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Mrs H Blakeley
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Blakeley

Ofsted 2011–12 good practice survey: primary mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 24 May 2011 to look at your work in mathematics, with a particular focus on arithmetic.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting as well as wider dissemination of good practice. 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.

Evidence was collected through: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documents; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons.

Features of good practice

- The school and the subject benefit from outstanding leadership and management. The subject leader's exemplary contribution through excellent teaching and guiding other members of staff, is reflected in the depth of pupils' understanding and in their exceptionally high achievement.
- Rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning, particularly the high-quality analysis of assessment data, ensure consistency of approach. Areas of mathematics that have the potential to create barriers to learning, such as fractions and division, are pinpointed, targeted and strengthened.
- Lessons are engaging, challenging and extremely well planned to ensure that all pupils are able to succeed, irrespective of their different levels of attainment. There are examples of outstanding teaching where pupils are inspired to use their knowledge, skills and calculation strategies to solve a

wide range of mathematical problems, such as measuring and costing the re-surfacing of the school playground.

- High quality assessment is evident in lessons. By asking pupils to discuss and explain their different methods, to a partner or the class, and asking them to hold up and show their answers to calculations on white boards, teachers are able to gauge pupils' understanding and regulate the pace and challenge of the lesson accordingly.
- The school provides a broad, rich and extremely well structured curriculum that enables pupils are able to build securely on earlier learning and use the knowledge, skills that they have developed to investigate and solve mathematical problems systematically. The small number of pupils who find difficulty in learning or have gaps in their understanding are promptly identified and strongly supported by well-trained teaching assistants.
- Pupils are highly motivated, fully engaged in lessons and show a fascination for mathematics. These factors are reflected in their enjoyment in learning, pride in presentation and in their capacity to think flexibly and calculate accurately.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- including the next steps in the marking of pupils' work to ensure that they understand what they need to do to improve further
- ensuring that the time pupils are engaged in whole class activities does not impinge too much on the time required to practise, extend and improve their skills, independently.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop mathematics at Heversham St Peter's CE Primary School.

Yours sincerely

Colin Smith
Additional Inspector