

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



10 May 2012

Miss E Brown
Headteacher
Kyson Primary School
Peterhouse Crescent
Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP12 4HX

Dear Miss Brown

Ofsted 2012–13 subject survey inspection programme: mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 30 April 2012 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 parts of five lessons.

The overall effectiveness of mathematics is good.

Achievement in mathematics

Achievement in mathematics is good.

- By the time they complete the Early Years Foundation Stage, most pupils are working securely at or above age-related expectations in problem solving, reasoning and numeracy. During the inspection, pupils in the Reception class learnt to compare heights and lengths using informal measures and rulers marked in centimetres. Pupils are well prepared for the transfer to Key Stage 1.
- By the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in mathematics is usually a little above average. In a Year 2 class, pupils showed good understanding of how to solve problems involving multiplication using diagrams and by counting in fives or tens.
- Following a disappointing set of results in 2009, the school has focused on raising achievement in Key Stage 2 by making sure that no pupil gets left

behind on any topic. As a result, pupils are now making better than expected progress in all year groups. Pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs make equally good progress because work is adapted to meet their needs and learning support is well organised.

- Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics and engage willingly in mathematics lessons. A greater emphasis on using and applying mathematics has made them more confident in tackling unfamiliar problems. Year 6 pupils showed a good understanding of equivalence of fractions, decimals and percentages and the links between these topics and multiplication and division. Year 5 pupils applied their knowledge of percentages to answer questions in real-life contexts. Higher-attaining Year 3 pupils calculated intervals of time with confidence.

Quality of teaching in mathematics

The quality of teaching in mathematics is good.

- Teachers organise their classrooms efficiently, develop very positive relationships with pupils, and manage the work of teaching assistants well. They know pupils' strengths and weaknesses and use this information well when planning work for different groups and individuals. They deploy teaching assistants well and provide clear guidance on their roles during each lesson, such as specific teaching input for individuals or small groups.
- The impact of teaching on pupils' progress over time is good. In an outstanding lesson, the teacher maintained a consistent approach of encouraging pupils to use and apply their existing knowledge and to return where necessary to techniques they understood well. She then helped them make links between their own methods and more efficient methods they could have used. Starter activities are currently being used well in Year 6 to keep pupils' skills fresh ahead of the forthcoming national tests.
- While all the lessons seen included some effective whole-class and small-group teaching, progress was occasionally slower for pupils working independently because they ran into unexpected difficulties or in one case, finished early. In these lessons, the teacher was focusing on a different group and did not spot the problems soon enough.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and usually write comments, mainly giving praise or confirming that learning has been demonstrated. The most useful comments provide additional guidance, set extra challenges or request corrections, but these are not always followed up in subsequent marking.

Quality of the curriculum in mathematics

The quality of the curriculum in mathematics is satisfactory.

- The school tried out the revised National Primary Strategy framework, but reverted to an earlier version to provide longer blocks of time on each topic. As a result, teachers have more scope to organise timely individual support and to revisit aspects that pupils have not understood well

enough, before moving on to a new area of learning. This is helping to raise achievement.

- The school's schemes of work provide a clear framework of learning objectives that support progression over time, but not always enough detail to guide teachers about the most fruitful approaches within different topics. Teachers share their planning with colleagues taking similar age-groups but, apart from an agreed policy for written calculations, there is no mechanism to ensure that teaching for older pupils builds coherently on the approaches used lower down the school.
- The curriculum has been enriched by devoting Friday mathematics lessons to a series of investigative tasks, real-life problems and practical activities. As yet, the school has not structured this additional material to help pupils to develop progressively better skills in communicating their findings.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in mathematics

The effectiveness of leadership and management in mathematics is good.

- Senior leaders monitor and evaluate mathematics provision effectively and identify strengths and areas for improvement well. Their good capacity for improvement is evident in the better progress in mathematics. They make good use of assessment data to gain an overview of pupils' progress. This information, supported by the findings of lesson observation and work scrutiny, is used to drive improvement and to hold teachers to account.
- Although there is scope for making the curriculum more coherent, the quality of mathematics teaching is good and improving. The mathematics coordinators provide a strong role model through their own teaching. They have strong subject expertise and provide good support for colleagues.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- ensuring that teachers check from time to time on the progress of groups of pupils who have been asked to work independently, in case they finish early or run into unexpected difficulties
- improving the curriculum by agreeing how topics other than calculation should be approached and adapting the schemes of work accordingly
- restructuring the Friday work on mathematics to develop more systematically pupils' skills in explaining and presenting their findings.

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

Stephen Abbott
Her Majesty's Inspector