

12 November 2008

Mr R Peers
Headteacher
Northbrook CofE School
Leahurst Road
Lewisham
SE13 5HZ

Dear Mr Peers

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 03 and 04 November 2008 to look at work in PSHEE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on economic well-being and information, advice and guidance (IAG).

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 you, your assistant headteacher, staff involved in PSHEE, students from Key Stages 3 and 4, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of five lessons and one assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHEE was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Students' achievement in PSHEE is satisfactory.

- Students' personal development is satisfactory.
- Students generally enjoy PSHEE, especially working in groups or engaged in discussions, when their progress is more rapid.
- Students behave well when they are actively engaged in interesting tasks, but occasional, low level disruption slows the pace of learning.
- When given the opportunity, many students display high levels of thoughtfulness and independence, although these qualities are not always consistent.
- Students have a good knowledge of how to keep safe and healthy.

- Although students have a good knowledge of the factual elements of sex and relationship education, their understanding of adult relationships is less well developed.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHEE

The quality of PSHEE teaching is satisfactory.

- In one of the lessons seen, the teaching was outstanding. The brisk pace and prompt engagement of students, together with work that was suitably challenging, meant students concentrated and made rapid progress.
- The lessons seen often included varied, interesting activities, although sometimes, the teacher talked for too long, so students became less motivated.
- Relationships between students and teachers are relaxed, yet purposeful.
- Generally, work is planned to meet students' differing needs, although at times, the work is too easy and lacks challenge.
- Assessment is developing, but it does not clearly show students' rates of progress.
- Teachers make good use of information communication technology (ICT) to make lessons more interesting and relevant.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory.

- The programme for PSHEE is varied and relevant.
- Students are regularly consulted about the topics planned so the programme of PSHEE meets their needs well.
- Statutory requirements are met and there are some good enrichment opportunities through themed days and extra activities.
- There is some confusion between PSHEE and citizenship, which needs clarification in order to ensure that both are fully covered.
- Other subjects make a good contribution to PSHEE, although their involvement is not sufficiently monitored to avoid duplication.

Leadership and management of PSHEE

The leadership and management of PSHE are satisfactory.

- Several staff bring expertise and enthusiasm to the development of PSHEE, but there is a lack of specialist training.
- The responsibility for leading PSHEE has not been clarified sufficiently to ensure clear direction.
- There is no formal monitoring of the teaching of PSHEE.

Subject issue: economic well-being and information, advice and guidance

Students are prepared for adult life in a satisfactory way.

- The programme to develop students' financial capability is satisfactory and being developed.
- There is a diverse range of events provided through careers and enterprise education, but there are missed opportunities to help students individually, for example, by preparing them to answer some interview questions, or by helping them to raise their aspirations.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- increasing the amount of active learning in lessons and ensuring that teachers' expectations for students are consistently matched to their needs
- reviewing the programme for PSHEE, to distinguish it from citizenship and develop provision in careers education to provide more information, advice and guidance
- clarifying the leadership of PSHEE and ensuring that teaching is formally monitored.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHEE 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

Sue Orpin
Additional Inspector