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Mr P Storey
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Storey

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

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 5 February 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 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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' reports; and observation of two lessons. I also observed the range of activity and provision for physical development in the Early Years Foundation Stage unit as well as healthy lifestyle activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is good.

- From average starting points, pupils make very good progress during the Early Years Foundation Stage. Consequently, the vast majority exceeds age-related expectations for physical development. Lesson observations confirm that good progress is sustained during Key Stages 1 and 2, where pupils' attainment is above average overall. Standards in swimming and dance are high.

- Pupils' personal development in PE is excellent. They are confident, PE literate and resourceful. They display creativity and readily embrace the leadership and competitive opportunities available. Their attitudes to learning are excellent.
- Pupils' contribution during a healthy-lifestyles assembly showed that they have a growing awareness of the benefits of keeping fit and eating well.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is at least good and promotes effective learning.

- Teachers show an infectious enthusiasm for the subject. Their planning is very good and lessons are sufficiently flexible to accommodate pupils' differing needs. They have improved their ability to teach the subject effectively by completing a number of PE-specific training courses.
- Teachers give pupils the confidence and motivation to exceed age-related expectations for PE. The use of varied stimuli, cross-curricular themes and fun activities assures their good progress. Learning support assistants are deployed well to enhance the experiences of pupils with physical disabilities.
- Assessment procedures beyond the Early Years Foundation Stage are sound overall but would benefit from further improvement. A fledgling assessment and monitoring system has been introduced. However, clarification is needed to ensure that the judgements made relate to the attainment levels for PE. Parents and pupils receive regular progress and attainment feedback.

Features of best practice

- The teachers are committed to delivering high-quality and enjoyable PE lessons, which stimulate pupils' interest, and stretch and challenge them.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the curriculum is good and facilitates pupils' secure acquisition of the four core strands for PE.

- Pupils benefit from a broad and balanced programme of physical activities. These promote their creative skills and independence effectively. In addition to a range of games, pupils participate in dance, athletics, swimming, gymnastics and outdoor and adventurous activities. All pupils receive at least two hours of PE every week.
- A range of after-school and lunchtime PE activities is available to pupils. Some of these are run by staff, but others arise from links with local clubs. Some older pupils act as play leaders for younger children. However, lunchtime supervisors are not trained to support PE and sports activities. The local school sport partnership link has been particularly successful in widening participation, exposing pupils to non-traditional activities and providing opportunities for staff to increase their PE knowledge and understanding.
- PE facilities are generally sound and support curriculum delivery. However, during wet weather drainage problems prevent the use of the yards and fields for PE.

Features of best practice

- Cross-curricular themes relating, for example, to English, music and history, are integrated into PE lessons to reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding across a range of subjects.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good overall.

- The PE coordinator is diligent and well organised. The expected PE policies and procedures are in place and all aspects of provision are monitored and evaluated, albeit intermittently.
- The subject is coordinated effectively. Staff receive good guidance and frequent opportunities to update their knowledge and understanding of PE. Short-, medium- and longer-term plans are meticulous. Clear targets are set which are reviewed annually. Standards have been successfully raised and sustained.
- PE holds a high profile in the school. Pupils' success is celebrated regularly and the photographic evidence file is testament to their prowess. Programmes of study have been adapted to reflect changes to the National Curriculum.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. The PE coordinator, well supported by you and the sport partnership staff, has a clear understanding of how provision and outcomes can be enhanced. Capacity for further improvement is therefore sound.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- further refining assessment practice to develop more reliable data
- training lunchtime supervisors to support PE and sport activities at lunchtime
- resolving the drainage issues to enable full use of facilities.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PE 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

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector