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Mrs S Godden and Mrs L Alcorn
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Dear Mrs Godden and Mrs Alcorn

Ofsted survey inspection programme – physical education (PE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 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 and observation of three lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good.

- Standards by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 are those expected for their age with the vast majority of pupils reaching the expectation in swimming because of good use of the top up swimming programme. A minority of pupils attain above average in their games skills. A strong aspect of pupils' work is their ability to work in teams and their perseverance to improve.

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points where a significant proportion show anxieties when learning to travel around and climb on apparatus.
- Pupils demonstrate good knowledge of health and fitness and demonstrate increasingly sophisticated use of the evaluate and improve strand of the PE National Curriculum as they move through the school. They have well planned opportunities to select and apply their learned skills in a variety of activities.
- The inclusion of pupils is an outstanding aspect of provision. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make the same progress as others in the class. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress because of excellent support from bi-lingual teaching assistants, especially in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have well adapted activities to ensure they are fully included in PE lessons. Although pupils identified as higher achieving or gifted and talented in PE undertake a wider variety of roles in most lessons, such as peer coaching, this is not a consistent feature of all lessons.
- Pupils have good opportunities for personal development through PE. For example they act as play leaders, team leaders and are starting to be asked for feedback on provision. In addition, a group of identified pupils are also targeted to attend a sports club to help build confidence and self-esteem. Behaviour is outstanding in lessons and all pupils say how much they enjoy PE both in lessons and at other times of the day.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

- Thorough planning combined with good subject knowledge enables pupils to make good progress in lessons. The pace and structure of lessons is good with the vast majority of pupils active, engaged and enjoying learning. Occasionally the pace of lesson slows when there is too much teacher input and pupils are inactive for too long.
- Teachers are skilled at observing progress and intervening at the right time to remind pupils of the task and expectations. The constructive feedback from both teachers and teaching assistants enables pupils to understand why work is good and how it can be improved further.
- Most teachers use question and answer techniques well to include all pupils when completing a session to observe, evaluate and feedback on each others work. The use of praise and positive reinforcement of expectations are strong aspects of PE lessons.
- The school makes appropriate use of specialist coaches to support teaching especially in games.
- The subject leader has been highly selective in the use of units of work from a number of commercial schemes of work, as a result work is planned to ensure pupils go through the correct steps when learning new skills.
- The use of information and communication technology is still at an early stage. Good use of photographs to record events and activities and movement clips are starting to be used to set expectations.

However there is a missed opportunity to extend its use when evaluating and improving pupils work.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- All pupils have access to two hours of timetabled PE. The curriculum offers a well balance programme of activities across all age groups with new sports having been introduced into Key Stage 2 to broaden pupils' experiences. For example volleyball and badminton.
- Good links are being created with other subjects. For example with geography for completing dances on rivers and with science on muscles and how the body works.
- The school offers a good range of enrichment activities linked to the school sports partnership such as dance festivals and sports tournaments. Extra-curricular activities are supported by external coaches so tend to be dominated by games. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the outdoor and adventurous residential opportunities throughout the school. The subject leader has already identified a wide variation in participation rates for different age groups and has started to take actions to tackle this.
- Good links have been created with local sports clubs to support pupils' access to sport outside school. For example with karate, gymnastics and tennis.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is good with outstanding features.

- The subject leader has outstanding knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has ambitious plans to improve provision further. She is constantly looking for the next challenge and opportunity to improve standards and attainment. She has outstanding subject knowledge that she uses extremely well to support staff development and extend opportunities for pupils across the school.
- The subject leader monitors planning and gives feedback to individual staff after team teaching activities or informal observation of teaching. However she has yet to formally monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching. The specialist coaches have been monitored by you leading to better use of the schools and National Curriculum expectations.
- The school is trialling assessment procedures in PE. This has already led to changes in the teaching of dance to help older pupils become more adept at working with different rhythms and patterns of movement. Staff comments indicate these new procedures are starting to give a more secure picture of pupils' attainments. Currently procedures do not track the attainment of different groups of pupils or use a variety of assessment criteria suitable to track the progress of lower attaining pupils.

- The subject leader makes good use of the primary link teacher days by delegating time for other members of staff to attend professional development in PE.
- The school has outstanding outdoor facilities for PE including a multi use games area and a range of climbing equipment. However the hall is small and is further restricted by the lack of storage areas for large gymnastic equipment. Consequently pupils have limited working space especially for activities such as gymnastics.

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

- Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of leading a healthy lifestyle because of its high profile around the school, and implement healthy eating and drinking. They talk knowledgeably about the relevance of a warm up and cool down in lessons.
- Good attention is paid to pupils' safety in lessons including changing into appropriate sports clothing. Pupils are helped to understand the importance of working in safe spaces such as placing of gymnastic mats around the working space.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- finding ways to use the primary link teacher days to support teaching and learning in lessons to bring about more consistency in provision
- when reviewing assessment procedures, explore the use of different criteria to help assess and track the progress of all pupils
- exploring ways that current play leaders can be involved in training their successors

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