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Miss Jibonah
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Dear Miss Jibonah

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 10-11 February 2009 to look at work in PSHE education.

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, three of the directors of learning, a deputy director of learning, a member of the teaching staff, the community police officer, the Education Welfare Officer, groups of Year 11 students and Year 9 students, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of students' work and observation of five lessons and one assembly.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Students' overall achievement in PSHEE is satisfactory.

- Students' personal development is good. They are friendly, polite, readily give their opinions and listen to those of others. They generally behave well, although in one lesson where there was a lack of clear boundaries, the behaviour of some students adversely affected the quality of learning of others.

- Students know they should eat five fruit or vegetables a day, and they understand the importance of a balanced diet. They have a good understanding of the need for regular physical exercise.
- Older students have good knowledge of the effects and dangers of drugs, including tobacco and alcohol.
- Students know about the physical changes that take place as they are growing up and older students know about contraception and sexually transmitted infections. However, their understanding of sexual relationships is less well developed.
- Although pupils work well together, specific skills, such as working in teams or resisting peer group pressure are less well developed.

Quality of teaching and learning of PSHEE

The quality of PSHEE teaching is satisfactory.

- Teachers have good relationships with students and generally lessons are well managed. However, in one lesson, the management of students' behaviour was ineffective.
- Good use is made of information and communication technology to help students learn and research, and in these lessons the work is more interesting.
- The quality of teaching varies, reflected in the two outstanding lessons seen. In one particular lesson, students knew they were learning about PSHEE as well as mathematics, and the two subjects combined well. Time was used effectively, to help students understand about budgeting. However, in other lessons, the contribution to PSHEE was not made clear and there were missed opportunities for developing students' skills.
- Pastoral care and guidance are strong so students feel very safe and are clear about where to seek advice should the need arise.
- Assessment is very limited, and does not show students progress, so students have little information about how to improve and their progress is not tracked.

Quality of the curriculum

The PSHEE curriculum is satisfactory.

- The enrichment of the curriculum is outstanding and provides students with an extremely wide and varied range of experiences through visitors, trips and special events, such as theatre group workshops. As a consequence, students are encouraged to take responsibility, for example, organising themselves in mini-enterprise schemes, with a positive impact on their personal development.
- The Healthy Schools Award has had a positive impact on students' attitudes towards healthy lifestyles, for example, students enjoy skipping at lunchtime.
- Students have several opportunities to work with their tutors on developing Personal Action Plans, which helps them learn to take responsibility and make decisions.

- The curriculum has been carefully mapped across all subjects and this generates some good links, but the complexity and lack of an overall programme mean that there are variations in the quality of planning for PSHE education and some inconsistencies in coverage. The development of some skills, such as, resisting peer group pressure, are insufficiently represented.
- The school is implementing the new curriculum in Year 7 well.

Leadership and management of PSHEE

The leadership and management of PSHEE are satisfactory

- The coordinator has successfully incorporated PSHEE into some subjects, but there has been little monitoring of the subject.
- Senior leaders have recognised the weaknesses in the provision of PSHEE and there are plans to improve the inconsistencies.
- There are up-to-date policies for sex and relationship education, and drug education,
- Generally there is a lack of staff training for PSHEE and insufficient guidance on teaching and learning

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

Students are well prepared for adult life.

- The diversity of enrichment opportunities has contributed to raising students' aspirations.
- Students' financial capabilities are being developed well.
- Students benefit from a good range of opportunities to express their opinions and listen to each other through the many experiences offered in school.
- They are provided with good access to a range of adults who will provide information advice and guidance.
- Although careers advice and guidance are effective at transition points and the school meets statutory requirements, there is no overall programme to ensure progression and careers education is not fully embedded across the curriculum.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- reviewing planning to ensure that all students benefit from a consistent single programme for PSHEE
- developing more assessment tasks to track progress in PSHEE
- ensuring that achievement, teaching and the curriculum are rigorously 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