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Miss Sue Brown
Headteacher
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Dear Miss Brown

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Evaluation of the Primary and Secondary National Strategies

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 21 September 2007 to look at work in the Primary National Strategy (PNS).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the PNS, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of Assessment for learning (AfL).

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 pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of two lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the PNS was judged to be satisfactory.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement in mathematics is satisfactory. The impact of AfL on pupils' achievement and personal development is also satisfactory.

- Pupils enter and leave the school with standards broadly in line with national averages. Lesson observations confirmed that the progress made by pupils is satisfactory.

- Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) remain focused on their work due to the effective support provided by teaching assistants.
- The school has successfully created a very good ethos for learning. Behaviour in lessons is good. Teachers motivate pupils well and as a result, pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They are confident, enthusiastic learners, responding positively in discussion and listening well to others.

Quality of teaching and learning of mathematics

The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory. The impact of AfL on teaching and learning is also satisfactory.

- The progress made by pupils as they move through the school largely reflects the quality of teaching they receive. Good teaching is exemplified by careful planning; clear learning objectives with suitably adapted success criteria; and good subject knowledge.
- Where teaching is not as strong, pupils rely too heavily on guidance from their teachers and tasks are not well matched to pupils' abilities.
- Examples of good questioning elicited pupils' understanding and engaged them in high quality dialogue
- Opportunities to make mathematics relevant and meaningful to pupils' lives are sometimes missed.
- Regular systems for monitoring teaching exist and helpful feedback is provided.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the mathematics curriculum is satisfactory. The impact of AfL on the curriculum is satisfactory.

- Key aspects of the National Strategies are in place with clear lesson structure and appropriate lesson objectives. The school is beginning to develop the mathematics curriculum to make it more interesting and relevant with stronger links between the subjects.
- Pupils report they enjoy mathematics: particularly the games at the beginning of lessons. Their learning and enjoyment is further enhanced by the effective use of interactive whiteboards.
- Carefully selected intervention programmes from the PNS are helping to overcome barriers to learning.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management in mathematics are satisfactory. The effectiveness of leadership and management of AfL is satisfactory.

- The subject leader for mathematics has been in post for three weeks. She has appropriately planned an audit and evaluation of mathematics for this

term. This will involve the monitoring of planning, lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work.

- Senior leaders have recognised the need to work with the infant school on moderating and levelling pupils' work.
- Senior leaders are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. However, the pace of development is not yet rapid enough to bring about the improvements in teaching and learning necessary to raise standards.

Assessment for learning

The impact of AfL overall is satisfactory.

- Although school senior managers have identified AfL as an area for development it is not yet established across the school. The school has improved its strategies for monitoring and tracking the progress of individual pupils and groups of pupils.
- Pupils are confident, articulate and enjoy working collaboratively. They are familiar with some aspects of AFL, such as, the sharing of lesson objectives and outcomes. The impact of PNS is only satisfactory in helping pupils to understand how they can improve their numeracy skills.

Inclusion

The impact of AfL on inclusion is satisfactory.

- Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make satisfactory progress. The analysis and monitoring of data to identify variations in progress is a particular strength of the school. The use of data to improve teaching is at an early stage.
- The needs of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities are accurately identified. Grouping arrangements in lessons take satisfactory account of these needs and resources are effectively deployed to support pupils' learning.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- raising achievement by improving teaching so that it consistently provides good challenge for all pupils
- improving teacher's use of questioning strategies so that they encourage pupils to think and enable more accurate assessment of learning
- developing opportunities to work with the infant school on moderating and levelling pupils' work.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop mathematics and assessment for learning 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

Kekshan Salaria
Her Majesty's Inspector