

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



10 May 2010

Mr K Mason
Acting Headteacher
Wexham School
Norway Drive
Slough
SL2 5QP

Dear Mr Mason

Ofsted 2010-11 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 27 and 28 April 2010 to look at work in PE.

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 students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of 10 lessons and extra-curricular activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE is outstanding.

Achievement in PE

Achievement in PE is good overall.

- Attainment has improved over the last three years. A very high number of students in Key Stage 3 now reach and exceed national averages. GCSE results by the end of Key Stage 4 have been below the national average, although students consistently attain better results in PE than in many other subjects. Few students attain the higher A* or A grades. The department has completed a thorough analysis of results and put into place a number of positive actions to improve this position. Consequently, school data and students observed during the inspection show they are on track to significantly exceed previous results. Attainment in BTEC has been consistently high in both Key Stage 4 and the sixth form.
- All students make at least good progress from their below average starting points because staff have very high expectations and consistently challenge students to achieve their best at all times. Students have well-

developed skills in observing, evaluating and feeding back to each other to improve the quality of their work. They are very good at making and applying decisions in different sporting situations because of the range of opportunities planned into lessons.

- Students demonstrate high levels of commitment and very positive attitudes in lessons and during extra-curricular activities. All students spoken to are developing a passion for different aspects of PE and school sport (PESS) and persevere in their work to succeed. Students listen and cooperate well together, and behaviour in and around the PE area is exemplary. Students spoken to were very good ambassadors and advocates of the benefits they had derived from the PESS opportunities.
- Students have outstanding opportunities for personal development through PE. They have a wealth of opportunities for responsibilities and leadership roles which they undertake very seriously. Their voice is not only sought but responded to positively, with changes made as a result to the curriculum and teaching methods in lessons.
- A particular strength of personal development is the very successful 'Living for Sport' programme. Numerous students highlight specific changes brought about in their overall behaviour, attitudes and communication skills with their peers and teachers through the medium of sport.

Quality of teaching in PE

The quality of teaching in PE is outstanding.

- Teaching is consistently good with much that is outstanding. All teachers have very high expectations of students' verbal and physical input to lessons. Teachers know students and their needs very well and, consequently, work is planned meticulously to meet the full range of different abilities. A broad range of teaching methods is used across the department to engage and motivate students in lessons.
- All staff have excellent subject knowledge. They use this extremely well to observe and intervene with feedback to help students improve their performance and/or key skills. Occasionally, there needs to be more balance between whole-class and individual feedback. A consistent strength is the way in which teachers use open-ended questions to challenge students' thinking and to extend their responses. The advanced skills teacher is a model of outstanding practice in this respect.
- Relationships between staff and students and between students are excellent. PE staff are outstanding role-models for PE and in achieving excellence in performance. Students are effusive about their teachers' commitment to the subject and in helping them to attain their best.
- Procedures to assess, monitor and set students' targets are outstanding. All students know how to improve because of the prominence given in lessons and displays to 'How do I progress to the next level'. Leaders in the department undertake thorough monitoring and analysis of assessment data that lead to effective changes in lesson planning and/or effective support programmes for individuals or groups of students.

Quality of the curriculum in PE

The quality of the PE curriculum is outstanding.

- All students in Key Stages 3 and 4 access a minimum of two hours and 20 minutes high-quality curriculum PE each week. Sixth-form students have an enrichment afternoon every week.
- The curriculum is broad and planned very effectively to meet the needs of different cohorts. Changes are made on an annual basis to ensure the curriculum matches the needs, interests and different learning styles of specific classes or groups. The Key Stage 3 curriculum has been changed effectively to meet the expectations of the new National Curriculum. From September 2010, all students in Key stage 4 will have opportunities to gain an examination or vocational qualification in PE.
- The range of examination opportunities has increased in recent years and students are carefully matched to courses to meet their needs. For example, an additional BTEC course has been added to the sixth-form provision to challenge students further. They are prepared well for course choices including through listening to older students talk about their experiences.
- The range of extra-curricular and enrichment opportunities is outstanding with high levels of uptake. The department has successfully introduced a number of activities to increase girls' participation. Students are particularly enthusiastic about sports tours and the increased number of inter-form competitions. Students in the sixth form go through a thorough selection process to visit their link school in South Africa where they deliver a range of sessions, many on sport.
- An innovative aspect of the curriculum is the introduction of a sporting scholars programme for talented cricketers. This very positive programme is helping to extend both their cricket skills through extensive coaching sessions and their commitment to achieving academic success.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PE is outstanding.

- The director of sport, head of department and other leaders of PE have excellent knowledge of the subject's strengths and areas for improvement as a result of rigorous monitoring and evaluation procedures. Findings are thoroughly analysed and used extremely well to plan developments and bring about further improvements in provision and students' achievements. For example, the focus on moving students from grade D to C in GCSE is helping to raise aspirations and attainment. The departmental self-evaluation is comprehensive and clearly focused on raising attainment further. Devolved leadership is a strength of the department's work as it makes best use of staff expertise.
- The impact of specialist status is significant. The PE department takes a lead role on several initiatives across the school, including the use of assessment, monitoring and personalising learning, increasing BTEC

opportunities and developing staff as reflective practitioners. Students have extended opportunities for PE and sport but they also have raised levels of self-esteem and aspirations. Many of the students have realistic ambitions to become professional athletes and/or dancers because of the support and ambition instilled by staff.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- finding ways to share good practice further by:
 - implementing the questioning skills of the advanced skills teacher in other lessons to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching even further
 - transferring the successful strategies that enable students to move from D to C grades in GCSE to increase the number of students attaining A* or A grades.

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 under the URN for your school. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Judith Rundle
Her Majesty's Inspector