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Mrs J Dempster  
Headteacher  
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HD9 5RW

Dear Mrs Dempster

### **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 3 November 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 judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three part lessons.

The overall effectiveness of mathematics is satisfactory.

### **Achievement in mathematics**

Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory.

- According to the school's records, children's knowledge and skills are broadly typical for their age when they enter school. By the end of Reception, children's mathematical attainment is broadly average, and rising. This indicates that children's learning and progress are satisfactory and improving in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory through Key Stage 1. Attainment is broadly average by the end of Year 2 and has shown gradual improvement over the previous three years.
- Pupils' learning and progress are satisfactory in lower Key Stage 2. Attainment by the end of Year 6 has fluctuated over recent years but has been broadly average overall. However, pupils' learning and progress are

accelerating significantly in upper Key Stage 2 and current Year 6 pupils are working at above average levels.

- In recent years, lower and average attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, have made greater progress, given their starting points, than more able pupils. More rigorous monitoring of the progress of groups of pupils is highlighting and helping to reduce differences between them.
- Pupils' calculation skills develop securely, though some pupils find it more difficult to use and apply their skills to solve mathematical problems.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics, behave well in lessons and work with good concentration. Upper Key Stage 2 pupils are taking increasing responsibility for their own learning, for example by setting their own targets and assessing their progress towards them.

### **Quality of teaching of mathematics**

The quality of teaching of mathematics is satisfactory.

- Teachers place a strong emphasis on improving pupils' mental mathematics skills and developing their mathematical vocabulary.
- Learning objectives are explained clearly and revisited at the end of the lesson, which helps pupils to understand what they are expected to learn and how well they have achieved.
- Teachers make effective use of interactive whiteboards to help pupils to understand complex ideas, such as fractions and place value.
- Lessons usually move along briskly and teachers provide sufficient time for pupils to practise and improve their skills.
- Teaching assistants provide good support to pupils who find learning difficult and are quick to identify and remove barriers to understanding.
- The activities provided in lessons are, in the main, matched appropriately to pupils' different learning needs. However, occasionally more able pupils have to complete easier examples, unnecessarily, before moving on to more demanding tasks.
- Assessment is used effectively to measure what pupils have learnt over a period of time. However, it is not used sufficiently in some lessons to pinpoint and correct pupils' misconceptions.

### **Quality of the mathematics curriculum**

The quality of the mathematics curriculum is satisfactory.

- Successful implementation of the renewed primary framework is helping to ensure that pupils build on their prior learning.
- More detailed assessment information is helping the school to adapt the curriculum more effectively to meet pupils' learning needs.
- Teachers benefit from clear guidance on how to develop pupils' calculation skills. However, 'using and applying mathematics' is not developed

sufficiently across the school, partly because there is little guidance to support teachers.

- Good intervention programmes are helping to close gaps in pupils' understanding and to ensure that all make at least the progress expected.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management of mathematics**

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

- Your determination to raise achievement is reflected in the way you have, in a very short space of time, involved teachers in interpreting and using assessment data to improve pupils' progress. The use of setting challenging targets and reviewing pupils' progress are proving effective strategies in raising attainment.
- The subject leader makes a particularly good contribution through strong teaching, sharing expertise and thorough monitoring and evaluation of teaching, planning and pupils' work. The information is being used well to guide future developments.

### **Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- ensuring a consistent level of challenge for more able pupils
- developing the using and applying aspects of the curriculum
- improving the use of assessment within lessons to promote the conceptual understanding of all pupils.

I hope that these observations 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

**Colin Smith**  
**Additional Inspector**