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Ms K Gray
Headteacher
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Dear Ms Gray

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 29 November 2011 to look at work in PSHE.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of an assembly and four lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE is good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement in PSHE is good.

- Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are friendly and confident and very supportive of each other. They have a sense of pride in the contribution they make to the school, for example, acting as play leaders and playground monitors.
- Pupils have a good understanding of healthy eating. They know the five fruit and vegetables message and what foods to limit. Pupils are well aware of the importance of exercise for their physical and mental health.
- Pupils feel safe and well-supported and know how to keep themselves safe. Older pupils know about e-safety and cyber bullying but have less understanding of homophobic bullying.

- Pupils have a good understanding of the changes that occur during puberty, and the importance of relationships. They work extremely well together and enjoy projects that are planned to involve the whole-school community.

Quality of teaching in PSHE

The quality of teaching in PSHE is good.

- Teachers create an inclusive ethos which provides a safe environment for pupils to explore and share their feelings and emotions.
- Lessons are well planned with a range of activities to engage pupils in relevant learning, such as the focus on teamwork in Years 3 and 4 before a residential experience.
- Effective use is made of the skills of teaching assistants to meet the personal, social, emotional and physical needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Occasionally the work set is insufficiently challenging with too few opportunities for pupils to participate in discussion.
- Assessment is not sufficiently integrated into lesson plans to assess and record pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills across aspects of PSHE.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE

The quality of the curriculum in PSHE is good.

- PSHE permeates the school's work with discrete lessons, effective use of the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) materials, and suspended timetable events to focus on specific priorities such as safety.
- The Healthy Schools award has had a strong impact on promoting healthy eating and take-up of school meals, in close partnership with parents and carers.
- Residential visits for all pupils make a significant contribution to PSHE by providing excellent opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their learning.
- Good use is made of external agencies, for example, the visit to the 'safety zone' organised by the police and fire service.
- Despite discrete provision for PSHE across the curriculum, schemes of work are not sufficiently detailed to support coherence and progression.
- Pupils contribute to developments and give their views to influence improvements to the school's buildings. However, the school council is less well developed to provide opportunities for pupils to experience democratic processes at work.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE

The effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE is good.

- A high priority is placed on PSHE by leaders, staff and the governing body who have created a happy and secure school environment where pupils feel safe to explore their feelings, values and beliefs.
- Teachers and teaching assistants know pupils and their families well and act as excellent role models. The high quality of care, support and guidance contributes significantly to pupils' achievement.
- The leadership of PSHE is in transition. However, there is a shared commitment to providing a rich and inspiring curriculum.
- Leaders have been successful in developing a thematic approach to curriculum planning which is popular with pupils. However, PSHE is yet to be integrated in to themes to secure effective progression across all aspects.
- The monitoring and evaluation of PSHE are developing through the collection of evidence. Leaders recognise that this is not rigorous enough to identify specific development needs.
- Effective links with the local authority facilitate access to a wide range of PSHE resources, support and training.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- establishing schemes of work to provide coherence, progression and challenge in PSHE
- developing formative and summative assessment to monitor pupils' progress across all aspects of PSHE.

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

As explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikić
Her Majesty's Inspector