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Mrs J Milford
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Milford

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 Friday 10 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 deputy headteacher and the PSHE co-ordinator, your pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, observation of two lessons and a parents' workshop.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement

Pupils' overall achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils' personal development is good. They are friendly, confident and very proud of their achievements.

- Pupils work together well, listen to each other and eagerly talk about their work.
- Pupils know that their views are highly valued and they confidently contribute their opinions to many aspects of school life, including voting for the new tyre park where pupils can play.
- 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 have a very good knowledge of how to stay safe. Older pupils understand the dangers of tobacco, alcohol and 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 positive.
- Lessons are based on interesting, real tasks, for example, planning how to spend the profit from the school 'Fayre'. Teachers provide a variety of activities, so pupils enjoy their work.
- Lessons are taught at a brisk pace and teachers make good use of time targets to help pupils complete their work.
- Teachers manage their pupils well, using praise and rewards to encourage them.
- 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, pupils become slightly less attentive because they have been listening for too long.
- The assessment of PSHE is developing and is still at an early stage. It does not cover all aspects of PSHE or clearly show pupils' differing rates of progress.

Quality of the curriculum

The PSHE curriculum is good.

- The programme for PSHE is mostly taught through other subjects, so it is relevant and interesting to pupils.
- There are good links between subjects, but at times there are missed opportunities for developing pupils skills.
- Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials are used effectively.
- Although the curriculum has been carefully mapped, the documentation for PSHE does not ensure that pupils' 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, skiing or surfing trips that are subsidised to ensure that everyone is included.

Leadership and management of PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are satisfactory.

- PSHE is seen by all staff as central to the work of the school.
- Effective monitoring has clearly identified gaps in the curriculum and there is a clear picture of how to develop the subject.
- The subject is being extensively reviewed and a new scheme of work is being written to ensure that there is progression in the curriculum.
- Planning and monitoring do not ensure that specific skills are identified in learning objectives and taught, as well as being used in other lessons.
- The policy for relationships and sex education does not place sufficient emphasis on relationships and pupils are not taught this aspect of the curriculum early enough.

Subject issue: economic well-being

Pupils' preparation for adult life is good.

- Pupils' self-confidence and their willingness to contribute are good.
- Pupils cooperate well, and they can discuss and make decisions maturely.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the world of work and an excellent understanding of how to influence decisions through the school parliament.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to manage their finances, although further work is needed in this area.

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