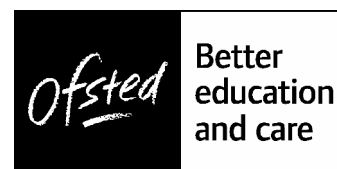


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20 September 2006

Mr G Hutchence
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Dear Mr Hutchence

Ofsted survey inspection programme 2006/07- Physical Education

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 18 and 19 September to look at work in physical education (PE).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of PE, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of the Physical Education School Sport and Club links (PESSCL) strategy on improving the quality of physical education and school sport.

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 incorporated : interviews with key staff and pupils including staff from a partner school, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work, assessment of facilities, six lesson observations and sampling extra curricular activities.

The overall effectiveness of physical education and sport in your school was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards in physical education are satisfactory overall.

- This is because despite pupils entering the school with severely underdeveloped skills in terms of their physical development by the end of key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 they have made at least satisfactory progress in their grasp of the key aspects of physical education.

- Girls' standards and progress are generally lower than boys' in the school. Minority ethnic pupils achieve in line with other pupils in the school.
- Standards of attainment however remain well below average and this is an area for development. On the evidence of the lessons observed there is a consistency issue with regard to the validity and reliability of internal assessment data.
- Pupils' attitudes towards physical education and sport are extremely positive and during the inspection their behaviour was exemplary.

Quality of teaching and learning of physical education

The overall quality of teaching is good, while learning is at least satisfactory.

- The best teaching is innovative and challenging. It allows pupils to express themselves, develop creativity and increase their knowledge and understanding of PE in an enjoyable and nurturing environment.
- Teachers establish extremely positive working relationships with pupils, who respond well to them showing respect and high levels of concentration. This is founded upon a caring approach with high levels of support and guidance.
- Pupils accept leadership opportunities readily and act with maturity when given responsibility. However, teaching does not always make use of a range of learning approaches and techniques to maximise engagement and stimulate pupils' interest.
- Assessment practice is satisfactory; however a comprehensive and coherent system is not embedded that enables teachers to consistently plan work and provide the necessary guidance that will support the further development of pupils' work.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is good.

- It is broad and balanced and as it evolves is increasingly meeting the needs and interests of learners. Importantly the faculty has canvassed opinion before introducing a number of new activities that have captured the imagination of pupils. Through the options of GCSE PE and the Junior Sports Leaders Award, pupils have good opportunities to gain accreditation and acquire leadership skills.
- The outdoor and adventurous residential experience offered enriches the provision further. A caveat exists in relation to the length of units of work, as they do not always promote the continuity and progression in pupils learning.
- The school has a commitment to extra curricular activities and provision is further enriched by the links in place with the School Sports Partnership. As a result pupils are able to experience a range of additional activities to those found on the curriculum. These are

facilitated by the hard working PE staff, additional staff in the school and a number of community coaches.

- There is sufficient accommodation, resources and equipment to support the curriculum provided. However much of it is of poor quality. Valuable teaching time is lost crossing roads onto an adjacent site because the school does not have its own fields.

Leadership and management of physical education

Leadership and management are good.

- The head of faculty is effective, and leads by example. He is ably supported by strong, committed and talented teachers who work well as a team. Effective systems and protocols ensure the faculty runs smoothly on a day to day basis, and all the expected policies and plans are in place. Action plans reveal a good awareness of the strengths and areas for development and discussions with the faculty leader demonstrate that he is reflective and forward thinking.
- Resources are appropriately deployed. Records show there is a satisfactory monitoring and evaluation mechanism established that informs professional development needs and faculty priorities.
- Areas for development include the use of data to set specific individual targets and track the progress of pupils, alongside improving the continuity and progression in units of work.

Subject issue- impact of the PESSCL strategy

- The impact of PESSCL strategy has been significant. As a result of the school's involvement in the programme both the secondary and primary schools in the partnership have accessed a range of activities previously unavailable to them.
- In addition, staff have received a number of professional development opportunities, which have given them increased confidence and competence in delivering, developing and managing the subject.
- Across the various strands impact has been felt in terms of initiatives. For example, to boost the numbers of pupils able to swim 25 metres by the end of Key Stage 2, identifying and developing the most talented performers; and increasing the choice and diversity of PE and sport experiences offered in the partnership.
- In addition, leadership and volunteering schemes have been established, alongside a number of projects designed to increase participation in PE and sport and using sport as a vehicle to tackle truancy and poor behaviour.
- A strength of the programme has been the school to club links programme which provides pathways for children to continue their development and participation.

Inclusion

Cedar Mount is an inclusive school. The school has worked tirelessly to create a harmonious environment in which the cultural and ethnic diversity of pupils are celebrated. The atmosphere and ethos is one of support and guidance and being proactive in meeting the needs of the individual pupils. Staff have developed very positive relationships with pupils and are committed to providing for the full spectrum of needs in the school. This is very evident in planning and the majority of practice. Minority ethnic pupils achieve in line with their peers in PE. Groups including those with additional learning needs are fully integrated and also achieve in line with their peers. An example of this is the joint working that is on-going with a local Special School.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- the achievement of girls and standards of attainment
- assessment; including establishing a base-line on entry through core tasks, reliability of levels attributed and using data to set targets and track progress
- the quality and consistency of teaching and learning and sharing of best practice.

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 Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

John Young
Her Majesty's Inspector