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Ms A Hoare
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Hoare

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 2 November 2009 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PSHE, the visit had a particular focus on learning to stay safe.

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 included: interviews with you, a governor, and some of your pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is satisfactory.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Pupils are confident and thoughtful. They express their views honestly and consider the opinions of others in a reflective way. They work together well.
- Pupils are making good progress in learning how to stay safe, for example, in road safety, and being able to make decisions in potentially risky situations. This is because they are given interesting and practical situations in which they can use and develop these skills.

- Pupils have a good knowledge of how to stay healthy. They understand the meaning of a healthy diet and know the importance of exercise and how to make sure it is having a positive effect.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of the dangers of tobacco and alcohol. They are less clear about the effects and risks of illegal drugs because they have had less information about them in lessons. They also have a secure understanding of how to resist peer pressure and have had the opportunity to practise these skills.
- Pupils' knowledge about body changes and how friendships change as they reach puberty are not developed sufficiently well.
- Pupils' knowledge about how to manage their money and their understanding of the world of work are not sufficiently extended.

Quality of teaching of PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is satisfactory.

- Relationships between teachers and pupils are positive and pupils are encouraged to succeed.
- Activities in lessons are interesting so pupils want to learn and enjoy the variety and stimulation. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the class were fascinated by a visit from a parent and her baby. They learned about a baby's needs and development through the opportunity to ask questions and the chance to see a real baby.
- However, despite the engaging material, pupils spend too long listening and become restless at times.
- The work in PSHE lessons is not always matched sufficiently well to pupils varied abilities, so some are not fully challenged, while others are not given enough support. For example, teachers' questions do not always provoke sufficient thought among more able pupils.
- Assessment is at an early stage so there is not enough information to show how well pupils are progressing in PSHE.

Quality of the PSHE curriculum

The quality of the PSHE curriculum is satisfactory.

- There is a clear and comprehensive scheme of work that is followed carefully by teachers in the weekly PSHE lesson.
- The lesson objectives, planned from the scheme of work, are not always sufficiently clear, so specific skills are not always developed progressively through the school.
- There are good links with other subjects, but they have not been mapped to ensure that PSHE is being taught effectively through cross-curricular opportunities.

- Assemblies make a good contribution to PSHE, especially in helping pupils learn to be safe.
- The programme for sex and relationships education is too limited and there is too little opportunity for pupils to extend their understanding of the relationships aspect.
- There are too few opportunities to develop pupils' financial capability.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The leadership and management of PSHE are satisfactory.

- You have recently taken responsibility for PSHE and this has raised the profile of the subject.
- You have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and how to improve provision.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching, so teachers have missed opportunities to develop their expertise in this subject.

Subject issue: learning to stay safe

- Pupils have a very good understanding of how to stay safe, for example, in relation to using sharp tools and road safety.
- The school has an effective policy on e-safety, including cyber-bullying, which is reflected in pupils' knowledge of these subjects.
- Pupils benefit from opportunities to practise their skills in role-plays, on school trips and through the use of equipment, such as sharp tools.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- reviewing learning objectives in the scheme of work for PSHE to ensure that it meets pupils' needs and guides teachers in planning lessons
- improving teaching through lesson observation and training for staff
- developing more assessment tasks for PSHE.

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