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Mrs M Weller
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Weller

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 19 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 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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports and observation of two lessons and other activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is good.

Achievement in PE

Achievement is good.

- Children get off to a good start in the Early Years Foundation Stage. They develop a wide range of physical skills in the Nursery and Reception classes through engaging in many well-organised indoor and outdoor activities. Pupils make good progress in PE. By the end of Year 6, almost all pupils reach the expected level for their age, and a good proportion exceeds it. The school's monitoring data show that attainment in all year groups is improving each year. Pupils perform particularly well in athletics,

swimming and games. Nearly all pupils leave the school able to swim 25 metres.

- Pupils say that they enjoy PE and sport a great deal. Those interviewed from Years 5 and 6 were able to explain how exercise helps to keep them fit and know what happens to their bodies when they are active. They were also able to describe other features of healthy lifestyles, such as eating a balanced diet. Good attitudes and engagement in lessons and the high take-up in sports clubs helps to boost pupils' physical achievement.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is good.

- Two good lessons were observed during the inspection. They were organised well and planned precisely with clear learning objectives and a suitable structure. Pupils engaged in a vigorous warm-up and discussed how this affected their physical condition. There were outstanding features in both lessons. In one, the support provided for a pupil with a disability enabled him to be fully included. In the other, the teacher's use of information and communication technology gave pupils the chance to evaluate the quality of their previous work in dance. Teachers also used their own and pupils' demonstrations well to show pupils what they were aiming for in their responses. Occasionally the pace of learning in the lessons dipped and pupils were not active enough.
- Teachers observe and question pupils well to assess their responses and check their understanding. In one lesson, the teaching assistant collected useful evidence of pupils' learning outcomes. There are good systems in place to record and monitor pupils' attainment. Teachers complete end-of-year achievement records and these are used by leaders to keep a check on progress. A detailed individual portfolio of children's physical development is collected by staff in the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Features of best practice

- The use of a video camera to capture pupils' dance performances and replay them as a starting point in the following lesson was particularly effective. The preparation of learning outcome statements, which pupils used to help them discuss and evaluate the quality of their work, guided their successful self-assessment. Pupils then used their evaluations to work on improving their dance routines.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is good.

- Pupils enjoy two hours of timetabled PE, which includes some 'take-ten' and 'brain gym' activities. All areas of learning are included in the curriculum, although provision for outdoor and adventurous activities is

less strong. Pupils in Key Stage 2 attend swimming lessons during the year and 'top-up' sessions are arranged for any pupils needing to reach the expected standard. Curriculum planning is moving towards linking learning in different subjects with some PE activities included in thematic topics.

- Involvement in the school sports partnership has been used well to introduce pupils to new sports activities. Courses in fundamental skills for those with underdeveloped physical coordination, and multi-skills sessions for talented pupils, provide good support and challenge. Attendance at after-school clubs is excellent. Pupils also have many opportunities to play in inter-school competitions and tournaments and are proud of their successes.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- Leaders have a long-standing commitment to improving achievement and the quality of provision in PE. The enthusiastic approach from key leaders ensures physical activities and healthy lifestyles have a high profile among staff and pupils. Leaders recognise the strengths in provision and know where further improvements can be made. Good systems have been established for monitoring pupils' achievements.
- Professional development organised for staff has helped to improve their subject knowledge. Newly qualified teachers receive good support and guidance through lesson observations and feedback. Pupils' views are collected and contribute to changes in provision, for example by extending the variety of club activities and purchasing more play equipment. Other aspects of monitoring and evaluation, such as undertaking regular lesson observations and making checks on teachers' planning, are less systematic.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- increasing the responsibility and leadership opportunities for pupils who are trained as play-leaders by involving them in organising lunchtime activities and intra-school competitions
- introducing a more systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating lessons and teachers' planning
- considering the introduction of more outdoor and adventurous activities, such as orienteering.

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

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector