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19 February 2010

Mrs J Whiteman
Headteacher
St Mary's Wrestwood Children's Trust
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Dear Mrs Whiteman

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 February 2010 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 included: interviews with staff including therapists, subject coordinators, residential staff, a parent governor, and the school social worker; scrutiny of relevant documentation; observation of two lessons; discussion and lunch with pupils; and observation of an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Pupils have impressive personal and social skills. They make rapid progress as they move through the school and are polite, courteous and keen to talk to visitors with pride about their school. They are able to recognise their personal strengths and weaknesses.
- Throughout the day, staff model and reinforce good social interaction and behaviour. Mealtimes are particularly good examples of how pupils use

this learned behaviour, displaying exemplary table manners, some using adapted cutlery.

- Pupils evidently develop confidence and self-esteem as they get older. They become increasingly independent in the school, within the local community, and in their ability to plan, shop and cook meals for themselves and friends.
- Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of sex and relationships and drugs education, taking account of their wide range of needs.

Quality of teaching of PSHE education

The quality of teaching of PSHE education is good.

- Lessons are always practical, enjoyable and meaningful to pupils' lives.
- Therapists and staff work together to ensure that the specific needs of individuals are met. Learning is consolidated in both the day and the residential curriculum.
- Assessment is a strength of the teaching and ongoing in all settings. It is used well by all staff to monitor individual progress and to set new and individual targets.
- Learning objectives in teachers' lesson plans are not always sharp enough.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The PSHE curriculum is outstanding.

- The PSHE curriculum is rich and permeates all aspects of the school, both during the day and across the residential curriculum.
- Pupils have a wide range of opportunities to develop their personal and social skills through an exceptional range of after-school, evening and weekend clubs, trips and local visits.
- The school's focus on developing speech, language, communication and independent travel has a profound impact on pupils' development.
- The PSHE schemes of work are planned carefully to ensure progression and independence as pupils move through the school.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The leadership and management of PSHE education are outstanding.

- PSHE education has a high profile in the school and is supported very well by senior leaders.
- The PSHE provision is planned, monitored and assessed exceptionally well to ensure that all pupils are appropriately supported by staff, a wide range of therapists, facilitators and other outside professionals.

- High-quality professional development training for identified staff is regularly evaluated and disseminated to all staff. All staff are supported well to deliver the PSHE curriculum.

Subject issue: learning to stay safe

Great care is taken by all staff to ensure that pupils learn how to stay safe. An outstanding example is their growing awareness of how to travel independently. A carefully structured programme ensures that learning how to stay safe is high profile for all pupils. For example, using a telephone, stranger danger, keeping passwords safe on the computer and showing respect for themselves and each other to prevent bullying. Pupils report feeling safe in the school and know that any concern will be listened to and acted on.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that all PSHE lessons have clear and measurable learning objectives.

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

As I explained previously, 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

Clive Kempton
Her Majesty's Inspector