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Mr J Barlow
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Dear Mr Barlow

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 13 July 2009 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, 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 playtimes and three lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement is satisfactory overall.

- Standards are average by the time pupils leave at the end of Year 6 with a few attaining better than this in games and athletics. The school football teams have experienced recent wins at local events following successful coaching programmes. All pupils from Year 1 onwards have good opportunities to swim and attain the expected levels.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school, especially the high number of pupils from Forces families who join and leave at different times. Where teaching is matched to pupils'

abilities and consistently challenges them to achieve their best some make good progress. However this level of challenge is inconsistent across the school and higher attaining pupils are capable of more than at present.

- Pupils have good understanding of health, fitness and leading a healthy active lifestyle and are given good opportunities to acquire new skills. The development of pupils' ability to observe, evaluate and improve their own and others' work is inconsistent and staff miss opportunities to fully exploit this so all pupils understand fully how they can improve their work further.
- Pupils have good opportunities for personal development through PE. They are increasing being asked to evaluate the quality of provision, through questionnaires and PE diaries, and to take on leadership roles in PE such as leading games for younger pupils at lunchtimes.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy PE and extra-curricular activities and the vast majority choose to be active at playtime and lunchtime. Skipping, catching and throwing games and football are particularly popular. An impressive aspect of pupils' development through PE is their understanding of fair play; all pupils in the school demonstrate the vision initiated in football of 'win with dignity, lose with grace'.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.

- Teachers have good subject knowledge that they use well to observe and assess pupils' work in lessons. In the majority of lessons this also helps them to intervene at the right time to bring about improvements in pupils' performances and to help pupils understand how well they are doing. However inconsistency exists in the planning of activities to ensure all pupils are challenged to achieve their best in all lessons.
- Teaching includes a good range of activities and resources although the range of teaching strategies is mainly limited to being teacher led. Occasionally this resulted in too much teacher talk, the pace of learning dropped and some pupils started to drift off task. In the Year 5 and 6 lesson where pupils had good opportunities to explore different running styles and stride patterns in hurdling it led to better knowledge and understanding of the activity and faster progress.
- The deployment of teaching assistants to support individual or groups of pupils is a strength of the school's work. The effective partnerships created between teachers, teaching assistants and pupils enables pupils with coordination difficulties or who have English as an additional language to be fully integrated into lessons and to make the same progress as others in the class.
- Teachers and teaching assistants are skilled at using question and answer techniques and in the use of effective praise to help pupils understand their work better.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- All pupils have two hours timetabled PE each week that increase further in the summer. Pupils talk with enthusiasm about 'wake and shake' sessions although say these are not on a daily basis.
- The curriculum is well balanced and meets the expectations of the PE National Curriculum. Pupils develop a good understanding of different games activities and quickly make connections between the aims of invasion games and the invasion of Britain learned in History. Pupils are more secure in the understanding of games than dance and gymnastics.
- The school makes good use of a commercial scheme of work to support teaching and assessing pupils' progress. This has been adapted well to meet the demands and needs of mixed age classes.
- The extra-curricular programme is good and offers an impressively broad range of opportunities, across the year and age groups, for a small school. This is enhanced well through school sports partnership activities such as festivals and tournaments and good use of external coaches to support both teaching in the curriculum as well as extending extra-curricular activities.
- Participation rates in extra-curricular are high, with half of the school attending at least one hour each week. The school also has a good programme of targeted early morning activities for pupils identified as needing additional support with their coordination.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding.

- The subject leader has a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, based on the outcomes of secure monitoring and evaluation procedures. She has well targeted priorities for future development that are translated into a realistic action plan. She recognises that more needs to be done to iron out inconsistencies but is ambitious and driven and has already brought about considerable positive changes in the last couple of years.
- The subject leader is an excellent role model for staff and pupils. She has high levels of subject knowledge that have been used well to support teachers and to develop their confidence in delivering the subject. For example through joint planning and team teaching opportunities.
- Involvement in the school sports partnership has been significant for this school. The subject leader has benefited from professional development that has led to greater understanding of monitoring the impact of recent changes and initiatives on pupils' achievements and in the sharing of and implementation of good practices across the partnership. Other staff have also benefited from professional development, such as improving their subject knowledge though

partnership workshop activities, that has resulted in better teaching of gymnastics and a greater number of extra-curricular activities available to pupils.

- Assessment of pupils' progress in PE is already secure and is based on the whole-school system although the subject leader acknowledges that staff do not always find it easy to identify and challenge higher attaining pupils. To support development in this aspect of PE the subject leader is trialling a more comprehensive assessment system that is more closely aligned to the four strands of the PE National Curriculum and will enable pupils' progress to be securely tracked over time, especially those joining at different times. However there is a missed opportunity to include the assessment of other life skills developed in PE such as leadership, problem solving, team work and cooperation.
- PE has a high profile around the school and pupils are starting to develop an understanding of the 10 high quality outcomes of PE.

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

- PE makes a good contribution to the outcomes of Every Child Matters. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their understanding of being healthy and good links have been created between the school's work to attain the Activemark for PE and the National Healthy Schools Award. Pupils are also starting to understand the links between PE and science when they discuss heart rates and the effects of exercise on the body. Staff ensure pupils are safe in lessons and undertake the appropriate safeguarding checks on external coaches. Older pupils start to take responsibility for their own safety through the careful placing of equipment.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- making more and consistent use of the 'evaluate and improve' strand of the physical education National Curriculum so all pupils know how to improve their work further
- improving the quality and consistency of teaching by:
 - ensuring all pupils are continuously challenged to achieve their best, especially the higher attaining
 - ensuring the pace of learning is maintained throughout all lessons so pupils make faster progress
- when reviewing assessment procedures ensure they include the assessment of life skills.

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