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Mr A Shoote
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Dear Mr Shoote

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 02 November 2006 to look at work in Physical Education (PE).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PE, the visit had a particular focus on the Physical Education School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) strategy.

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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included, interviews with staff and children, scrutiny of relevant documentation, and observation of three lessons and lunchtime activities.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is good.

- The Foundation Stage profile for 2006 indicates that most children leave the reception classes with skills in physical development which match their age. The school's own attainment tracking records show that standards in Years 2 and 4 are at least at expected levels for almost all pupils. Standards in swimming match those expected for children in Year 4.

- Children make good progress in PE. The progress made by children who have weaker coordination skills is very good. This is because they take part in a well organised skill improvement programme.
- The physical activity programme contributes very well to children's personal development and well-being. Year 4 children know that exercise and eating a balanced diet are important features of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They can talk about what happens to their bodies when they are active. The very good programme of before school, lunchtime and after school activities is having a positive impact on promoting children's good behaviour and their enjoyment of school.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- The lessons observed were well organised with a suitable structure. Teachers' planning included clearly defined learning objectives and assessment questions. Children had the chance to acquire and develop their skills. A particularly strong feature of the lessons was the emphasis on children evaluating their own performance and the performances of others. Selecting and applying skills were given less prominence, particularly in the Year 1 dance lesson. In the games lesson in Year 4, one aspect which was less effective was the challenge provided for more talented children. The well-organised "gym trail" programme is helping children in the Foundation Stage to improve their physical skills.
- Teachers assess learning in lessons and record children's progress as they move through the school. The attainment records collected in reception, Year 2 and Year 4 help the subject leader keep track of the progress children are making and the standards they achieve. The school recognises that further improvements can be made in assessment, including making more effective use of ICT to record evidence of standards and achievement.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- Children take part in a full range of PE activities. The subject leader has provided a set of detailed curriculum plans and suitable resources to guide teaching and learning in all year groups. The PE curriculum is linked well to the school's work on achieving healthy school status.
- Although the curriculum does not include two hours of PE for all children, there is an extensive range of additional sports activities available before and after school. The positive play programme which runs at lunchtimes is outstanding. It is managed effectively by a team of well-trained play-leaders who coordinate a number of play-zone activities. Large numbers of children take part in these activities each day.

- Accommodation and resources are good. The school recognises that more use could be made of the second smaller hall to extend the curriculum time available for PE.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management in PE is outstanding.

- The subject leader is fully committed to securing high quality provision for all children. As part of her continuing work with the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA), she has improved significantly the play opportunities available at lunchtimes. She has also introduced 'gym trail' programmes for children in Key Stages 1 and 2 and more recently in the Foundation Stage. These are having a positive impact on improving children's confidence and coordination skills and on their work in other aspects of the curriculum.
- The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the PE curriculum. She knows which aspects require improvement and has included these in the subject development plan. Teachers' requests for training have been collected and children's views on provision in PE have been analysed. She has begun to establish a suitable system for assessing, recording and reporting children's achievements. Resources are managed well. The subject leader receives good support from the headteacher and this helps to ensure that the importance of high quality PE and school sport receives suitable recognition.

Subject issue – PESSCL Programme

- The school joined the programme in September 2006. The subject leader as primary link teacher has completed an audit of strengths and weaknesses which will contribute towards the local family of schools' development plan. The priorities for improvement are clearly identified and these are referred to at the end of this letter. The Partnership Development Manager and link Sports Coordinator recognise the school's strengths in PE and school sport. They appreciate the potential for involving the subject leader in supporting other schools with securing improvements in provision.

Inclusion

- All children participate fully in lessons, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The support provided for children who attend the 'gym trail' activities within and outside of curriculum time is outstanding. This enables all children to make very good progress with their physical development and in PE. Good support is provided by teachers, teaching assistants and play-leaders. Children's progress is regularly assessed, recorded and analysed.

- Children who have particular talents in PE and sport are not currently identified on the school's gifted and talented register. However, the subject leader informs parents about the high ability shown by their children and introduces them to suitable clubs that offer additional challenges outside of school.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed and were already identified by the school, included:

- increasing the amount of monitoring undertaken by the subject leader to enable her to gain a greater understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning
- improving assessment and the use of ICT to support teaching and learning
- providing challenging activities for more talented children in lessons and outside of school
- involving children more in inter-school competitions and tournaments.

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

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Robert McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector