgh programmes, field trips, music events, sports competitions, community outreach, charitable fund-raising and enterprise-linked outings exist as a planned cycle of entitlement within a Christian ethos. These support further acquisition of PSHE skills in a wider context.
- Regional Student Parliament elections were held at the school. The student voice and school council play an important part in school life and students feel valued and listened to, with good insights into the working of democracy and global issues.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are outstanding.

- The senior leadership team and middle managers are very well integrated. PSHE and citizenship are at the heart of the school community and there is a clear sense of excellent direction and purpose.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of impact and outcomes from the PSHE provision, citizenship teaching and cross-curricular integration is evident.

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

Pupils are well prepared for adult life.

- Effective use is made of 'Enterprise' within citizenship coursework, contributing to significant fund-raising for charities, along with well-organised work experience, careers fairs, business partnerships and a range of external speakers.
- Older students feel well prepared for the move to employment, further education and higher education institutions.
- Students are all provided with a range of curricular initiatives in which they take responsibility and are expected to use their initiative.
- There is a unit of work on 'Money Matters' for Year 11 students and advice for post-16 students on the realities of student finances and accommodation.

Inclusion

Evidence has been seen of very good inclusion practice.

- The school is committed to providing for the full range of needs and abilities.
- Students from traveller backgrounds are fully integrated into the life and work of the school, and achieve as well as other students in PSHE.
- The school has expanded its safe 'after-school' bus access – to allow students to enjoy much broader after-school provision of clubs, sports and wider activities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- continue development of a summative system that records individual PSHE progress, but that also can support oversight of groups of students
- complete the process of PSHE review – initiated by the school in response to the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's initiative to 'refresh and develop' against new national guidance.

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,

Sa'ad Khaldi
Additional Inspector