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Mr N Ward
Headteacher
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Dear Mr Ward

**Ofsted 2013–14 subject survey inspection programme: mathematics**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 25 June 2013 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: discussions with you, the mathematics subject leader and pupils from Year 5; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of four lessons, two jointly with you, and one intervention session.

**The overall effectiveness of mathematics is outstanding.**

**Achievement in mathematics is outstanding.**

- Pupils' attainment at the end of Year 6 is well above that expected for their age. Pupils are well prepared for secondary education having secure knowledge of number, skill in applying what they know to solve problems, and a very positive attitude to the subject. Year 5 boys and girls said that mathematics is fun, especially when tackling new aspects, such as algebra.
- Pupils rise to teachers' challenges and high expectations: Year 1 pupils beavered away sorting numbers into sets of odd, even, multiples and non-multiples of three, and pupils in Years 2 and 3 were highly engrossed in solving mathematical puzzles.
- Scrutiny of pupils' work completed this academic year bore out pupils' views that they had made 'a lot of progress'. Children in the Reception

year have moved on considerably; they counted accurately in twos up to 20, and some counted beyond, as they matched pairs of socks and sequenced relevant number cards. Data show that pupils in all year groups, including the very few eligible for pupil premium funding, have generally made more than expected progress. Pupils' progress accelerates in upper Key Stage 2, building on a secure knowledge of the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. A good number of Year 6 pupils have made the equivalent of six years' progress since leaving Year 2.

- The very neat layout of pupils' work shows errors are most often due to miscalculation rather than misconception. Pupils know their targets and weaker aspects: Year 5 pupils indicated they needed to work on specific multiplication facts or to increase the speed of solving problems mentally.

**Teaching in mathematics is outstanding.**

- Teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Teachers plan and sequence their lessons well, often incorporating a range of motivating and challenging activities to enable pupils to practise and apply their number knowledge and skills. Work is well matched to pupils' abilities and pupils progress securely in all aspects of mathematics.
- Teachers and assistants work very well together to support and encourage pupils although, occasionally, they provide answers and key information rather than draw out what pupils know and think.
- The staff know each pupil very well. They are quick to see when pupils are slower to grasp a concept or to acquire a new skill, such as using a ruler correctly to measure and to draw lines, and to provide focussed support.
- Teachers' burgeoning practice in posing questions, as part of marking along with indicating next steps, is strengthening pupils' awareness of their own progress although some questions go unanswered and additional challenges not tackled.

**The curriculum in mathematics is outstanding.**

- The overall mathematics curriculum ensures very good continuity and progression in pupils' conceptual understanding of the four operations, and their application in solving problems and mathematical investigations. Links are made with other subjects and themes. Year 6 pupils, for instance, were using their knowledge of ratio to determine the amount of ingredients required to give sufficient 'mocktails' at the forthcoming leavers' party.
- An emphasis on practical activities, indoors and out, especially in the Reception year, gives pupils a wide experience within each mathematical aspect and use of different ways of recording their findings, including blogs on the school's website.
- Although pupils' success in a computer programme to develop skills in handling number mentally is publicly celebrated, some chances are missed to maintain a high profile of mathematics across the curriculum.

**Leadership and management of mathematics are outstanding.**

- Your knowledge of and passion for mathematics along with those of the subject leader ensure the confidence of all staff in teaching mathematics. All want pupils to achieve their best. The ratcheting up of expectations of progress, along with timely intervention and reasoned decisions about the most appropriate calculation methods to meet pupils' needs, have strengthened achievement, most especially at the end of the Reception year and Year 6.
- Improvement planning in mathematics arises from the outcomes of the regular monitoring of lessons, numeracy walks and pupils' work. However, while records from monitoring are detailed and evaluative about teaching and pupils' responses, there is scope to highlight more effectively the impact of the teaching on the pupils' learning in mathematics.

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

- fostering pupils as mathematicians even more strongly by:
  - allowing pupils to take the lead more frequently in explaining their thinking and justifying the strategies they use to tackle problems
  - ensuring pupils have time in lessons to evaluate their progress and to respond to questions and challenges posed as part of marking
  - maintaining a high profile of mathematics across the curriculum
- placing even more emphasis on the impact of teaching on pupils' learning when monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision in mathematics.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop mathematics in the school.

As explained previously, 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

**Sonja Øyen**
**Her Majesty's Inspector**