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Mrs M Rowlands
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Rowlands

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 09 and 10 June 2009 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 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 discussions with pupils, parents and staff, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of eight PSHE lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement is outstanding.

- Pupils' personal development is excellent and pupils of all ages and abilities listen to each other's views very respectfully.
- Pupils of all abilities discuss issues such as body image and relationships very constructively.
- Pupils have an excellent knowledge of the dangers of smoking and alcohol.
- Pupils are very aware about how important it is to be fit and healthy; the take up of the many sporting activities before, during and after school is high.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The quality of teaching is outstanding.

- The learning seen during the visit was of a consistently high quality.
- Pupils of all ages and abilities respond very positively to the subject.
- Planning for learning in PSHE is excellent and staff often try things out first in their own 'circle times', before presenting to pupils.
- Many opportunities are taken for pupils to work collaboratively in PSHE lessons.
- Arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress are good and involve pupil's decisions about the content of lessons.
- Pupils are made aware about the safe use of the internet.
- The expertise of teaching assistants is not always used effectively, for example, to record the outcomes of PSHE activities or the contribution made by individuals or groups of pupils.

Quality of the PSHE curriculum

The curriculum is outstanding.

- The content of lessons changes to reflect the emphasis on the issues of most relevance and concern to pupils.
- Excellent contributions are made to develop pupils' social awareness through the well-established links with the community police team.
- The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials are used very effectively by all staff.
- The school has achieved the Healthy School award and pupils have an excellent understanding of how to eat healthily while in school.
- Very effective links are made with the local infant and secondary schools in preparing pupils socially for the movement from one key stage to the next.
- Excellent opportunities to develop independence and self-esteem are provided to all pupils through two residential experiences.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully involved in all PSHE related activities.
- Very effective support is provided for vulnerable pupils so they benefit from PSHE activities.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are outstanding.

- Provision in the subject is expertly managed by the co-ordinator with excellent support from school leaders.
- Self-evaluation is accurate, though modest, and is securely based on what pupils, parents and staff think of provision in PSHE.
- Planning for the subject is focussed on very well considered local priorities that relate to the school's strategic plans.
- School leaders have a very strong commitment to the development of pupils' social and emotional intelligence.

- Resources are used effectively, including training and preparing staff for PSHE activities.
- School leaders make excellent use of visitors to get over key messages, including 'Professor Fluffy' who helps to raise pupils' aspirations.
- The school's website is an excellent example of how to communicate with parents about PSHE activities.
- Pupils' and teachers' evaluations are well used to plan future provision.

Subject issue: economic well-being

Pupils are very well prepared for the next stage of their education.

- Very good use is made of computers so that pupils' information and communications skills are improved.
- Pupils have excellent understanding of how to work with others because of the emphasis teachers give to paired and group work, including drama.
- Opportunities to develop pupils' enterprise and work related skills are developing well such as the 'job spot' for older pupils.
- The very active and well-respected School Council uses pupils' views well to make informed decisions about how to use the resources available to it.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- using the skilled classroom assistants in a more focussed way during PSHE activities.

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

Henry Moreton
Additional Inspector