

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



04 June 2009

Mrs T De Quincey
Headteacher
Charles Dickens Primary School
Lant Street
London
SE1 1QP

Dear Mrs De Quincey

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Physical Education (PE)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 12 May 2009 to look at work in PE.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on assessing the PE contribution to the outcomes of Every Child Matters (ECM), particularly 'being healthy'.

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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' reports and observations of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of physical education was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good.

- Children start school with physical skills that are below those expected for their age. The school's Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) profile records show that most children make good progress. Outcomes in children's physical development at the end of Reception vary but were above the expected level last year, reflecting the improved focus on promoting physical development.
- Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and in Year 6 most reach at least average standards. The many sports activities that pupils engage in outside of lessons are helping to boost their overall achievement. Standards in swimming are not as strong and a significant

minority of Year 6 pupils leave the school unable to swim 25 meters. Pupils who are talented at sport are identified and provided with additional challenges, including in clubs outside of school.

Quality of teaching and learning of PE

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

- All three lessons observed during the inspection were good. Learning intentions were clearly identified in teachers' planning and pupils had good opportunities to develop their physical skills. Pupils were managed well. They had very positive attitudes, cooperated effectively in pairs and groups and displayed very good behaviour. Teachers used their secure subject knowledge to provide demonstrations and good coaching points to show pupils what they should be aiming for and guide their performances. Teaching assistants' support for pupils and their involvement working alongside teachers was good. The matching of activities and equipment to pupils' learning needs was less effective in one lesson.
- Teachers assess pupils well during lessons by observing their responses and helping them make improvements. In the Year 5/6 lesson the teacher involved pupils well in evaluating their own learning. There are currently no formal systems for assessing progress during the year, apart from the regular assessments and progress recording made in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teachers write reports for parents on pupils' achievements but the detail included is variable.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding.

- All pupils have two PE lessons on their weekly timetables. Many additional activities are also provided for pupils, taking their participation in sport beyond the recommended two hours. Outdoor accommodation for PE is limited but the school makes very good use of other local sports facilities to ensure pupils do not miss out. Pupils gain experience of a wide range of physical activities, which have included speed stacking, tag-rugby and BMX biking. Older pupils have a very good outdoor experience when they spend a week working on a farm.
- Teachers also link learning in PE to work in other subjects. Pupils' performances in dance are developed through thematic topics. Displays of photographs of pupils' involvement in physical activities illustrate the quality of pupils' experiences and their enthusiastic participation and enjoyment. There are good proposals to improve outdoor learning facilities, including for children in the EYFS.

Leadership and management of PE

The quality of leadership and management is good.

- Senior leaders are strongly committed to providing high quality provision and a breadth of opportunities for all pupils. Participation in PE and sport

forms an important strand of the school's promotion of pupils' health and well-being. The subject leader has a good understanding of the strengths in provision and aspects that still require improving are set out in the subject action plan. Pupils' achievements are celebrated in displays and assemblies. The improvements already secured and the ambitious proposals to enhance facilities further, demonstrate a strong capacity to improve.

- Good links are established with local sports coaches and an extensive clubs programme is managed efficiently. Training has been provided for staff and demonstration lessons have been organised for newly qualified teachers. Clubs have been set up for groups of pupils who may otherwise not participate in physical activities. Playing team sport and pupils' involvement in local competitions is helping to promote community cohesion. Senior leaders acknowledge that systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and for keeping a check on standards and achievement require strengthening.

Subject issue - PE contribution to the outcomes of ECM particularly 'being healthy'

- Pupils' involvement in PE and sport is making a strong contribution towards their personal development and well-being. Pupils have many opportunities to take physical exercise in lessons, at break times and in extra-curricular activities. Most children walk to school and safe cycling courses are available for those who cycle.
- Pupils interviewed had a good knowledge of the effects of physical exercise and they appreciate the importance of keeping fit to stay healthy. Pupils could also talk about other aspects of healthy living, such as eating the right foods and drinking plenty of water. Older pupils spoke perceptively about how playing in competitions and tournaments helped to develop their teamwork skills and their appreciation of sportsmanship.
- Pupils' successes in competitions and their personal achievements are celebrated and this helps build self esteem and motivation. There are plans to train pupils in Year 5 this term to take responsibility for leading activities for younger pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- developing suitable systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress
- making full use of the primary link teacher time to strengthen monitoring and evaluation
- improving outcomes in swimming, so that a higher proportion of pupils leave the school able to meet the National Curriculum standard.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop physical education 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

Rob McKeown
Her Majesty's Inspector