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Mr R Bullock
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Dear Mr Bullock

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 Thursday 09 July 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:

- 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, the PSHE coordinator and SENCO, your pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of two lessons and a social skills group.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement

Pupils' overall achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils' personal development is excellent. They are very friendly, thoughtful and eagerly participate in lessons.

- Pupils work together well, listen to each other and readily offer their views. They enjoy learning PSHE and talk enthusiastically about their work.
- Pupils know that their views are highly valued and they confidently contribute their opinions to many aspects of school life, including making learning more interesting.
- Pupils have an extremely good knowledge of how to stay healthy. They know the importance of fruit and vegetables, a balanced diet and the value of regular exercise.
- Pupils generally know how to stay safe. Although older pupils have a secure knowledge of the dangers of tobacco and alcohol, they are less clear about the effects of other drugs.
- Older pupils' factual knowledge of relationships and sex education is secure, but their understanding of the relationships element is less well developed.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The quality of PSHE teaching is good.

- Relationships between adults and pupils are trusting and purposeful.
- Teachers plan interesting activities, for example, how pupils would feel if they met an alien, and lessons provide a variety of tasks, so pupils enjoy their work.
- Teachers explain and use technical terms, such as adolescent and puberty clearly and accurately.
- Teachers manage their pupils well and use questions carefully, for example, to extend more able pupils, such as the Year 1 boy who explained that if he met an alien he would feel jealous because 'he can do more than me'.
- Teaching assistants work effectively to help individuals or groups and make sure that they play a full part in the lesson. They also provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss and listen to the views of others.
- Occasionally, the pace of the work slows or the pupils become slightly less attentive because they have been listening for too long.
- The assessment of PSHE is at an early stage and it does not clearly show pupils' differing rates of progress or provide them with sufficient guidance about how to improve their work.

Quality of the curriculum

The PSHE curriculum is satisfactory.

- The programme for PSHE is mostly taught through other subjects, so it is relevant and interesting to pupils.
- Statutory requirements are met and most aspects of PSHE are suitably covered.
- The documentation for PSHE does not ensure that pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are developed progressively as they move through the school.

- The enrichment of the PSHE curriculum is excellent through a wide range of extra activities, for example, two residential trips to North Somerset and a wide variety of sporting activities after school.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are good.

- PSHE is seen by all staff as central to the work of the school.
- The subject is being extensively reviewed and a new scheme of work is being written to ensure that there is progression in the curriculum.
- Monitoring is developing and there is a clear picture of gaps in the curriculum and how to develop the subject.

Subject issue: economic well-being

Pupils' preparation for adult life is good.

- Pupils' self-confidence and their readiness to offer opinions are excellent.
- Pupils work well together, undertake responsibilities maturely and listen carefully to each other's views.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to consider the world of work, for example, through the use of discussion with visitors such as MacAlpine, a company who carried out work on the playground, or activities such as the Trading Game, provided by Young Enterprise.
- Not enough work takes place on managing personal finance.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing more assessment tasks to track progress in PSHE
- ensuring that there is curriculum progression through the new scheme of work.

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