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Mrs Doherty
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Dear Mrs Doherty

Ofsted Survey Inspection Programme - Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 21 September 2006 to look at work in PSHE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on healthy eating.

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 should we wish to cite specific aspects of practice we will contact the school first. 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 the headteacher, the coordinator of PSHE, the lunchtime supervisor and Year 6 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of three lessons, playtime, lunchtime and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of Personal, Social and Health Education was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Pupils have good knowledge and understanding about PSHE.

- Pupils know about healthy diets and the importance of keeping safe. Older pupils understand the changes that happen at puberty.

- They understand why it is important to take regular exercise, and put this into practice at break and lunchtime practicing their running and many different sporting activities.
- The personal development of pupils is good. Their speaking and listening skills are developing well and even the pupils whose first language is not English have the confidence to contribute. Many have an extensive vocabulary in which to express emotions, as was demonstrated in their work on "My Dream School".
- Pupils take on a range of responsibilities around the school. They work together well in groups and look after each other.
- They are bright and lively and have positive attitudes to school.

Quality of Teaching and Learning of PSHE

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Teachers have high expectations and ensure everyone is included in the lesson. They know the pupils very well and have very good classroom control and discipline.
- Teachers are not yet sufficiently familiar with the new SEAL materials to adapt them to respond to meet the needs of their class and the time available. The range of activities undertaken is fairly narrow and visual displays are often too small.
- Assessment is good across the school. Teachers record the progress that is being made by each child and this is reported to parents.

Quality of Support and Guidance

Support and guidance are outstanding.

- This is a school which practices what it preaches and where every child really does matter. Pupils and their families are well known to the school and there is an underlying sense of stability.
- Induction procedures are effective and pupils quickly settle into the routines of the school.
- The school provides high quality meals which meet the new School Food Standards. Lunchtimes are happy times. They are carefully managed by a well trained supervisor and pupils are able to pursue a wide range of activities.
- The school has not yet drawn up a whole school food policy.
- Despite many pupils joining the school at different times of the year and a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language, pupils report a very low level of bullying and racism. They feel safe and secure and say that any incidents are followed up effectively. They all know they can use the "worry box" to express concerns and they are confident to talk to adults at school about their concerns.
- A breakfast club is planned to meet the needs of pupils who arrive at school very early in the morning.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- An outstanding feature of the curriculum is the opportunities for physical activity provided, and the wide range of extra-curricular activities including residential trips, visits and speakers into school. This provision enriches the experience of pupils and enhances their learning and enjoyment of school.
- PSHE and citizenship are embedded across the curriculum but are given insufficient discrete time in lesson planning.
- The SEAL materials have just been introduced and teachers now need to adapt these to their own classes and to extend the range of methods they use to suit different types of learning.
- Assemblies are linked to the PSHE curriculum and provide good opportunities for pupils to participate and reflect on their learning.
- The work the school has done in gaining Bronze accreditation for the National Healthy Schools Programme has had a positive impact on health education.

Leadership and management of subject

The quality of leadership and management of PSHE is good at all levels but it is early days as both you and the PSHE coordinator have only been in post since the beginning of term.

- The PSHE coordinator has made a good start by using an external consultant to gather the views of the pupils about PSHE provision. The findings from this survey have been used to devise an appropriate action plan to take the subject forward.
- The SEAL materials which have just been introduced are to be reviewed at half term.
- All policies are in place but parents have not been formally consulted about them. The school plans to do this in the future.

Inclusion

The lessons observed were inclusive and all the pupils enjoyed answering questions and offering their views in discussion.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- class teachers taking more responsibility for the content of PSHE lessons
- introducing a Breakfast club
- drawing up a whole school food policy

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE 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 the Ofsted website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Margaret Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector