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Mrs D Dix
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Dix

Ofsted 2014–15 subject survey inspection programme: mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on Wednesday 3 December 2014 to look at work in mathematics.

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 without their consent.

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

The overall effectiveness of mathematics is good.

Leadership and management of mathematics are good.

- You and the mathematics leader have created a school where pupils and staff enjoy the subject. Well-taught lessons help develop pupils' core mathematical skills and ensure good progress is made. You are well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of mathematics provision within the school and use informal guidance effectively to ensure all groups of pupils make good progress.
- The mathematics leader is capable and well respected. Good monitoring and evaluation have identified some further desired improvements to teachers' planning and the curriculum. Trialling by the mathematics leader of a new method of teaching problem solving is helping to inform the practice of others. You have moved ahead confidently with developments

for the new National Curriculum resulting in pupils' deeper conceptual understanding in several aspects of mathematics.

- Subject plans identify actions to bring about further improvements. Analyses of teachers' planning and pupils' work, focussing on their acquisition of core skills and techniques, are used well informally to support teachers' individual training needs. You are aware that a more systematic approach to training, linked to a more structured approach to the planning of progression of key concepts in the new curriculum would enhance the provision of mathematics further.

The curriculum in mathematics is good.

- The curriculum places a high priority on developing pupils' core mathematical skills which are increasingly taught through a problem-solving approach where possible and appropriate. Teachers do not follow any particular scheme approach but choose what they feel best meets the needs of pupils, depending on the topic being taught.
- Pupils enjoy the links made in the curriculum to other subjects and topics. For example, they reported enthusiastically of the 'story week' topics where mathematical activities supplemented pupils' literacy skills well. Teachers take every opportunity to use the extensive school grounds to support real-life learning well in mathematics such as developing pupils' concept of scale when measuring.
- Information and communication technology is used well across the school to support pupils' mathematical development. Pupils present their work on shape using a variety of published programmes with confidence. On-line resources, to which pupils are directed out of school, supplement taught aspects well and help to enhance pupils' breadth of learning and experience of tackling mathematical activities using other media.

Teaching in mathematics is good.

- Teaching across the school enables all groups of pupils to make good progress and be well prepared for secondary school. A strong focus on pupils' mental and oral skills develops pupils' fluent recall of knowledge and calculation strategies. Effective support from adults for pupils who are disabled or have special educational needs ensures their good progress.
- Lessons are often organised so that groups of pupils of similar ability work together or in pairs. Targeted questioning meets the needs of each group effectively with challenge appropriate to their group. Occasionally, teachers and adults do not listen carefully enough to pupils' responses and consequently so not use this information to re-shape activities.
- Teachers' marking and verbal feedback is regular, consistent and appropriately detailed. Pupils can point quickly to where marking has helped them, explain why, and demonstrate where they have acted upon the points raised. Pupils' next steps in learning and frequently identified and planning amended as a result.

Achievement in mathematics is good.

- Published results in the national assessments at Key Stage 2 in recent years are not reflective of current pupils' achievement. Results over the last few years were affected adversely by a high number of pupils joining the school during years 5 and 6 with standards lower than those already attending.
- Pupils' achievement in mathematics also fluctuates year to year due to the very small numbers in each year group. Generally their attainment is above the national average and is improving further. Of the pupils who have attended the school for all of Key Stage 2 the proportions of pupils making the expected and better-than-expected rates of progress have been higher than average in recent years. Those pupils who join the school other than at the normal times catch up with their peers quickly.
- Throughout the school, pupils respond well to teachers' focus on using precise mathematical language. In class 1, Year 1 pupils provide accurate directions for robots, using the terminology of quarter turns and right angles to navigate their way around maps. One group made an impressive conceptual observation noting that 'four quarter turns made a whole turn'.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics very much. Those who met with me were keen to demonstrate their mathematical knowledge. They spoke in detail of the strategy to find equivalent fractions from an improper fraction by making the denominator the same, adding or subtracting and turning it back.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- using the findings from monitoring and evaluation activities to provide more formal training for staff for example, on listening to, and responding to pupils' responses in lessons
- mapping systematically the progression of key concepts such as fractions and how they will be taught in your newly designed curriculum.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop mathematics in the school.

As explained previously, this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Richard Light
Her Majesty's Inspector