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Mrs Drake  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Drake

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 18 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 (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 schools but the individual schools 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 documentation and three lesson observations.

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged to be good. The school is one of only 30 nationally to achieve Advocate Status, which charges it with supporting the development of PE in less successful schools.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good.

- Pupils make rapid progress during the Foundation Stage and profile scores are well above national expectations for physical development. Good progress is sustained in Key Stages 1 and 2, where high standards were observed. Swimming standards are high and all pupils met the Key Stage 2 attainment target a year earlier than expected. Some pupils gain regional and national recognition.
- All pupils including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make equally good progress and develop the four strands of PE successfully.

- Pupils say they really enjoy PE. They behave well, have positive attitudes to learning and cooperate effectively.

## Quality of teaching and learning of PE

Teaching and learning are good overall and promote effective learning.

- Despite being non specialists, staff have developed good PE subject knowledge and deliver lessons with competence, confidence and enthusiasm. A range of learning approaches is used to engage pupils and develop their knowledge, skills and understanding of PE. Suitably qualified parents and coaches also successfully teach sessions.
- Staff's nurturing style enables pupils to flourish. There is a good balance between support, guidance and independent learning and leadership opportunities. As a consequence lessons are challenging with expectations and aspirations high. Less successful aspects included insufficiently precise feedback to promote further progression for the very able; and use of a plenary to gauge depth of understanding.
- Current assessment procedures are inadequate. Beyond the Foundation Stage staff do not measure, track or evaluate the progress pupils make or the standards they reach during their time in the school. Although pupils peer assess in lessons there are no set criteria and when questioned pupils did not know how well they were doing nor could they explain what they needed to do to improve further. Reports to parents do not indicate achievement or standards attained.

## Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding overall.

- Provision is wide ranging and includes all six activity areas of the National Curriculum. Pupils benefit from a minimum of two hours of PE weekly. This time is bolstered by daily activities at lunchtime, 'one off' events like sports days and an Olympic theme week. An extensive extra-curricular programme is supported by coaches, staff and parents.
- An inclusive curriculum ensures a good match to individual needs, including special arrangements and mentoring to help talented athletes juggle their commitments. Similarly pupils with coordination difficulties receive additional support to improve their fine motor skills.
- Schemes of work are sound, although in need of a review to bring them in line with the latest thinking and requirements. The high quality outcomes for PE are well promoted through the curriculum, including creativity, independent learning and working cooperatively.
- The school has forged excellent links with the local sports college and many local clubs to establish pathways of continuous development for their pupils. There is an excellent range of PE accommodation and equipment that facilitates curriculum delivery very well.

## Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is good overall.

- The subject leader has injected a fresh momentum into PE provision that has seen its profile rise significantly in school. Coordination and planning of the subject are sound and PE delivery runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Available resources are well deployed and good links established with partner agencies to enrich the quality of provision. The impact of enhancing curricular provision, introducing PE specific training for staff and maintaining a focus on high quality outcomes is seen in improved standards and achievement.
- Scrutiny of action planning and discussions with managers reveal accurate self-evaluation, with plans in the pipeline to remedy some known weaknesses. At present however, there is no formal monitoring or evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning in PE.
- The subject leader is supported well in his role by senior leaders who recognise the whole school value of high quality PE. For example you attribute an increase in general boys' achievement to transferable learning skills honed in PE. In light of the progress already secured there is capacity to promote further improvement.

Subject issue - PE contribution to the outcomes of ECM, particularly being healthy

- ECM outcomes are promoted well. Healthy schools and Activemark accreditation recognises the school's success in promoting healthy lifestyles. Take up of healthy meals at lunchtime is good and pupils' enjoyment of PE is seen in their high participation rates and good progress. Pupils' success in PE is celebrated at weekly assemblies, which boosts their confidence and self-esteem.
- Pupils make a positive contribution to the wider life of the school through fundraising to buy new PE football posts, representing the school in sports fixtures and acting as playground leaders and 'buddies'. They also canvass through the school council for new PE equipment. Pupils learn how to conduct themselves responsibly and use apparatus safely. They also acquire skills which will aid their future economic well-being such as working as part of a team.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- introducing a coherent approach to assessing, recording and reporting pupil progress and standards
- empowering the subject leader to formally monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning
- better use of feedback to promote further progression for the very able and consistent use of a plenary to gauge depth of understanding.

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

John Young  
Her Majesty's Inspector