

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



11 July 2008

Miss Whitehead
Headteacher
The Willows Primary School
Tayfield Road
Woodhouse Park
Manchester
Lancashire
M22 1BQ

Dear Miss Whitehead

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 09 June 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 (ECM) 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 discussions with you, your deputy, the partnership development manager and the school sport coordinator. I also met with pupils, lunchtime supervisors and undertook scrutiny of relevant documentation. In addition I inspected three lessons and observed pupil activities at lunchtime.

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged outstanding.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' standards are above average, which represents outstanding progress considering they join the nursery with severely underdeveloped fine and gross motor skills.

- During the Foundation Stage pupils make good progress, through a creative, fun and diverse curriculum plus good teaching. Consequently they reach standards that are broadly average by the time they enter Year 1. Pupils go on to attain very high standards by the end of Key

Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Lesson observations during the inspection confirm these high standards and superb progress.

- Boys and girls make equally good progress, and are developing the four strands of PE National Curriculum well. Pupils with learning difficulties make the same outstanding progress as other pupils in the school.
- Pupils 'can't get enough of PE' in this school. Their behaviour and attitude are usually beyond reproach and they demonstrate great enthusiasm for learning. There is good social harmony and pupils cooperate very well, facilitated by caring and supportive staff.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

In the small number of lessons seen the quality of teaching is good with some exemplary features. This is promoting very effective learning.

- Teachers, trained lunchtime supervisors, specialist coaches and school sport partnership staff combine very effectively to deliver high quality learning experiences for pupils. As a group they have good subject knowledge and use it well to enhance pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of PE.
- Teaching is enthusiastic, creative and often dramatic, which helps to engage and sustain pupils' interest. A range of stimuli are used to good effect to encourage learning and pupils thrive in the supportive learning climate staff foster. There are good links to national strategies and pupils' literacy and numeracy development is consolidated through PE.
- Teachers use questioning techniques well to develop pupils' evaluative skills. However, there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' leadership skills in lessons and use information and communication technology (ICT) to further develop pupils' observation, analysis and feedback skills.
- Current assessment practice inconsistently highlights pupil progress. This means the school does not have a coherent view of standards across year groups and stages of learning. There is good practice which needs to be extended. Similarly pupils do not have a real sense of the standards they reach and PE reports to parents do not provide attainment information.

Quality of the PE curriculum

- Curriculum provision is exceptional and provides pupils with opportunities to experience all six activity areas of the PE National Curriculum. Combined with a diverse range of supplementary activities, significant value is added to pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of PE. Providing equality of opportunity, tailored provision for the least and most able pupils and a recognition that pupils learn in different ways are a few examples of how the school supports equality in PE.
- Pupils throughout the school receive a core entitlement of two hours of PE, and benefit from a further 30 minutes of very well planned daily

lunchtime activities. All Year 5 and 6 pupils go to an outdoor education centre and pupils also benefit from specialist coaches, festivals of sport and multi-skills activities organised by the local school sport partnership. The Foundation Stage curriculum is equally extensive.

- There are wide-ranging extra-curricular choices, which offer competitive and leisure based alternatives. Non-traditional opportunities such as wrestling, boxing, ice skating, horse riding and cheerleading have proved popular. Lunchtime supervisors have undergone training to support pupils' play at social times, while older pupils help as playground pals and junior organisers.
- More talented and able pupils access additional provision through good school-club links, and the local sport partnership.
- In the Year 6 dance lesson observed a thematic approach to World War II exploited the connections between history, drama, dance, music and geography very effectively.

Leadership and management of PE

Leadership and management of PE are outstanding.

- You and your deputy have done a wonderful job in maintaining the impetus created by the former PE coordinator. You are leading the subject well and it runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.
- Your passion for the subject means it has a high profile and is well regarded in the school. Provision is underpinned by sound planning and good use of available resources.
- Staff benefited from the PE-specific training you arranged, which has improved their competence and confidence in delivering the subject.
- You hold staff to account for the quality of their work when you scrutinise their planning, assess the coaches, and observe teachers and support staff as part of their performance management.
- The school's arrangements to promote inclusion through PE are successful and form part of the whole-school ethos. Ensuring a wealth of diverse and often non-traditional activities are offered, that are informed by the pupil voice, further supports this aim.
- You demonstrated that you have a good awareness of the strengths of existing provision and were in agreement with what needs to improve. There is good capacity for further improvement.

Subject issue - PE contribution to the outcomes of ECM, particularly being healthy

- The ECM areas of 'enjoy and achieve', being healthy and making a positive contribution are very effectively promoted through PE. As a result of the first-rate provision participation rates are high, attendance and behaviour have improved and pupils are developing better self-esteem.
- Team working skills are being nurtured and pupils have a good awareness of the benefits of taking regular exercise and leading healthy and active lifestyles. The school has gained Activemark gold and the healthy schools award, in recognition of its commitment to

promoting these outcomes. Pupils are encouraged to cycle to school and there are plans to develop a series of urban walks.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- refining assessment procedures to sharpen tracking and ensuring reports to parents reflect pupils' attainment as well as their progress
- providing more leadership opportunities for pupils in lessons
- using ICT to further hone pupils' observation, analysis and feedback skills.

I hope these observations prove useful as you continue to develop physical education in the school.

As I explained at the end of my visit, 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

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector