Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk

14 October 2010

Mrs C Hobbs
Headteacher
Wrekin View Primary School
North Road
Wellington
Telford
TF1 3ES

Dear Mrs Hobbs

Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 28 September 2010 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 judgments included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; observation of four lessons; and a meeting with a group of pupils.

The overall effectiveness of mathematics is satisfactory.

Achievement in mathematics

Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory.

- Children start in the nursery with mathematical skills and aptitudes below those expected for their age. They make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage to reach standards in line with national expectations by the time they start in Year 1. From then on, pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics and reach average standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress in mathematics is good in Key Stage 1.
- Some variation exists. For example, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher levels in 2010 in Key Stage 1 was lower than the previous year. Also, the proportion of girls who reached the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1 was below that of the boys.
- In 2010, the school did not participate in the national Key Stage 2 test arrangements for mathematics but undertook rigorous testing of its own

which was moderated alongside other schools. The school expects these results to show satisfactory achievement. The differences in the performance of various groups of pupils are not significant and there was a small increase in the number of pupils reaching the higher level at age 11.

- The school's regular assessment and analysis of pupils' performance are effective. An individualised monitoring system identifies pupils at risk of underachievement and the school responds quickly with additional support where appropriate. The performance of more able pupils in both key stages has rightly been identified as a priority. The school also pinpoints accurately those aspects of mathematics that are less well developed. These include the application of basic number skills in a variety of contexts, particularly investigative work, alongside problem-solving. Pupils' understanding of number is generally good throughout the school, reflecting teachers' emphasis on this aspect of the subject.
- Pupils show genuine enthusiasm for the subject although they say that they would like more practical and puzzle-style mathematical activities. They like tackling 'hard' number work and respond enthusiastically to challenges and exploring more open problems.

Quality of teaching of mathematics

The quality of teaching of mathematics is satisfactory.

- The proportion of good teaching is growing. Particular strengths include detailed planning, good use of interactive whiteboards by most teachers, positive and encouraging attitudes to the subject and some imaginative use of resources, especially those based on information and communication technology (ICT). For example, the school uses a mathematics software package that pupils can access from home to give a broader range of homework activity. Its use is monitored carefully. Teachers use mathematical vocabulary effectively, for example routinely asking younger pupils to use words such as 'inverse' and 'product'.
- Teachers have good relationships with their pupils, fostering a positive atmosphere for discussion, particularly with 'talk partners'. Pupils are happy to ask for help and question their own working well. This enables them to be accurate when self-assessing.
- Weaknesses in teaching include missed opportunities to correct misconceptions and errors. This is most evident when teachers ignore pupils' unexpected responses to questions, continuing to seek out the 'correct' answer rather than probe pupils' thinking. Occasionally, teachers' expectations are too low. Some introductory mental and oral sessions are too long and complex.
- The quality of teachers' questioning varies considerably. In the best practice, thoughtful and probing questions enable pupils to consider their work in more detail. However, this was not widespread. As a result, the level of challenge, for the more able pupils in particular, was limited.
- Marking is usually up-to-date and encouraging but occasional errors or mistakes go uncorrected.

Quality of the mathematics curriculum

The quality of the mathematics curriculum is satisfactory.

- The curriculum is based on the national framework, supplemented well by additional activities and resources. These include some innovative work with the 'Ice Zone' where some pupils attend off-site extension sessions and 'minutemaths' for rapid number practice. Other pupils benefit from sessions run in collaboration with a nearby independent school, the football club, and a mathematics and physics club run by the local authority. The school plans to revisit some aspects that have slipped back, such as running a maths trail and refreshing some classroom resources.
- Pupils who need extra help with their mathematics receive good support from a strong team of teaching assistants. This includes some pupils who show a particular flair in the subject. Focused questioning and individual support help most pupils make good progress, although lengthy starter sessions sometimes mean that teaching assistants wait passively before starting their work.
- As a response to pupils' requests for more practical and investigative activities, the school is introducing some ICT-based resources and 'real-life' mathematics problems. However, practical sessions tend to be taught in isolation without making explicit links with other strands of mathematics, which limits the development of pupils' understanding.

Effectiveness of leadership and management of mathematics

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of mathematics is satisfactory.

- Currently, the leadership of mathematics is shared across both key stages with some input from you. This system works well and, as a result, the school has an accurate set of priorities in the most recent plan. Targets are suitably ambitious for individual pupils and for the school as a whole.
- The school operates a comprehensive tracking system which generates a clear picture of pupils' progress in mathematics. This strength supports the school's good capacity to improve its work in mathematics.
- The quality of teaching and pupils' workbooks are also monitored closely, generating a helpful range of professional development activities. At present, this does not include a planned programme of teachers working alongside each other to share good practice specifically in those aspects of mathematics identified as a priority.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that teachers question pupils more precisely to assess their understanding and provide them with opportunities to explain their mathematical thinking in detail and with depth, especially the more able pupils
- increasing the frequency of problem-solving and practical activities in mathematics, raising the level of teachers' expectations of pupils'

understanding in these sessions and making explicit the links between this work and other aspects of mathematics.

I hope that these observations and our discussions on the day are useful as you continue to develop mathematics in the school.

As explained previously, a copy of 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

Ceri Morgan
Her Majesty's Inspector