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Mrs J Coysh
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Coysh

Ofsted survey inspection programme – personal, social and health education (PSHE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 14 and 15 of January 2009 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 how the PSHE curriculum meets the specific needs of pupils in your local area, and how progress is tracked and assessed; and the contribution made by PSHE to the future economic well-being of your pupils.

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 discussions with teaching and non-teaching staff, governors and parents, scrutiny of relevant documentation, discussions with pupils and ex pupils, and observation of three PSHE lessons and an assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE was judged to be good.

Achievement in PSHE

Achievement is good.

- Pupils' personal development is good. They value the opportunities to contribute to the life and work of the school.
- Pupils have good knowledge about how to stay safe and be healthy, and they enjoy make food choices at lunchtime.
- The older pupils enjoy and benefit from the residential experience.

- Pupils have positive attitudes towards the subject.
- Pupils have a good understanding of how to work in teams because of the opportunities provided in lessons.
- Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are fully involved in all PSHE activities.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHE

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- Planning is comprehensive and effectively draws on a range of materials to develop the social and emotional aspects of learning.
- Pupils feel safe and secure in the school environment.
- Teachers report to parents on the personal and social skills pupils develop.
- Teachers use displays and visual stimuli well to record and celebrate pupils' outcomes in PSHE.
- Teachers know their pupils well, but there are few opportunities taken to assess their progress over time in all strands of the subject.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum in PSHE is good.

- The Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) materials are used very well to provide an interesting range of activities.
- The school has achieved the Healthy School Award and as a result pupils have greater understanding of how to eat healthily.
- Staff maintain records of the many pupils who take advantage of the extra-curricular activities, including in sport in order to check who is getting some form of physical exercise outside of the physical education lessons.
- Good use is made of external coaches to provide challenge so that pupils' fitness improves.
- Staff ensure that there is something for pupils of all ages and abilities. For example, Year 3 pupils benefit from the after school cookery club where they can develop their knowledge, understanding and skills of preparing healthy food.
- The 'Sunflower' club is very popular with pupils, including the vulnerable pupils, and this is making a significant contribution to their personal and social development.

Leadership and management of PSHE

Leadership and management is good.

- The school is excellent in supporting pupils in need, and those who suffer adversity are embraced wholeheartedly by their peers and school staff. In the words of one parent: 'the kids in this school are brilliant'.
- All staff tackle their work in PSHE with commitment and enthusiasm.

- The subject leader is well supported by the learning mentor who is active in supporting vulnerable pupils.
- Action planning for PSHE is closely allied to whole school priorities.
- Access to continuing professional development for PSHE is good, particularly in supporting the social needs of vulnerable pupils.
- Provision in all the strands of the subject are not monitored or evaluated systematically.

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

Provision for economic well-being and information, advice and guidance is satisfactory.

- With the support of governors some links have been established with local industry.
- Pupils' aspirations are raised through activities such as 'going for goals'.
- Pupils raise large sums of money for a range of charities.
- Pupils use the Internet to develop links with their peers overseas.
- Pupils take responsibility and relish opportunities to do so.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- improving accountability by putting in place systems to evaluate the impact of PSHE activities
- improving provision by ensuring that assessment is built into the scheme of work so that pupils' progress in all strands of the subject are tracked.

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

Henry Moreton
Additional Inspector