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Mr C Drew  
Principal  
The King's Academy  
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Dear Mr Drew

Ofsted 2010-11 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and students, during my visit on 13 and 14 May 2010 to look at work in PSHE education.

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 nine lessons and a tutor group's reflection time.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is good.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is good.

- Students have a good understanding of how to live a healthy and safe life. They know what makes a healthy diet and understand the importance of vitamins, minerals and fibre.
- Students have good knowledge and understanding of the need for physical activity to stay healthy and have excellent opportunities to put this into practice. Extra-curricular sporting activities are well attended.
- Older students have a good understanding of sex and relationships education. Most students understand the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, but for some the relative danger of these substances is not clear enough.

- All students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress in these areas. The few students from minority ethnic backgrounds are included well and make good progress.
- Students have a sound knowledge of basic economic concepts, such as profit, credit and debt. They have good opportunities to put their skills into practice by running their own fundraising activities, businesses and participating in Young Enterprise. They have good careers education, know their Connexions adviser and feel they get high-quality impartial careers advice in school.
- Students' personal development is outstanding. Their behaviour is outstanding in lessons related to PSHE education. They have positive attitudes and enjoy their learning. All students are keen to participate and are articulate when expressing their views. They show respect for each other and their teachers. The disciplined environment and high expectations result in students feeling safe and secure and able to develop skills of reflection.

#### Quality of teaching of PSHE education

The quality of teaching of PSHE education is good.

- Teachers set high expectations for learning and behaviour. Most teachers have good subject knowledge of their own areas, but confidence and expertise to teach sex and relationships and drugs education are more variable.
- Teachers generally plan lessons well but do not always have sufficiently clear objectives for PSHE education. The quality of classroom teaching is good. All lessons are characterised by positive relationships and excellent discipline and behaviour management.
- A good range of practical activities is used to engage students in their work. Information and communication technology is used effectively. However, sometimes discussion work is stilted and superficial.
- Outstanding use is made of a range of external speakers, visitors and events to support PSHE learning.
- Assessment is effective in subject areas and through external accreditation higher up the school. However, no formal systems are in place in the lower school to monitor and assess students' learning in PSHE education.

#### Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE education is good.

- Although there are no discrete lessons, PSHE education permeates the whole curriculum and is taught through strands in other subjects.
- The Academy has been innovative and introduced a personal and thinking skills course in the lower school and an accredited scheme for employability and enterprise in the senior school. These courses cover different aspects of the PSHE curriculum.

- Students' personal and social needs are met very well. Staff who use sign language and other support are provided for those with physical disabilities. Small group work, such as the gardening project, is provided for those with particular special educational needs. Staff mentor the most vulnerable students.
- The Academy has not yet achieved the Healthy Schools award. It plans to introduce the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) initiative next year.
- The wide range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities gives students outstanding opportunities to apply and practise their personal and social skills.

#### Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The leadership and management of PSHE education are satisfactory.

- The Academy has an accurate picture of PSHE provision. However, there is no coordinator for PSHE education to provide an overview, pull the various strands of the subject together or specifically monitor the teaching of PSHE education.
- No one has the PSHE certificate and staff lack specialist training in teaching the more sensitive areas of the curriculum.
- The leadership and management of PSHE provision in the sixth form are good. An interesting programme has been established which is managed well and meets students' needs.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- appointing a coordinator for PSHE education to draw together the various strands of the curriculum and take the subject forward
- monitoring, more formally, students' progress as they move through the various elements of PSHE education.

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

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter 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

Margaret Jones  
Her Majesty's Inspector