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Mrs E Mortimer
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Mortimer

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 17 September 2008 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 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 interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports and observation of three lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement is satisfactory.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in PE. Almost all children leave the Foundation Stage reaching the expected level in physical development, although the 2008 profile showed incorrectly that they were doing better than this. Standards in PE are broadly average in Key Stage 1 and 2. Satisfactory progress and average standards were seen in the lessons observed.
- Apart from the Foundation Stage, where achievement is recorded, pupils' attainment and progress are not tracked as they move through the school.

You reported that almost all Year 6 pupils were able to meet the National Curriculum swimming standard by the time they leave but records were not available in school to verify this.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- There were a number of positive features in the lessons observed. A suitable lesson structure was in place with pupils having the chance to warm up, acquire, develop and apply their skills, and evaluate their performances. Teaching assistants contributed well by supporting the teacher with modelling, guiding groups and making assessments. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes and teachers' management of pupils were good.
- Occasionally the pace of lessons dipped when pupils were slow to respond to the teacher's instructions or had to sit and listen for too long. There were insufficient challenges included for some higher ability pupils. After a period when a sports coach taught all PE lessons, teachers acknowledge that their subject knowledge requires strengthening.
- Assessment in lessons was satisfactory with teachers observing pupils' responses and questioning their knowledge and understanding. Pupils themselves were given good opportunities to observe each others' performances and identify positive aspects and improvements. Teachers recognise that they could make more effective use of information communication technology (ICT) to support teaching and learning. Teachers' assessment and recording of pupils' progress in PE is an improvement priority identified in the subject action plan.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Most pupils take part in two hours of timetabled PE each week. This is supplemented with daily 'take ten' aerobic sessions. A curriculum map is in place but requires review and revision. A core scheme is to be introduced to support teachers' planning and improve continuity and progression. Pupils engage in a full range of PE activities which includes swimming for older pupils and outdoor and adventurous activities during a Year 6 residential visit. Provision for Foundation Stage children is enhanced by fortnightly visits to a local woodland area as part of the 'Forest Schools' project.
- Pupils participate in a good range of extra curricular sports activities. These are well attended, particularly by older pupils. There are also many opportunities available for pupils to play in local competitions and tournaments run by the sports partnership. Teaching assistants have contributed well to helping pupils engage in community sports and partake in purposeful play at lunchtimes in a 'zoned' playground.
- Indoor and outdoor accommodation is good, and work is underway to improve the outdoor learning environment for Foundation Stage children. A review of the quality and accessibility of PE equipment and storage arrangements is required.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- A new and experienced subject leader joined the school at the start of this term. She has accurately identified a number of key improvement priorities, which have been set out in a subject action plan. Following discussion with teachers, training is planned in gymnastics and dance to support improvements in subject knowledge. A review of planning and schemes of work is underway. Lesson observations and interviews with pupils are also planned. Leaders recognise that improvements are required in assessment and progress tracking.
- Involvement in the sports partnership has enhanced extra-curricular provision and introduced pupils to a wider range of sports activities. In contrast the impact of partnership involvement on teaching and learning has been much less effective. Stronger links are now planned with the local sports coordinator to help improve provision further.

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

- Pupils' involvement in PE and sport is making a positive contribution to their health and well-being. Pupils take part in regular PE lessons, daily 'take ten' aerobic sessions, a good range of after school sports clubs and purposeful play activities at lunchtime. These help to keep them fit and active, although warm up sessions at the start of lessons are not always vigorous enough.
- Pupils enjoy taking part in PE and sport and most participate enthusiastically in lessons. Pupils interviewed were able to explain what happens to their bodies when they exercise. Older pupils appreciate the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle and how physical fitness contributes to this. Leadership responsibilities are to be extended to Year 5 and 6 pupils when they complete their play-leader training this term.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- completing the programme of improvements identified in the PE action plan, including reviewing the curriculum map, and introducing training and a scheme of work to support teachers' subject knowledge and planning
- establishing a workable system for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in PE
- making effective use of ICT to support teaching and learning, including assessment.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop physical education 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

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector