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Dear Mr Byford

Ofsted 2007-08 subject survey inspection programme: Citizenship and Physical Education

Thank you on behalf of Judith Rundle HMI and myself for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and students, during our visit on 24 and 25 June 2008 to look at work in Citizenship and Physical Education (PE).

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 staff and students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of lessons, an assembly and a form period.

Citizenship

The overall effectiveness of citizenship was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- Students have a satisfactory understanding of issues such as human rights and responsibilities, the role of the United Nations, the environment and the criminal justice system. They have a less well developed knowledge of local and parliamentary systems, the global economy and global institutions.
- Students particularly enjoy the opportunities they have to discuss and debate issues in citizenship. However, many struggle to articulate their opinions orally and the quality of their written work is lower than in other subjects.

- Students are encouraged to participate and take responsible action in citizenship. All are involved in charity fund-raising through their form groups. Some students act as peer mentors and others are elected to the college council.
- The council meets regularly and successfully represents the views of their electorate. However, council members receive no training; do not have a student chair, secretary or treasurer nor any budget or website. Students on the council are involved in staff appointments but, for the most part their ambitions are limited.
- There are the beginnings of an assessment system for citizenship at Key Stage 3. However, it is not yet possible to effectively identify students' progress within and between the key stages.

Quality of teaching and learning of citizenship

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Teachers show enthusiasm for citizenship but do not demonstrate expert subject knowledge nor a sufficient grasp of subject pedagogy. Lesson plans focus too little on what the students will learn and are not always designed to meet individual needs, particularly for the more able and gifted students.
- Teachers regularly reflect on topical issues in lessons and some use information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance their teaching. Students report that teachers deal well with sensitive issues such as racism. Students are confident in discussing controversial issues and often raise questions about global injustice and the consequences of ignorance and prejudice.
- Where citizenship is addressed through other subjects such as geography, English and religious education (RE), teachers provide good opportunities for students to extend their knowledge in other contexts.
- Students and teachers are engaged in assessing progress in citizenship and there are annual reports to parents. However, monitoring systems are not robust enough to fully assess students' knowledge, skills and engagement in citizenship activities. Marking is variable and not all students know what they need to do to improve.
- Teaching assistants play a positive role in supporting students in citizenship lessons.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory overall although the present Key Stage 4 provision is inadequate.

- In Years 10 and 11 there is insufficient time allocated for citizenship. Plans are in place to introduce accredited programmes and enrichment days but these do not ensure all students receive their full entitlement.
- Sound schemes of work underpin the curriculum. There are some opportunities to revisit topics across the key stages but this is not been systematic enough to ensure progression.

- The programme is distinctive but lacks coherence, particularly across the key stages. There is a lack of distinction between citizenship, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and work-related learning at all levels of planning and evaluation.

Leadership and management of citizenship

The leadership and management of citizenship are satisfactory.

- The college has a vision for citizenship which strongly reflects the Catholic values of the college such as providing a duty of care for others. Sufficient resources have been provided in terms of staffing and materials. However too little time is allocated to citizenship at Key Stage 4.
- The subject leader is responsible for leading RE, PSHE and citizenship in the college. She carries this out with dedication and enthusiasm, reflecting the college's core values. However, planning often fails to recognise the distinction between the three curriculum areas.
- The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in citizenship is at a very early stage. The current evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is overgenerous.
- No use has been made of the DCSF self-evaluation tool. Nevertheless, the subject leader has a satisfactory understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the department and has put strategies in place to address the areas for development.

Subject issue: teaching and learning about Britain's diversity

- There are some effective cross-curricular contributions to the students' understanding of Britain's diversity, for example in RE, geography and English.
- There are some wider cultural events in the college such as African drumming and some students have the opportunity to meet people from other cultures. The integration of Polish students into the college has provided opportunities to develop cross-cultural understandings.
- In citizenship lessons students have a satisfactory understanding of the role of the European Union and how recent policies have affected migration to Britain; they have far less understanding of the historical role of the British Empire, issues affecting global migration or the present role of the Commonwealth.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- to ensure that curriculum provision is sufficient at both key stages
- to improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching to ensure all students are challenged appropriately
- to consider more robust assessment which identifies progress within and across the key stages in all strands of the citizenship programme
- to further develop the role and impact of the college council.

Physical Education

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

- Standards in the lessons observed are average, as is their achievement overall. Where students are given longer opportunities to refine and practise their skills they make better progress.
- Standards in GCSE PE are below the national average and have been for the last few years. Girls perform better in theoretical aspects of PE GCSE work than boys. Senior leaders and PE staff have already identified these issues and have implemented a number of strategies including smaller teaching groups and booster classes. This appears to have had a positive impact on students' standards as the predicted results are higher than in previous years.
- The college has gained successes with their teams, most notably girls' cricket and boys' football.
- Information held by the PE department indicates that students attain better in games than in other activities, reflecting the emphasis given to these in the curriculum. However, no overall analysis of students' progress and standards was available at the time of the inspection.
- The college makes good use of an initial unit of work on multi skills to assess and grade students' work. The information is then used effectively to group students to work in similar ability groups.
- The key focus of improving students' fitness, which is developed from the time of entry to the college, results in students making good progress in this aspect of the National Curriculum programme of study. Students have good opportunities to use the 'evaluate and improvement' strand although limited opportunities were given for students to select and apply their skills independently.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

In the limited number of lessons seen, teaching was good overall.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use effectively to intervene with individual students or the whole class to bring about improvement. In the majority of lessons a good range of methods is used to engage students in learning. Occasionally there is too much teacher directed activity and not enough time for students to explore ideas, evaluate and consolidate their skills. Students respond particularly well to problem solving tasks and opportunities to find their own solutions.
- Staff are skilled at using questioning techniques to check students' understanding of tasks and to reinforce what students are expected to learn.
- Relationships between staff and students are good. Students all comment on how supportive and approachable PE staff are; many comment, 'they always have time for you'.
- Limited use is made of ICT other than in GCSE lessons. Even here, there is evidence that students indiscriminately cut and paste

information from internet sites for their homework rather than interpret information and make it relevant to PE and sport.

- Although work is marked in GCSE, this does not consistently explain why it may have received higher marks or how to improve further. Students' files are not well ordered or presented to help retrieval of information at a future date and students appear to have little pride in their work. Presentation is rarely commented upon during marking.
- The new system introduced this year for recording students' progress is a comprehensive document that tracks progress well in fitness and against National Curriculum levels of attainment. However, as this is embryonic it is not being utilised fully to maximise the potential. Good plans are in place to increase its use with Key Stage 4 students and to help evaluate and improve the department's work.
- Students are aware of their progress although not all are aware of how to improve their work further in activities other than fitness.
- Gifted and talented students are identified. Students say they are challenged in lessons to use their expertise by helping others in their class to improve.
- Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in PE lessons. Good links are made with medical personnel and parents, where applicable, to agree levels of physical exertion.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- No students have the opportunity to access two hours of PE in curriculum time. Key Stage 3 students have 110 minutes in one session, but time is wasted when lessons do not start punctually. Students in Key Stage 4 core PE lessons only have 50 minutes curriculum time. Although extra-curricular activities supplement the time for students to be active, the majority do not meet the Government target.
- The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is games-dominated and does not offer a broad range of activities. Units of work are short at four to six hours and do not give students enough time to establish skills fully in order to improve standards.
- Students in Key Stage 4 comment favourably on being able to choose the activities they want to pursue. They appreciate the opportunities to follow activities that meet their interests and work in friendship groups.
- The focus on the development of fitness at the beginning of every lesson reflects well the Government's agenda to tackle childhood obesity. Where this is linked effectively to different activities and sports, students more readily understand the importance of leading a healthy, active lifestyle.
- Expansion of the PE department has had a significant impact on the range of activities that are offered to students both in lessons and extra-curricular activities.
- The extra-curricular programme is extensive and has been enhanced through involvement in the college sports partnership, for example cricket coaching for boys and girls.

- A number of students are attached to development squads with Manchester United football club. They receive good support to maintain their academic work.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- Although teachers in the department have a reasonable understanding of their strengths and weaknesses, this is not based on secure evaluation of the subject. A number of positive initiatives have been introduced recently although there is no action plan to support their coordinated implementation nor planned opportunities to evaluate their effectiveness. You have already identified a number of these issues and have put into place a range of strategies to support the department.
- PE staff are highly committed to improving provision, reflected in the time given to developing the new assessment and recording procedures, GCSE improvements, revising schemes of work and increasing the range of extra- curricular and enrichment opportunities. However it is not clear how these initiatives are being linked together to fully exploit their potential.
- Department minutes record discussion on how to improve GCSE results but do not focus on the achievement and standards of all students. No use is made of the physical education and college sport (PESS) 10 high quality outcomes to help evaluate and improve provision.
- A broad range of professional development opportunities have been made available to help improve provision, although these have yet to make an impact on improving standards.

Subject issue - PE contribution to the outcomes of Every Child Matters particularly being healthy

- This is a strength of PE provision, particularly the emphasis placed on improving students' understanding of leading a healthy lifestyle and levels of fitness. Students are motivated to improve not only their stamina but agility and co-ordination both in lessons and in their own time. As one boy said, 'this is 50/50, we need to work hard at fitness at home too. The teachers tell me how I can do that'. Occasionally students say they are unable to perform other activities to the best of their ability because they have no energy left after completing a 12 minute run at the beginning of a lesson for fitness.
- The vast majority say how much they enjoy PE. However, students mention frequently the lack of space and privacy in changing rooms; you have good awareness of this and have already committed to a programme of refurbishment. Students have positive attitudes towards PE and behaviour is good in lessons. They work co-operatively and safely together in pairs, small groups and classes. The majority listen attentively to others' input.
- Sports helpers and leaders make a positive contribution within the college, such as their organisation and running of inter-form competitions and clubs for younger students. They also make a good

contribution with partner primary colleges in running festivals of sport and clubs. The college sports coordinator has good plans in place to increase the number of students being able to access these opportunities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- reviewing the curriculum to ensure students have opportunities to consolidate their skills in order to improve standards
- ensuring a coordinated approach to department action planning to link explicitly the new initiatives and fully exploit their potential
- making use of the PESS 10 high quality outcomes to help evaluate and improve provision.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop citizenship and PE in the college.

As explained in the 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

Janet Palmer
Her Majesty's Inspector