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Mrs H Gilbert  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mrs Gilbert

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 on 10 October 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).

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 six parts of lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory as is their personal development. The impact of AfL on pupils' achievement and personal development is also satisfactory.

- Standards of attainment in mathematics are average.

- Pupils' progress in the lessons observed was satisfactory although, in a small minority of lessons, there was insufficient challenge for lower attaining pupils.
- Key aspects of AfL are in place and these are having a satisfactory impact on pupils' learning.
- Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. They use teachers' feedback and targets to achieve sound progress. However, their involvement in peer and self-assessment is limited.

### Quality of teaching and learning of mathematics

The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is satisfactory.

The impact of AfL on teaching and learning is satisfactory.

- Teachers have sound subject knowledge and plan lessons in detail.
- In the best lessons, teachers and teaching assistants carefully target questions and make assessments that inform the next steps in learning for individual pupils.
- Teachers' questioning routinely seeks explanations or reasoning from pupils.
- In lessons, pupils understand what they are trying to learn but are less sure of the progress they are making towards longer term objectives.
- Most teachers use assessment information to match gaps in the pupils' knowledge. In a minority of lessons, activities do not meet the needs of the lower attainers.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory, as is the impact of AfL on the curriculum.

- The school makes satisfactory use of tracking information to meet the needs of the pupils by appropriately adapting the curriculum.
- PNS intervention programmes have helped to accelerate progress in Key Stage 2 classes.
- There is good guidance to support the teaching of mathematics to pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). This work has benefited from PNS materials and strong consultant support.
- There are missed opportunities to promote numeracy through other subjects.

### Leadership and management

Leadership and management in mathematics are satisfactory.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of AfL is satisfactory.

- The senior leadership team has promoted AfL through its teaching and learning policies but ongoing changes to staff and recruitment

difficulties have inhibited its impact. This has led to inconsistent practice.

- Overall, teachers' knowledge of the strategy is satisfactory.
- The school's self-evaluation of the impact of AfL on provision and achievement is accurate and identifies what needs to be done to ensure that AfL is an integral part of teaching and learning in all classrooms.
- The local authority consultants provide valued support for the newly appointed mathematics coordinator. She has yet to have a strong influence on the quality of teaching and assessment in the subject.

### Assessment for learning

The impact of AfL overall is satisfactory.

- AfL contributes positively to the pupils' satisfactory progress. Its impact varies considerably between classes.
- Pupils are familiar with aspects of AfL but only a minority can explain clearly how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

### Inclusion

The impact of AfL on inclusion is satisfactory.

- Over time, all pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make expected progress. In a small minority of lessons the provision for the lower attainers is inadequate.
- In a few lessons there are very good examples of teachers and teaching assistants working together to support the specific needs of pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring that the teaching of mathematics meets the needs of lower attaining pupils
- improving AfL by sharing existing good practice between teachers
- developing the role of the subject leader in mathematics.

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

Anthony O'Malley  
Her Majesty's Inspector