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Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Welch

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: physical education (PE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 7 December 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 the identification of an area of best practice in the subject and its impact for 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included interviews with staff and Year 6 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports and observations of three lessons and other activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement

Achievement and enjoyment of learning are good.

- Pupils enjoy physical activities and achieve well. Attainment on entry to the Early Years Foundation Stage is low and outcomes in physical development at the end of the Reception year are below expected levels. Most children make good progress but those who come into the Reception class later in the year have less time to develop their physical skills. Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 is good, so that by the time pupils leave the school in Year 6 almost all are attaining average standards.
- Most Year 6 pupils reach the expected standard in swimming before they leave; the school's swimming programme has been reorganised recently to

enable even more pupils to do so. Pupils who are talented in physical activities are identified and provided with additional challenges through the sports partnership and community sports-club activities. The school also provides a programme of 'gym trail' activities for pupils who are less well coordinated.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is good.

- There were a number of strengths in the lessons observed. Pupils were managed effectively, and in the Reception class teaching assistants were deployed successfully to work with individuals and groups. Teachers had high expectations for good behaviour and pupils responded well showing positive attitudes and an enthusiasm for learning. There were good opportunities, particularly in the Year 2 lesson, for pupils to practise their skills and they worked together particularly well in pairs and groups. Teachers provided helpful demonstrations to show pupils what they were aiming for in their responses. Teachers also encouraged pupils to observe and discuss their own and others' responses and look for improvements.
- Teachers' planning is focused clearly on learning objectives and identifies how the success of pupils' learning will be assessed. Differentiation is an aspect of lesson planning identified for improvement and the level of challenge in the lessons was not always high enough, especially for more able pupils. There are good systems in place for teachers to assess and record pupils' attainment and progress; these include the periodic assessments made by teachers at the end of a unit of work. Currently, information and communication technology (ICT) is underused for supporting modelling and assessment in lessons.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Pupils take part in two hour-long PE lessons each week. They also have up to three 'take-ten' activity sessions and the chance to engage in purposeful play activities at lunchtimes. The curriculum is organised well and includes all six areas of learning. Pupils from Years 2 to 6 have swimming lessons, and Year 6 pupils attend a residential visit engaging in a number of outdoor and adventurous activities. There is a good range of well-attended after-school sports clubs and the subject leader has plans to introduce a programme of intra-school sports competitions.
- The PE curriculum is a major contributor to the school's positive promotion of healthy and safe lifestyles. There are also some good links with other subjects. For example, in dance and in science which include a focus on physical fitness in Year 5. The school's involvement in the sports partnership has improved provision; pupils take part in many tournaments and in alternative activities designed to attract pupils to a wider range of sports, such as trampolining. Pupils also enjoy competing with other schools in competitions organised by the district sports association.

- Accommodation and resources are good. Positive improvements have been made to the outdoor learning area for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management is good.

- Subject leadership is organised well and focused clearly on improving provision and outcomes for pupils. Involvement in the school sports partnership has been used well to strengthen subject leader skills and provide training for staff. A very good system is in place to record pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school. Support for teachers' effective assessment of PE is also good. The extra-curricular sports programme is managed well and the deployment of a teaching assistant to lead lunchtime play activities is another positive influence on pupils' participation in physical activities.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. A calendar of subject leader monitoring and evaluation activities has been drawn up. Monitoring includes lesson observations, discussions with pupils and checks on teachers' planning, but the records from these are insufficiently evaluative. PE and sport have a high profile in displays around the school and pupils appreciate the many sporting activities available to them.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- establishing effective links with Early Years Foundation Stage pre-school partners to help improve starting points for children who join the Reception class
- strengthening the quality of evaluation following subject leader monitoring to provide more evidence of the impact of provision on achievement
- continuing to support teachers in providing pupils with suitably challenging activities and with using ICT effectively in lessons.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PE 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

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector