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30 December 2008

Mr P Marks
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Marks

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 07 July 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 discussions with pupils and staff, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of three lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils enjoy PSHE activities and have very positive attitudes towards the subject.

- Pupils learn to listen to others' ideas, make suggestions and compromise if necessary.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to manage anger and stress.
- Pupils know how important it is to keep healthy, and they value the many opportunities to take part in a wide range of sports.
- Older pupils have a good knowledge of the dangers of alcohol, smoking and drugs.

Quality of teaching and learning in PSHE

The quality of PSHE teaching is good.

- Teachers have secure subject knowledge as a result of good professional development in PSHE.
- Teachers plan and teach their lessons and activities to have a real impact on pupils' learning.
- Long term planning is well considered and focuses on the development of pupils' personal skills.
- Staff work very well together in team teaching situations in order to raise pupils' aspirations.
- Teachers plan the content of lessons well to reflect pupils' starting points.
- Effective use is made of teaching assistants to assess the outcomes of activities and teachers include opportunities for pupils to assess their own progress.
- Teachers report to parents on the standards achieved by pupils, and on the effort they put in to learning in the subject. However, The recording of pupils' knowledge and understanding of PSHE issues over time is not consistent.
- Pupils feel very safe and secure in the school environment.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- The curriculum is enhanced by the use of strategies to develop pupils' thinking skills where they look at things from different points of view.
- The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials are being piloted to provide more depth to activities.
- Pupils benefit from regular classes in Yoga where posture, breathing and relaxation techniques are taught.
- Raised beds supply salad produce and vegetables for each class to sample and this contributes to their understanding of healthy lifestyles.
- Pupils benefit from opportunities to work with others such as when practising their cookery and other skills.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- School leaders are improving provision in PSHE through the well-planned introduction of important whole-school initiatives.
- The members of the 'Personal and Spiritual Development Group' who oversee the subject are good role models, and have secured the commitment of the whole staff.
- Access to continuing professional development is good and all staff have received expert training on the PSHE curriculum and its assessment, the use of SEAL materials, and on drugs and substance misuse.
- The school is inclusive, with pupils from the Dyslexia Centre fully integrated in all PSHE activities.
- School leaders do not know enough about the provision of PSHE in the local secondary schools.

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

- Pupils are well prepared for the next steps in their lives. They take responsibility and are encouraged to use their initiative.
- Pupils are active in their roles such as representatives on the school council, as peer mediators, as part of the 'crucial crew' and as members of the water aid project.
- Pupils develop commercial awareness and decision-making skills through their work in the class cafés, by selling surplus produce from the school garden and their involvement in recycling initiatives.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to share roles and tasks, and work in teams.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensure pupils' knowledge and understanding of PSHE is consistently recorded to show their achievement over time
- develop an awareness of PSHE provision in the local secondary schools so that there is a smooth transition in the subject.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE in the school.

As I explained, 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

Henry Moreton
Additional Inspector