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Dear Mrs Blackwell

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 2 March 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 three lessons and other activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is satisfactory with good features.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is satisfactory. Standards and progress are satisfactory and pupils' personal development through PE is good.

- Standards are at the expected levels for the vast majority of pupils by the end of Year 6 and all pupils meet the requirement to swim 25 metres. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall during their time at the school although progress is accelerated during Key Stage 2 because of higher levels of challenge in lessons. Small groups of higher attaining pupils make good progress in Key Stage 2 although higher attaining pupils are not consistently challenged in other classes and are capable of attaining more

than at present. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities have good opportunities to develop their fine and gross motor skills through the 'smart moves' programme and, consequently, make the same progress as others in the school.

- Pupils have a well-developed understanding of living a healthy lifestyle and have emerging skills in observing, evaluating and feeding back to others on how work could be improved.
- Older pupils have good opportunities to devise and lead 'wake and shake' sessions for the whole school, and some parents, at the start of the school day and take responsibility for ensuring playground equipment is available for active play sessions. All pupils have increasing opportunities to feedback on provision and positive changes are made to the curriculum as a result of their suggestions.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes towards PE and thoroughly enjoy lessons and enrichment activities. Behaviour in PE lessons and when working together in the playground is exemplary.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is satisfactory overall.

- The quality of PE teaching is inconsistent, particularly between key stages. During the inspection, more satisfactory teaching was observed than good or better. In one outstanding Key Stage 2 lesson, the teacher had very high expectations and was highly effective in the use of praise and questioning to challenge and extend pupils' thinking and in helping them to work out their own solutions to tasks. In the less effective lessons, expectations of pupils' capabilities were too low. As a result, tasks were insufficiently challenging and pupils were inactive for extended periods of time because of too much teacher input.
- Good use is made of photographs to demonstrate pupils' experiences, although no use is made of other technologies for pupils to record, evaluate and improve their own and other's work or to moderate teacher assessments.
- The use of assessment for learning strategies is inconsistent. When teachers intervene, pupils make accelerated progress in understanding the task. However, pupils are not consistently helped to understand their next steps in learning or how to attain higher quality in their performances.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is good.

- The curriculum and extra-curricular programme have recently and effectively been revised to ensure pupils experience a broader range of activities during their time at the school and have more opportunities to study an activity in depth. For example, the swimming programme has been successfully extended to ensure all pupils reach the expected levels.

The school makes best use of time taken to travel to the leisure centre for swimming by remaining on site and also completing work on multi-skills development. Following feedback from pupils, a 10 week unit of ice-skating has also been introduced. Through an ice hockey community project pupils will have further opportunities to consolidate previously taught game skills. These changes have yet to impact fully on improving standards further.

- The school makes good use of commercial schemes of work to support teaching. It employs an external coaching company to deliver part of the PE curriculum to enable pupils to work with subject specialists. All pupils experience two hours of PE in the curriculum each week and a large proportion attends extra-curricular activities.
- The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities throughout the year that includes outdoor and adventurous residential experiences, a dance club that uses a range of dance styles and numerous festivals and tournaments for all age groups. The school has developed effective links with local sports people who deliver judo, football and multi-skills clubs at the school. Good plans are in place to introduce archery during the summer term.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is good.

- The leadership team has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in PE. You have supported the subject leader extremely well and, consequently, there is a clear direction and determination for continuous improvement. The subject action plan is focused clearly on improving provision further and together you have a good understanding of the necessary actions to bring about the improvements at pace.
- The school makes good use of primary link teacher days that have enabled the subject leader to better understand her roles and responsibilities through attending training days. Other staff have also benefited from professional development courses to increase their subject knowledge. The impact of the school sports partnership is good, especially in extending the opportunities for pupils to participate in festivals and tournaments of sport and in leading professional development for staff in gymnastics and dance.
- The subject leader has good opportunities to monitor teachers' planning and the work of the coaching company. However, evaluations are not sufficiently focused on the impact of initiatives for pupils and their achievements.
- The school has recently introduced assessment procedures in PE and is at an early stage of implementation. They have yet to impact fully on raising teachers' expectations or improving pupils' attainment. Leaders have a good understanding of extending their use further.

- PE has a high profile around the school with photographic displays of pupils' work, an improved range of climbing equipment and play equipment for use in the playground and a good range of resources to support teaching.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring more consistency in the quality of teaching especially between key stages by:
 - raising teachers' expectations and the level of challenge in lessons
 - improving the pace of lessons to ensure pupils are active for the majority of time
 - making better use of assessment for learning strategies so that all pupils know their next steps in learning
- embedding and extending the use of assessment by:
 - analysing assessment data to ensure a more secure picture of pupils' progress over time
 - ensuring data are used to give specific feedback to pupils on how to improve their work further
 - exploring the use of technology to help pupils evaluate and improve their own and other's work and to support the moderation of assessment judgements made by staff
- ensuring monitoring and evaluation activities have a clear focus on the impact for pupils.

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

Judith Rundle
Her Majesty's Inspector