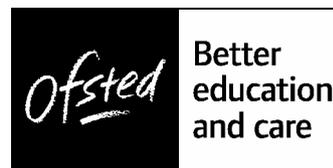


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10 October 2006

Mr D Harris
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Harris

Ofsted 2006-07 survey inspection programme – mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 9 October 2006 to look at work in mathematics. As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on pupils' enjoyment and understanding of 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.

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

The overall effectiveness of the subject, mathematics, was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Achievement and standards are satisfactory.

- Standards at the end of Year 6 are generally in line with national expectations, representing satisfactory progress during the pupils' time at school. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 has improved for the last two years.
- Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good; they work with enthusiasm and cooperate with each other impressively.

Quality of teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- The teachers ensure the pupils clearly understand what they are expected to learn in all lessons. The good range of interactive strategies, including good questioning, the use of partner talk and mini-whiteboards, enable teachers to assess pupils' progress towards these objectives throughout the lesson.
- The pace of learning of some groups of pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils, was not consistent as they were sometimes insufficiently challenged.
- The regular assessment and discussion of pupils' progress is raising the teachers' expectations of what the pupils should achieve.
- The pupils' own targets could be used more effectively to give them greater responsibility for their own learning.

Quality of the curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Teachers' short-term planning is detailed and accommodates the full range of the pupils' needs.
- The school is aware of the need to provide a scheme of work and to monitor its implementation to ensure continuity and progression in pupils' learning of mathematics.
- The impact of intervention programmes is inconsistent; the school has appropriate plans to improve their implementation and monitoring.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory.

- Robust self-evaluation systems enable the headteacher to accurately judge the provision for mathematics throughout the school and to set suitable targets for its improvement.
- The newly appointed mathematics subject manager has a clear understanding of what needs to be improved. She is working closely with the local authority to extend her skills in developing the curriculum and improving colleagues' classroom practice.

Subject issue: pupils' enjoyment and understanding of mathematics

The pupils' enjoyment and understanding of mathematics is satisfactory.

- The lessons observed and discussions held with pupils indicated a pleasing level of enjoyment from boys and girls of all abilities. They commented on benefiting from a more challenging curriculum and having more opportunities to discuss and work with their peers in the lessons.

- The older pupils' ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills is sometimes held back by gaps in their previous learning; for example, relying on formal methods rather than use the most efficient.

Inclusion

- The school has a very inclusive ethos. Observations of lessons indicated that teachers catered for the needs of all the pupils.
- However, the school does not analyse pupils' attainment or progress by groups, so can not be sure if there is underperformance of any group in mathematics.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- to develop the skills of the subject manager
- to continue to develop the reliability of the teachers' assessment to ensure accurate tracking information and precise identification of the next steps in the pupils' learning
- to develop the use of pupils' targets so as to give them greater responsibility for their own learning.

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

As I explained previously, 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

Andrew Olive
Her Majesty's Inspector