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23 February 2010

Mrs M Basham
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Basham

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 10 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, and observation of three lessons and other activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is outstanding.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is outstanding.

- Pupils make excellent progress in PE in all key stages. Children start school with physical skills which are broadly typical for their age. By the time they leave in Year 6, they reach standards that are well above average in many aspects of PE and sport. Pupils' attainment and progress are boosted significantly by their involvement in an excellent range of high-quality physical activities, which are organised before and after school, and at lunchtimes. All pupils leave the school in Year 6 able to swim 25 metres. High-quality performances in dance are another outstanding feature.

- Pupils' personal development and well-being are significantly enhanced by their involvement in physical activities. They thoroughly enjoy their PE lessons and sports clubs, and know a great deal about healthy lifestyles and why keeping fit is important. Behaviour and attitudes in lessons are exemplary. Pupils work very well together and everyone participates with great enthusiasm. Older pupils enjoy taking responsibility for leading activities at lunchtimes.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully included in lessons and extra-curricular activities. Talented pupils are provided with additional challenges in school and through community sports club links. In recent years, pupils have reached the level of elite performers in areas such as dance and gymnastics. Another excellent feature of pupils' personal development is the contribution they make towards the lives of others through their participation in sponsored sports events.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is outstanding.

- All three lessons observed were outstanding and pupils made excellent progress. Lessons are planned meticulously and focus sharply on outcomes for pupils. Teachers' high expectations and excellent relationships result in full engagement and high levels of enjoyment for pupils. No time is wasted and the pace of learning is always purposeful. Teachers model techniques well to show pupils what they are aiming for and pupils are asked to demonstrate their high-quality responses. Pupils also have many opportunities to be creative and make decisions for themselves.
- Teachers assess learning well through their questioning and observations, making pertinent coaching points to challenge pupils to reach higher quality in their responses. Pupils are also asked to discuss and evaluate their learning and look for ways in which they might improve. Teaching assistants provide excellent support, helping teachers manage the lesson, guiding pupils' responses and making observations to assess learning. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) to stimulate ideas and capture pupils' learning is an aspect of teaching that could be extended further.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is outstanding.

- All pupils have two hours of high-quality PE on their weekly timetable but pupils are physically active for considerably more time than this. The curriculum includes high-quality provision in all areas of learning. Dance is a significant strength and teachers successfully link cultural and creative dances to thematic learning topics. PE is linked well to other subjects, such as science, incorporating the strong focus on pupils adopting healthy lifestyles.

- The diversity of physical opportunities in the curriculum inspires pupils and provides them with rich and memorable sporting experiences. An excellent variety of sports clubs are well attended and appeal to a wide range of interests as they offer something for everyone. Pupils also have many opportunities to play and gain success in sports competitions against other schools. There are excellent links promoted with community sports clubs so that pupils can continue their sporting interests outside of school.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is outstanding.

- PE and sport receive an exceptionally high profile. This is evident in what the pupils themselves say about their enjoyment and achievements. Leaders are committed to the very best quality provision and work tirelessly to sustain it. Staff are keen to try new ideas and approaches to extend pupils' experiences, such as organising virtual competitions with a partner primary school in Spain. The energy and enthusiasm of those leading PE and sport activities are commendable.
- There is a positive focus on providing teachers with up-to-date professional development to maintain their strong subject knowledge. Subject monitoring and evaluation are regularly undertaken and include lesson observations, checks on teachers' assessments and taking feedback from pupils on their views of provision. A more in-depth analysis of attainment and progress data would sharpen evaluation further. Good support is provided for newly qualified teachers, including attendance at training courses organised through the school sports partnership. Improvements in provision and pupils' many achievements are reported termly to the governing body.

Features of best practice

- The school reaches exceptionally high standards in many aspects of PE and sport. This stems from an unstinting and innovative approach to providing the best possible learning experiences for all pupils. High-quality leadership and management, outstanding teaching and excellent curricular provision combine to enable pupils to reach high standards in all their physical activities.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- continuing to develop teachers' use of ICT for modelling and assessment
- sharpening the analysis, evaluation and reporting of pupils' attainment and progress in PE.

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

As I explained previously 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