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Mrs R Freestone
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Freestone

Ofsted 2009-10 subject survey inspection programme: personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 15 and 16 March 2010 to look at work in PSHE education.

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PSHE education, the visit had a particular focus on learning to stay safe.

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.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with you, staff, pupils and parents; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of PSHE education is outstanding.

Achievement in PSHE education

Achievement in PSHE education is outstanding.

- Pupils' self-confidence is developing extremely well, so they are able to tackle new experiences confidently, both in and out of school.
- Pupils value each other and are extremely respectful of their individual differences. They thoroughly enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of which foods are healthy and are able to use their knowledge to make healthy choices for snacks and meals.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of money and how it is used, and they are well informed about the world of work.

- Pupils are extremely well prepared for the challenges of everyday life, such as crossing roads, visiting shops and meeting people.
- Older pupils have a good knowledge of harmful substances, including drugs, and understand the effects and dangers. They have learnt how to resist the peer-group pressure they might encounter in the outside world.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of sex and relationships education, so they have a secure understanding of changes to their bodies, and older pupils have a very clear understanding of the changing nature of relationships between young men and women.

Quality of teaching of PSHE education

The quality of teaching of PSHE education is good.

- Teachers' relationships with pupils and their management of their behaviour are extremely good. Teachers make very good use of stories to help pupils to understand and cope with changes in their lives.
- Teaching assistants are very well informed and all adults work closely together as a team.
- Teachers make sure that pupils' differing needs are specifically planned for through detailed preparation. They use individual targets extremely well, as seen in a lesson where pupils were developing their ability to take turns by taking part in a 'pass the parcel' game.
- However, very occasionally, teachers' lack of subject knowledge makes lessons less effective, for example, where pupils are not helped to understand what they are learning and why.
- Assessment procedures are extremely rigorous and provide a clear picture of how well pupils are doing and what they need to do next.
- Pupils are cared for extremely well, so they feel very secure in school.

Quality of the curriculum in PSHE education

The quality of the PSHE education curriculum is outstanding.

- The curriculum has been planned extremely well. It takes account of pupils' differing needs, ensuring that expectations are suitably challenging, which sometimes surprises parents. Parents are closely involved so they can contribute to deciding the programme for their children.
- The curriculum is enriched extremely well by a wide range of visitors, including the nurse, fire service and the local road safety team. There are many trips to help pupils develop skills outside the school. These include trips to the shops, riding for the disabled and residential trips.
- Throughout the curriculum, opportunities are provided for pupils to learn how to stay safe, both in school and outside. There are good links with the local community, for example, through work experience.
- Pupils are prepared very well for their future lives by learning about money and the world of work. Extremely careful attention is given to

transition times and pupils are very well prepared so that they know what to expect and are able to deal with the changes.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in PSHE education

The leadership and management of PSHE education are good.

- The subject is given a high priority in the school and there is a clear vision for its future development. Very good use is made of external services.
- There are good schemes of work in place that ensure all pupils benefit from a wide range of learning activities.
- All pupils are included extremely well and all staff take great care in ensuring that barriers to pupils' learning are minimised as far as possible.
- Assessment of pupils is used very well to monitor their progress, but there is not enough monitoring of teaching to provide advice on how to improve.
- Although the subject leader is well qualified, training for other teachers in PSHE education has not been sufficient to help them develop their skills.

Subject issue: learning to stay safe

- Pupils are taught to be safe, both in and out of school, extremely well and parents say that their awareness of safety is 'amazing'.
- Pupils' safety is an extremely important part of everyday lessons and there are regular reminders and opportunities for them to practise their skills.
- Older pupils have keyrings which they can use to request help with road traffic situations.
- Pupils are taught about safe sex and the dangers of drugs well.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- developing teachers' expertise to ensure a more consistent approach to PSHE education.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop PSHE education in the school.

As I explained previously, 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

Susan Orpin
Additional Inspector