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Mrs S Owers
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Dear Mrs Owers

Ofsted 2009-10 survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 7 December 2009 to look at work in PSHE education.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PSHE education, 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff, a parent governor and a group of Year 6 pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons and one assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is good.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is good.

- Pupils understand the importance of exercise and keeping fit. A broad range of sporting activities is available which pupils enjoy taking part in.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of food groups and a balanced diet.
- Pupils have a secure understanding of the dangers of legal and illegal drugs, alcohol and tobacco.

- Pupils have good levels of knowledge and understanding of staying safe, particularly protective behaviour. Two pupils in Year 6 have trained as road-safety officers raising the awareness of younger children.
- Pupils show good knowledge about how the body changes at puberty.
- Pupils are confident, caring and thoughtful. This reflects the caring ethos and values of the school. Pupils are able to readily express their ideas and feelings.
- Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of how to manage money. They undertake some very useful work during the enterprise day and have opportunities to work in teams.

Quality of teaching of PSHE education

The quality of teaching of PSHE education is good.

- Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and use a range of activities in lessons to engage and motivate pupils and make learning purposeful.
- Teachers start lessons well so that pupils understand what they are learning about and recall relevant prior learning experiences.
- Good relationships are established in lessons. Teachers are encouraging and manage behaviour well so all pupils enjoy learning.
- The work in PSHE education lessons is not always matched sufficiently well to pupils of varied abilities. Some need more support, while others need more challenge.
- There is an effective range of assessment opportunities which is developing well. The monitoring and recording of pupils' progress in PSHE education are at an early stage.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The PSHE education curriculum is good.

- The PSHE education curriculum is broad and coverage is mainly in discrete lessons but enhanced by assemblies and themed days. Curriculum provision is planned well.
- There are good links with other subjects. However, these are not mapped sufficiently to show where provision is taking place.
- The Healthy Schools award has made a beneficial contribution by increasing the number of health-related activities across the school. The percentage of pupils eating a school meal is well above the national average.
- Good use is made of external agencies and visits to complement the PSHE education curriculum and make learning more relevant and interesting.
- Using the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) materials has had a significant impact which is reflected in the pupils' positive attitudes to learning and improved emotional development.

- The curriculum meets the needs of vulnerable pupils well through targeted activities such as the Kite group and African drumming. There is a strong focus on developing social skills and raising self-esteem and confidence.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The leadership and management of PSHE education are good.

- Subject leadership is good and supported well by the senior leaders. This ensures that PSHE education is a fundamental part of the school's ethos.
- The PSHE education policy is coherent and detailed with clear links to other policies.
- There is a generally accurate understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The PSHE education action plan is well focused.
- The role of the subject leadership in monitoring and evaluating PSHE education is limited.

Subject issue: learning to stay safe

- Pupils feel safe at school and know who they can turn to and what to do if they have a concern.
- During lessons, PSHE education and SEAL activities encourage pupils to speak openly about their emotions and discuss strategies to manage feelings and situations.
- Pupils have a good understanding about how to stay safe during activities such as forest school and use equipment which includes sharp tools.
- The protective behaviour work is a key part of the curriculum and makes an important contribution to pupils' understanding of how to be safe. Pupils have an excellent knowledge of e-safety.
- Parents confirm that the school nurtures a safe environment and pupils learn to be safe in and outside of school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- embedding and evaluating the new systems for monitoring and recording pupil's progress in PSHE education
- increasing the role of subject leadership in monitoring and evaluating PSHE education across the school.

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

Davinder Dosanjh
Her Majesty's Inspector