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Mrs S MacCourt
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs MacCourt

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 08 October 2008 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, 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 pupils from a range of ages, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' overall achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are confident, have well developed discussion skills and they readily express their views. They are very caring, thoughtful and polite, and can work together in a group or team.

- Pupils behave well, enjoy their work and are enthusiastic about PSHE topics.
- Pupils readily undertake responsibilities around the school and are becoming more independent in lessons.
- Children in the Reception class make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, providing a good foundation for later stages in their education.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of how to stay healthy and they know the importance of fruit and vegetables in their diet. Older pupils have a sound knowledge of the changes that occur whilst growing up.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The quality of PSHE teaching is good.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are positive, supportive and productive.
- Teachers plan interesting and practical activities, making lessons engaging and fun.
- Most lessons seen provided suitable challenge for all pupils, but at times, the teacher talked for too long or the pace of the lesson slowed slightly, so pupils became a little less attentive.
- The care and support for pupils are outstanding, so they feel safe, valued and know adults will listen to them.
- Teaching assistants are effective in helping individuals and groups of pupils, particularly in the Reception class.
- Assessment is developing, but does not clearly show pupils' rates of progress or provide them with sufficient guidance about how to improve their work.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is good.

- The PSHE programme is comprehensive, enjoyable and meets pupils' needs well.
- Links with other subjects are planned well, making learning relevant and meaningful.
- There is a strong and effective emphasis on pupils' social and emotional development, with a judicious use of Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials.
- The PSHE curriculum is enriched well through a wide range of themed activities, such as Monster Week, trips and visitors to the school.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- PSHE is given a high priority and school leaders have a clear vision for the subject. They have accurately identified the few areas for development.

- Teamwork is strong and all staff are enthusiastic, readily accepting advice.
- Monitoring is not always sufficiently focussed to ensure that teachers continue to improve.

Subject issue: economic well-being

Pupils' preparation for adult life is good.

- Pupils' self-confidence and their readiness to offer opinions are good.
- In lessons and around the school, pupils work well together and listen to each other's views.
- The work of the school council and other responsibilities enables pupils to demonstrate a wide range of skills, relevant to later life.
- Not enough work takes place on managing personal finance.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing more assessment opportunities for PSHE
- formalising and developing the range of procedures for monitoring PSHE.

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

Susan Orpin
Additional Inspector