

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



26 March 2009

Mrs M Bather
Headteacher
Checkendon Church of England Primary School
Checkendon
Reading
RG8 0SR

Dear Mrs Bather

Ofsted survey inspection programme – physical education (PE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 17 March 2009 to look at work in 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 and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged to be good with some outstanding aspects.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good.

- Pupils reach the expected standards by the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. A significantly higher proportion of pupils attain well above the expected standards in swimming reflecting the school's commitment to this activity and effective use of the top up swimming programme.
- Achievement is good overall in lessons by the vast majority of pupils. At times higher achieving pupils are not challenged enough in lessons although the school sport partnership is starting to provide more

opportunities for those identified as gifted and talented, for example a visit to the Beckham academy for talented football players.

- Pupils have good opportunities to acquire, develop, select and apply their skills. For example when making sequences using canon and unison in gymnastics. Although some opportunities are in place for pupils to use, evaluate and improve strand of the PE National Curriculum, there is a missed opportunity to fully extend pupils' reasoning when identifying strengths and weaknesses in performances.
- Behaviour by the vast majority of pupils is good in lessons and when playing together at breaks and lunchtime. They work cooperatively together, listen attentively and most persevere to improve their work. Pupils in Year 6 have been trained as sports leaders but have yet to implement these roles.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

- Good quality of teaching enables pupils to make good progress in PE lessons. Pupils were able to explain clearly their previous learning in gymnastics on body tension, balance and working successfully together. In the mixed Year 3 and 4 tag rugby lesson pupils displayed good knowledge in how to pass and receive a ball and simple attacking and defending skills.
- A strength of teaching was the use of questioning techniques to help pupils recall previous work and to think of solutions to task for themselves. However, at times pupils were not given enough time to discuss their solutions with team mates before putting them into practice.
- Teachers were also skilled at using intervention to bring about improvement with either small groups or the whole class, although the variety of these approaches was not consistent across classes.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well to help pupils understand their work. They make good use of PE terminology to extend pupils' PE vocabulary and pupil demonstrations to set expectations of high quality performances.
- Good use is made of commercial schemes of work to support teaching and learning. As a result pupils learn the correct progressive steps in the full range of activities. Pupils were able to explain the importance of the warm up and cool down in lessons and participation in the 'big sporty bit' in the middle. At times higher achieving pupils are capable of working at a faster pace and attaining more.
- Good links are made between subjects and pupils were particularly enthusiastic about the PE, art and science project.
- The school make good use of photographs to record work and are starting to use 'digi blue' cameras to evaluate performances. There is a missed opportunity to use images on the interactive whiteboards whilst pupils are changing for PE to remind them of previous work, their targets for improvement and set expectations of the lesson.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum that has been successfully reviewed to ensure pupils make progress in mixed age classes and throughout their time in the school. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of the different activities. For example they talk confidently about different invasion games and with encouragement recognised links with swimming and water polo. Outdoor and adventurous activities have a prominent role in the PE programme both in lessons and through off site and residential experiences for pupils in Key Stage 2.
- Although pupils only have two 50 minute lessons each week, they have ample opportunities for physical activity at other times with a dedicated PE day each term, inter house competitions and a sports day. The school has good plans in place to extend the available time further through their development of the creative curriculum.
- The school offers a rich and varied extra-curricular programme over the course of a year. Pupils have excellent opportunities to participate in competitive sport against other schools as well as festivals of dance and tournaments. The school sports partnership has been significant in increasing the number of these activities. The school make good use of external coaches to increase the range of activities and staff subject knowledge, for example in judo and football.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The subject leader is outstanding in her leadership, management and ambition. She has excellent knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject that are translated into a clear and achievable development plan. She has successfully reviewed the curriculum and is always looking for the next opportunity to extend and improve provision.
- The subject leader is a good role model in teaching, has good subject knowledge and uses this well to provide support on a day-to-day and long term basis, for example, working alongside teachers to increase their knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver outdoor and adventurous activities.
- The school assessment procedures are secure and the subject leader has plans to extend these further. Although a wealth of data is held on pupils' progress and attendance at extra-curricular activities, this is not analysed to identify securely the progress of different groups of pupils over time or to fully support planning of future lessons.
- Highly effective use is made of the primary link teacher days. The subject leader uses these to enhance provision through improving the quality of teaching and learning, including delegating days to other staff that enables them to attend external professional development courses.

- Facilities and resources for PE are very good including the range of climbing equipment both indoors and outdoors. The subject leader makes good use of supermarket vouchers to 'top up' small equipment.

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

- Pupils have good understanding and knowledge of health and fitness including why it is important to eat healthy foods, drink water and the amount of exercise to take to be healthy. Lunchtime supervisors are trained to lead games at lunchtimes to further extend the amount of time children are involved in active, organised play. Good attention is given to safety in lessons; pupils are able to explain the importance of placing mats strategically in gymnastics. Pupils display very positive attitudes towards PE lessons and all those spoken to say how much they enjoyed the subject.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- extend the use of evaluation to help pupils understand fully strengths and weaknesses of a performance and the next steps for improvement
- make fuller use of assessment data to identify the progress of different groups of pupils to support the planning of subsequent lessons
- explore ways to bring about more consistency in the range of teaching strategies across all lessons.

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

Judith Rundle
Her Majesty's Inspector