

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 0207 421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



16 December 2008

Mrs A Godfrey
Headteacher
Mandeville Primary School
Mandeville Drive
St Albans
Hertfordshire
AL1 2LE

Dear Mrs Godfrey

Ofsted survey inspection programme – physical education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 December 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 (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 interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports, observation of two lessons and a range of other physical activities.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good.

- Children start school with physical skills that are well below expected levels. They make good progress through the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) because an excellent range of activities is provided to help develop their fine and gross motor skills. Progress for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 continues to be good, so that by the time pupils leave in Year 6, a majority are working at the level expected for their age. Progress in swimming is good for many pupils but standards are below average. The 'top up' swimming programme was used successfully last year to help a

group of year 6 pupils to become stronger swimmers. The many opportunities pupils have to engage in purposeful physical activities at lunchtime are helping to boost their achievement.

- Detailed records of progress are kept for children in the EYFS but the attainment and progress of pupils in Keys Stages 1 and 2 are not recorded systematically. Consequently the subject leaders' views of progress are not easily substantiated. There is a wide variation in pupils' physical ability across each year group. Programmes such as the multi skills extension club for talented pupils, speed stacking and the speed agility quickness (SAQ) club, organised through the sports partnership, help to meet individual needs.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- There were a number of strengths in the lessons observed during the inspection. A suitable lesson structure is in place with all four strands of the PE programme included. Pupils warm up at the start and they are encouraged to discuss the impact that this has on their bodies. At the start of the lesson in Year 3, the teacher used information communication technology (ICT) well to show pupils what they should be aiming for in their own gymnastics responses. Teachers' strong subject knowledge, helpful modelling and effective coaching helped pupils in Years 5 and 6 to make good progress in acquiring basic rugby skills. The team teaching arrangement matched to pupils' abilities was another successful feature.
- Teachers assess pupils' learning well during lessons by observing their responses and commenting on how they might improve. In the Year 3 lesson the teaching assistant kept a record of children's learning outcomes. Teachers in Years 5 and 6 were adept at identifying the next steps needed to move pupils' learning on. At the moment there is no formal system for assessing pupils' attainment in PE at the end of units of work. Reports written for parents of children in the EYFS are detailed and closely matched to children's achievements. The reports seen from Key Stage 1 and 2 were less detailed and not as informative.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- All classes have two hours of timetabled PE and regular 'take ten' sessions. Many pupils also take part in physical activities at lunchtime. A published scheme of work is used to guide teachers' medium term planning and all areas of learning are covered through the year. Older pupils take part in outdoor and adventurous activities when attending residential study visits. The subject leaders acknowledge that the curriculum map for PE requires revision to show when each area of learning is taught in each year group.
- The activities led by the sports coach at lunchtime supplement curricular provision very well. Older pupils also have the chance to take part in festivals, tournaments and inter-school matches in a range of sports. Pupils have been introduced to new activities, such as 'try-golf', through

the sports partnership network, and 'circus skills' as part of the International Primary Curriculum programme. Some sports clubs are provided after school but despite support and encouragement from the school, attendance is often very low. Additional activities are also organised through the extended schools programme but the coordinator would like to attract more pupils from Mandeville to these.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- There is a very strong commitment from senior leaders for establishing high quality provision and achieving positive outcomes for pupils. For example, the appointment of a specialist coach to lead activities at lunchtime and the allocation of funding to improve the play environment and increase pupils' participation rates in physical activities. The current and future subject leaders provide good role models and respond positively to their colleagues' requests for guidance and support. Their subject evaluation clearly indicates the strengths and weaknesses in provision and what requires further improvement.
- Good use has been made of the school sports partnership link to strengthen subject leadership. Professional development courses have been organised to help improve teachers' subject knowledge. However, insufficient time is allocated to monitoring and evaluation through lesson observations and making checks on pupils' progress. Subject leaders also acknowledge that the organisation of intra-school competitions would help increase pupils' participation in competitive sport.

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

- Provision in PE makes a good contribution to pupils' outstanding personal development and well-being. Pupils enjoy taking part in physical activities and their behaviour and attitudes in lessons are very good. The pupils I met knew that their involvement in PE and sport was helping to keep them fit and healthy. They could talk about what happens to their bodies when they exercise and how other choices, such as eating a balanced diet, contribute to their overall well-being. Pupils regular 'take ten' sessions and lunchtime activities are contributing well to improving their physical skills, coordination and fitness. There are excellent opportunities for older pupils to take responsibility and show leadership as play-leaders and 'hut heroes'.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- consider establishing a workable system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in PE, so that the subject leader is able to judge pupils' achievement more accurately;
- strengthen subject leader monitoring and evaluation through scheduling regular lesson observations;
- continue to find ways to increase pupils' participation in sports clubs and competitions during and after the school day.

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