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Ms Parker
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Parker

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 13 November 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 PE 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. 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 staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and reports and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement is good.

- Learning and progress are good. Pupils enjoy lessons and are very keen to do well; their behaviour and attitudes are outstanding.
- Pupils develop physical skills at a good rate. Games skills are secure and pupils move with control in dance, using movement well to express their ideas. Pupils have a good knowledge of how to keep themselves fit and healthy through exercise and diet, and the majority take part in sports outside of lessons and school. Dance and football clubs are especially

popular. Pupils recognise good features in performance and what is needed to improve.

- There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. An above-average proportion of pupils is identified as gifted and talented and these pupils achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are included in lessons and make good progress.
- When given the opportunity to do so, pupils develop outstanding leadership skills. However, there are limited opportunities to train and develop pupils as play and games leaders.

Feature of best practice

- Year 6 pupils demonstrated outstanding leadership skills when they planned and organised a sponsored obstacle course for the whole school. Each group took charge of one class and, with great care, designed activities suitable for each age-group. They used computers to plan the courses and design and produce sponsor forms and certificates of participation. The pupils organised the event on the day, setting up and running the different courses. They provided healthy refreshments, having liaised with a local store. This successful event raised considerable money towards school funds, helping to purchase an outdoor performance stage. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the event and Year 6 pupils were given a standing ovation in assembly in recognition of their hard work and excellent organisation.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching is good.

- Very positive relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils are motivated well and enjoy lessons.
- Lessons are planned well and build on pupils' prior learning. Most tasks are challenging and matched to pupils' needs well. Occasionally, more-able pupils are not fully challenged or tasks are not focused well enough on the main purpose of the lesson. Pupils generally know what is expected of them because learning objectives and success criteria are made clear and are referred to frequently, helping pupils to evaluate performances well and focus on what they need to do to improve.
- Most teachers are secure in their understanding of the teaching of games and dance but some lack confidence in teaching gymnastics.
- A good range of activities is included in lessons so that pupils are physically active for most of the time. Equipment is used well in lessons to ensure plenty of practice. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used to share the purpose of lessons with pupils and provide stimulus for dance. ICT is not used as fully as it might be to support pupils' evaluation of performance or understanding of health-related knowledge and understanding.

- Pupils' progress is not monitored or recorded formally. The school recognises that this needs to be done and is in the process of deciding what sort of assessment and recording will be most helpful and supportive of pupils' progress.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- The curriculum provides a good balance of activities and includes a residential visit for Year 6 pupils. The school is currently developing opportunities for orienteering for all pupils and the chance to experience more net/wall type games. The school has held the Activemark award for three years and the national healthy schools award in recognition of its work.
- A good programme of extra-curricular activities is offered to pupils in Key Stage 2 and increasingly to pupils in Key Stage 1. The programme is broad with dance clubs and festivals, Irish dancing in which the school has a national champion, team games and cross-country running.
- A good relationship with the school sport partnership enables a wide variety of coaches to visit school and additional non-traditional activities to be offered such as golf, judo, sailing and skipping alongside badminton, basketball and volleyball. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are provided for well within these programmes. Gifted and talented pupils are guided towards local opportunities and the school is increasing the meaningful links it has with local sports clubs.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management is satisfactory.

- Some discontinuity in the leadership of PE in recent years has led to a decrease in the pace of developments of some priorities such as developing systems for assessment and recording.
- Internal and external auditing of provision has helped to set appropriate priorities for improvement that are shared by all staff. These priorities are reflected in the improvement plan, with an appropriate focus on raising standards and improving the quality of provision. A satisfactory range of professional development opportunities supports these priorities. However, monitoring of teaching and scrutiny of pupils' progress and achievements are limited and do not regularly inform planning for the future. The capacity for further improvement is satisfactory with a number of initiatives in the early stages of development.
- Attention is given to health and safety, although risk assessment of activities is not always detailed enough.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing the leadership skills of more pupils

- ensuring that more-able pupils are fully challenged in all lessons
- establishing more formal systems of assessing and recording pupils' progress in PE
- developing more rigorous systems of monitoring and evaluating progress and provision to better inform priorities for improvement
- ensuring rigorous risk assessment of all activities.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop physical education in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Gillian Salter-Smith
Additional Inspector