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Mr G McKeon
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Dear Mr McKeon

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff and the School Sport Co-ordinator, during my visit on Thursday 15 March 2007 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, analysis of children's reports and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PE was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement in PE is satisfactory.

- Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stages 1 and 2 and most reach the standards expected for their age. The vast majority of pupils reach National Curriculum standards in swimming by Year 6. There is no clear indication of the proportion of pupils that reach higher standards because the school has no clear records of pupils' achievements.

- Pupils make good progress in Foundation Stage from a low starting point. The Foundation Stage profile for 2005-6 shows that most children reach the expected levels and girls do better than boys. In the lesson seen, pupils in Reception moved with control on large apparatus, knew how to perform well and showed a good awareness of safety.
- In the Key Stage 1 and 2 lessons seen, pupils made progress in improving their athletics and gymnastics skills. They observed demonstrations and recognised features of good and weak performance. They showed a good awareness of how to keep safe.
- Pupils enjoy PE lessons. They feel they are challenged to work hard and learn new things. Pupils understand how to prepare for exercise and how exercise can contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Many show a commitment to teams and clubs and enjoy the extra activities.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Lesson activities are varied and usually ensure that pupils maintain good levels of physical activity. Higher attaining pupils are often given additional challenges. Occasionally, there is too little variety in the lesson activities and pupils become restless. Good knowledge of the subject enables teachers and teaching assistants to give useful guidance to pupils on how to improve. Pupils respond positively to good relationships and teachers' high expectations of good behaviour and conduct.
- Lesson planning is satisfactory and based on a scheme of work that provides well for progression in acquiring and developing skills. The scheme of work and lesson planning do not always give enough guidance on how to develop pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in other strands of the National Curriculum or key skills such as literacy. Short term plans do not always take enough account of pupils' previous learning.
- Systems to assess and record pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. Teachers set clear objectives for each lesson that pupils understand. These help to guide learning during lessons and pupils are encouraged to review their progress against them. However, there is no system in place for teachers to assess and record pupils' progress against National Curriculum expectations on a regular basis. Each pupil's attainment and effort is reported to parents annually but this information is not collated by class teachers or the subject leader.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Not every pupil in Key Stage 1 and 2 experiences two hours of high quality PE each week. Each class receives a minimum of 90 minutes PE time. In addition to this, each class has 12 x 30 minute swimming lessons in the course of a year and some outdoor games or athletics lessons, weather permitting. Some classes hold whole-class 'brain-gym' breaks. The amount of time each class experiences active PE is not closely monitored.
- Children in the Reception classes have a good curriculum of physical activity. They have 90 minutes of taught PE every week. In addition they experience well planned outdoor play and learning every day in a well equipped area. The school provides protective outdoor clothing to ensure that children can play outdoors on most days except in the most inclement weather.
- A well balanced programme of activities is taught in Key Stage 1 and 2 and statutory requirements are met. There is good provision for swimming and all pupils in Year 6 experience outdoor and adventurous activities during a two day residential visit.
- A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is enthusiastically led by teachers, teaching assistants and local coaches. There are more opportunities for older pupils than for the younger pupils. With the support of the local PESSCL partnership, the school is starting to build up more activities especially for pupils in Key Stage 1 and for those pupils who have previously taken little part in extra-curricular activities.
- The exact number or proportion of pupils taking part in these activities has not been calculated by the school.
- Playground equipment is available at break and lunchtimes for parts of the year. With the support of the partnership, there are plans to train pupils and welfare assistants to become leaders of play. The playground itself is bleak with little stimulation for play.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management in PE is satisfactory.

- You and your subject leader are enthusiastic and committed to improving provision. You are working well with the recently established PESSCL partnership to make further improvements.
- The subject leader has strengthened her knowledge and leadership skills through attendance at training for primary link teachers. She provides good subject knowledge and expertise in supporting staff. She is a qualified provider of in-service training for the 'TOPS' games programme.
- Systems to monitor and evaluate standards, achievement and provision, are not yet rigorous enough. A recent audit of provision against the PESSCL targets has helped to identify priorities for improvement. The subject leader has carried out informal monitoring of lessons and each teacher evaluates the progress of their class each term. There is little analysis of pupils' progress.

- Health and safety policies are in place and adhered to by staff but risk assessment of activities in the hall and the outdoors has not been carried out.
- Development plans for the subject reflect the right priorities but they do not identify clearly what impact they should have on pupils' standards and achievement.

Subject issue – PESSCL Programme

The impact of the PESSCL programme is satisfactory.

- The PESSCL partnership was established in September 2006. The school has been able to take advantage of the activities and support it can offer since November 2006 and much is planned for the future.
- The audit prompted by the partnership has helped the school to identify priorities for action.
- The subject leader has taken advantage of training for primary link teachers to develop leadership and management skills.
- The partnership is supporting the enhancement of teaching and learning and furthering the provision of extra-curricular activities. Two staff in the school have undertaken training in dance and another is taking part in 'Tag Rugby' training at a local rugby club.
- Much is planned for the future to extend provision in dance, gymnastics, 'tag rugby' and competition targeted towards pupils with little experience of extra-curricular PE and sport. A good programme of 'Top-Up' swimming is available for pupils in Year 5 and 6 pupils not reaching National Curriculum standards. Training to develop subject knowledge is planned for staff and in developing leadership of play for Year 5 pupils and lunchtime supervisors.

Inclusion

- All pupils are included in PE lessons. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or physical difficulties are well supported in lessons by teaching assistants and class teachers.
- Gifted and talented pupils have been identified. The school is in the early stages of working with the partnership to find ways to enhance their experiences within and beyond the school. They are seeking ways to ensure that pupils and their parents are aware of how they can develop their interests and talents through involvement in local clubs and sporting organisations.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- extend learning activities to ensure that all pupils experience at least two hours of high quality PE and school sport every week including the quality of play experiences and leadership during break and lunchtimes

- introduce systems to assess pupils' progress in PE and use this information to identify priorities for improvement and plan future learning
- carry out a risk assessment of PE activities in the hall and outdoors
- monitor and evaluate standards and provision more rigorously to help identify priorities for improvement
- improve schemes of work and lesson planning in order to identify how pupils will make progress in all four strands of the National Curriculum and develop key skills such as literacy
- ensure that planning builds on pupils' progress from week to week, and that pupils or groups that need extra challenge or support are identified.

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

Gillian Salter-Smith
Additional Inspector