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Mrs J Field
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Field

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 Monday 19 May 2008 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PSHE, 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: interviews with you and the PSHE co-ordinator, discussion with two groups of pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of three lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good with some outstanding features.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- The personal and social development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are confident to talk to visitors and are proud of their school. They demonstrate care and support for each other, and are keen to take advantage of leadership opportunities such as organising play equipment at lunchtimes.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of issues such as global warming and the need to re-cycle.
- Knowledge of sex and relationships education is satisfactory and developing. The school, identified that more work was needed in this area and is in the process of implementing a new scheme of work for sex and relationships education across the school.
- Knowledge of drugs education is good. Pupils are aware of the dangers of smoking and alcohol and the consequent health implications.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The overall quality of teaching in PSHE is good.

- Teachers plan and deliver a good range of appropriate activities in PSHE lessons that motivate the pupils at all key stages. There are good, planned opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect.
- Questioning strategies are well used by all staff. Use of questioning that targets individual pupils is particularly effective in some classes.
- Assessment, whilst currently satisfactory and at the early stages of development, is clearly embedded in the new scheme of work.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- Pupils enjoy the wide range of learning opportunities, in the weekly PSHE lessons and in the after school clubs, that develop their personal and social skills.
- Good use is made of external agencies such as the school nurse and the local police to support aspects of the PSHE curriculum.
- The curriculum is carefully mapped in every class. However, currently it does not provide enough role play opportunities so that pupils can practise strategies to resist peer pressure.
- Pupils of all abilities make good progress in PSHE. Vulnerable pupils, including those recently arrived from other countries as well as those who have not coped well in other local schools, are very well integrated into the school, settle quickly and develop their confidence and self-esteem. There is a strong inclusive feel to the school where parents as well as pupils, feel part of a strong, supportive community working together.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- A recent review of the curriculum has led to a new scheme of work being trialled that fully maps the PSHE curriculum throughout the school.
- The PSHE co-ordinator has been well supported by you, and has been involved in appropriate professional development. As a result she is now ready to take on full responsibility for the sole management role.
- You are very accurate in your self-evaluation of the PSHE provision.

Subject issue: the contribution made by PSHE to pupils' future economic well being

PSHE makes a good contribution to pupils' economic well-being. Pupils are well prepared for the future through their good personal and social skills and their ability to take turns, empathise with others and take on leadership roles. Additionally, the opportunity to take part in an enterprise activity, helps them to appreciate the world of work and develops aspects of their financial capability.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- introducing more role play activities into the PSHE curriculum
- further developing the management of PSHE by allowing the co-ordinator to assume full responsibility for the subject.

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 HMI
Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools