

Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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



16 July 2007

Mrs E Crayton
Headteacher
Branton St Wilfred's Church of England Primary School
Valley Drive
Branton
Doncaster
DN3 3NB

Dear Mrs Crayton

Ofsted 2007-08 survey inspection programme – mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 13 July 2007 to look at work in mathematics. As outlined in my initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on pupils' enjoyment and understanding of 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. This letter will be posted on the Ofsted website.

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 three lessons.

The overall effectiveness of the subject, mathematics, was judged to be good.

Achievement and standards

Achievement is good. Standards are above average.

- Children's mathematical development on entry to the school is average for their age. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress throughout the school. Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6, as reflected in pupils' consistently good performance in national assessments and tests. Higher ability pupils achieve particularly well.
- Pupils have good attitudes and are keen to learn. They explain themselves clearly in oral work and are not afraid to make mistakes or to have their answers used to develop learning further. Pupils enjoy working in groups, sharing ideas and trying to work answers out for themselves before seeking help from adults. This builds up their confidence and helps them to become independent learners.

Quality of teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good.

- Teachers have high expectations. Some excellent learning was observed in which pupils adopted a strategic approach to the solution of complex and open-ended problems.
- Teaching assistants work collaboratively with class teachers. They make a significant contribution to the learning of those pupils who, for any reason, need additional support to help them make the expected progress.
- Relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils are confident to ask questions and are persistent in seeking answers when they do not understand. The climate for learning in all of the lessons observed was lively and purposeful. The pace was fast and pupils were clear about what they had learnt.
- The marking of pupils' work is thorough, accurate and corrective. It is, however, inconsistent in that it is not always clear to pupils how they can improve further.
- Teachers make very good use of information from assessment procedures to provide work that challenges pupils at levels suited to their ability. Pupils self-assess their own progress in lessons, and do this well, but they are not sufficiently aware of the progress expected of them over time.

Quality of the curriculum

The curriculum is excellent.

- Pupils' competence in mental mathematics provides a very good foundation for the application and transfer of mathematical skills across the whole curriculum.
- Activities are structured in a way that helps pupils to see the relevance of what they are learning to everyday life, such as when pupils analysed personal data collected during 'Active Week' to come to perceptive conclusions about their own health and fitness.
- The curriculum and its organisation are flexible and readily adaptable to pupils' specific needs.
- Information and communication technology is used very effectively. It enables pupils to be stretched to the limit of their capability.
- Pupils respond particularly well in lessons that include plenty of practical and thought-provoking activities.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are outstanding.

- The high quality of the leadership and management of mathematics is at the root of pupils' consistently good performance and enjoyment of the subject. The governors provide good back-up and support for new developments.
- The school's evaluation of its provision and performance is accurate and thorough. It influences teachers' professional development and leads to a

constant search for ways to improve even more, for example, through the introduction in the next academic year of personalised learning programmes similar to those already used successfully in English.

Subject issue: pupils' enjoyment and understanding of mathematics

Teachers are enthusiastic about mathematics, and this influences pupils' attitudes to the subject. Pupils are at ease with problem-solving and investigative work because these are integral to teachers' planning for lessons. Throughout the school, including the Reception class, pupils are encouraged to think about alternative ways of finding answers. By explaining these in oral sessions, pupils learn to reason and to think logically. Pupils particularly enjoy the extra-curricular 'Family Learning' activities. These challenge pupils and parents by drawing on their research skills and initiative. The 'manic mechanisms' produced by pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrated a good understanding of links between mathematics, engineering, and design and technology.

Inclusion

Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve well because good systems are in place to meet their immediate and long-term needs. Pupils flourish in the exhilarating environment that generates a sense of purpose and community spirit. There is a real sense of partnership that extends to parents and beyond. Pupils are treated as individuals whose talents and potential are unique. This inculcates in them a desire to achieve as well as they can.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring the consistency of marking so that pupils know exactly what to do to improve their work further
- embedding the individual learning programmes in mathematics so that pupils know what they are expected to achieve over time.

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

As I explained previously, 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

June Tracey
Additional Inspector