

Aviation House  
125 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
www.ofsted.gov.uk



18 March 2010

Mr R Kennedy  
Headteacher  
The Lancaster School  
Knighton Lane East  
Leicester  
LE2 6FU

Dear Mr Kennedy

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 20 and 21 January 2010 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 students.

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 you and your assistant headteacher, the subject leader and director of specialism, and a group of students; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of students' work and observation of 10 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement is good.

- Good teaching and students' positive attitudes towards learning ensure that the majority of students make good progress and attain standards that are above national averages by the end of Year 9. Students develop effective problem-solving skills in outdoor and adventurous activities and consolidate their games skills in cooperative and competitive activities in tennis.
- In Key Stage 4, most students enjoy PE, behave well and participate regularly in lessons. The BTEC sport award has been introduced and over

the past two years results have improved with more students attaining higher grades. A small minority of students entered for GCSE PE as part of the school's work-related learning pathway, attain results that are below the national average.

- In core PE lessons in Years 10 and 11, standards are broadly average. However, accurate records of students' progress are not maintained so teachers do not have a clear picture of the achievement of individual students or of different groups of learners.

### Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- Specialist teachers display good subject knowledge, are well-organised and manage behaviour well. They plan lessons that make learning enjoyable and generate high activity rates. The most effective teaching makes the best use of the time available by encouraging students to change into PE kit quickly and by maintaining a good pace to learning.
- Most lessons include opportunities for students to observe and evaluate the work of others. Little use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to enhance learning. During group work, students are offered regular feedback on how to improve. Students in Key Stage 3 are assessed on their performance but not on other aspects of the attainment target for PE. These procedures do not extend into Key Stage 4.

### Features of best practice

- As a specialist sports college, the school has attracted funding to provide an indoor, state-of-the-art tennis centre. The facility is shared with the Girls School based on the same site and complements six outdoor tennis courts of good quality. The centre is permanently staffed by a full-time tennis coach who is on site during the day, evenings and at weekends. The key strength of this arrangement is that students receive weekly tennis lessons delivered by an expert coach who makes learning fun, highly active and enjoyable. The high standards he generates within the curriculum are reinforced further through extensive opportunities to practise in after-school clubs.
- The facility provides an ideal environment in which to learn to play tennis. Lessons are timetabled effectively in six-week blocks. The appropriate type of tennis ball, racket, court and net are matched to different abilities and students of similar abilities are grouped together to ensure they enjoy success and to maximise their achievement. The coach's knowledge and enthusiasm inspires students; they are eager to learn, enthused and willing to try their very best in lessons. Consequently, standards are above average. Tennis is played to a high level in local and national competitions. A significant number of students practise regularly, either before or after-school, and at weekends as part of the centre's elite development groups. This provides an excellent model for developing high-quality performance in school sport.

## Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is satisfactory.

- All students receive two hours of PE each week. This is extended to three hours in Year 7 to ensure that students joining the school receive a good grounding in PE and sport. This year, a small group of higher attaining students is being fast-tracked to achieve the GCSE PE short-course award by the end of Year 9.
- Curriculum changes in Key Stage 4 have increased opportunities to gain accreditation, but provision is not yet fully suited to the needs of all students. For example, leadership training is limited to those pursuing the BTEC course. There is no clear strategy to ensure students that have English as an additional language are always engaged in learning.
- A large proportion of students engage in a wide range of clubs and sporting activities after school and a significant number of sports teams compete at local and national level.

## Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- The subject leader heads a strong team of specialist staff who all readily adopt responsibility for making further improvements to the work of the department. The subject leader and director of specialism work effectively to raise achievement and promote participation further in PE and sport. The decision to change accredited courses in Key Stage 4 has had an immediate and dramatic impact on raising standards.
- Monitoring of lessons and regular reviews of coursework inform self-evaluation which is largely accurate, but the routine analysis of assessment data and target-setting in both key stages lacks coherence.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- making better use of ICT in practical lessons by:
  - using video files to illustrate key techniques and identify good practice
  - encouraging students to use cameras to record other students' performance and analyse these images to identify how they can improve their work
- improving curriculum provision in Key Stage 4 by:
  - embedding recent changes in Years 10 and 11 and monitoring the impact of these changes on students' learning
  - ensuring that the small minority of students that have English as an additional language are fully engaged in learning in all 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

John Mitcheson  
Her Majesty's Inspector