

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404045
F 020 7421 6855
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs Livingstone
Headteacher
Deansbrook Junior School
Hale Drive
Mill Hill
London
NW7 3ED

Dear Mrs Livingstone

Ofsted survey inspection programme – Evaluation of the Primary and Secondary National Strategies

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit with Kekshan Salaria HMI on 22 May 2007 to look at work in the Primary National Strategy (PNS).

As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the PNS, the visit had a particular focus on the impact of Assessment for Learning (AfL) 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. All feedback letters will be published on the Ofsted website at the end of each half-term.

The evidence used to inform the judgements made included: interviews with staff and pupils, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of 6 lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the PNS was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement in mathematics is good. The impact of AfL on pupils' achievement and personal development is also good.

- Standards are improving and are in line with national averages. Pupils' progress is good. Boys make better progress than girls. All groups make at least satisfactory progress.

- This good progress is due to the rigorous monitoring and targeting of pupils. Regular evaluation ensures pupils continue to make progress and are supported to do so.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are keen to learn and respond very well to opportunities to work collaboratively.

Quality of teaching and learning of mathematics

The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good. The impact of AfL on teaching and learning is also good.

- The progress made by pupils as they move through the school largely reflects the quality of teaching they receive. Teachers know their pupils well and plan effectively to meet their needs. Practical tasks ensure that pupils are engaged. High quality resources further enhance pupils' learning. However, opportunities to make mathematics relevant and meaningful to pupils' lives are sometimes missed.
- Teaching assistants provide high quality support: they keep pupils focussed and assist them during good quality questioning. Assistants provide detailed feedback to class teachers on how individuals have progressed during lessons and whether pupils need further teaching input to meet the lesson objectives.
- The learning environment is vibrant. Displays showcase examples of pupils' high quality work. All classes display individual pupils' targets. Pupils have a very good understanding of what the targets mean and what their role is in meeting them.

Quality of curriculum

The quality of the mathematics curriculum is outstanding. The impact of AfL on the curriculum is good.

- Pupils enjoy mathematics in particular the games, practical activities and well planned investigations which challenge their thinking and understanding of mathematics. Lesson observations noted the extended opportunities for pupils to talk about methods and give reasons through practical or paired work.
- Interactive whiteboards are used judiciously to enhance teaching and learning. Pupils enjoy and value their use.
- Progress of all groups is carefully monitored. Intervention programmes are chosen carefully and used effectively to overcome barriers to learning.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management in mathematics are good. The effectiveness of leadership and management of AfL is outstanding.

- AFL is central to all plans for improvements. Senior leaders have purposefully identified aspects of the strategy that support and develop their vision. Rigorous monitoring and evaluation ensures AfL policy is implemented consistently across the school. New staff members are quickly inducted into this system.
- The school's self evaluation procedures are very good. Teaching and learning in mathematics are kept regularly under review and very helpful lesson observation feedback is provided for teachers. As a result, teaching has improved.
- Much work has been undertaken on securing better progression for every pupil. Data show that this work is having a positive impact.

Assessment for learning

The impact of AfL overall is good.

- Rigorous assessment procedures ensure that teachers shape their planning in the context of their analyses of pupils' performance.
- Pupils are confident, articulate and enjoy working collaboratively. The commitment to AfL has had a positive impact on pupils' personal development.
- All school staff are inducted and trained to arrive at a common approach to AfL. This includes teaching assistants who provide very effective support and track pupils' progress to maximise achievement.

Inclusion

The impact of AfL on inclusion is good.

- Inclusion is good because pupils make good progress and careful monitoring ensures that support is given where it is needed. The analysis and monitoring of data to identify variations in progress is a particular strength of the school.
- The needs of pupils learning English as an additional language are identified accurately and barriers to progress removed. Teachers know their pupils well and deploy resources effectively to support their learning.
- The use of teaching assistants to support the learning of pupils with Group Educational Plans ensures that gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding are quickly and systematically addressed.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- develop opportunities to work with the infant school on moderating and levelling pupils' work
- develop opportunities to make mathematics more meaningful and relevant to pupils.

I hope these observations are useful as you continue to develop mathematics and assessment for learning in the school.

As I explained in my previous letter, a copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority and will be published on Ofsted's website. It will also be available to the team for your next institutional inspection.

Yours sincerely

Asyia Kazmi
Her Majesty's Inspector