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Mr Michael Kent  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Kent

### 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 Deana Holdaway ADM on 4 December 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, enjoyment of pupils' work and observation of four lessons. Limited use has been made of PNS because senior leaders have devised their own systems for targeting underperformance which serves the needs of pupils well. There is some involvement of the PNS through subject leaders' meetings and other relevant training, for example, on implementing the revised literacy and numeracy frameworks.

#### Achievement and standards

Pupils' achievement is good. The impact of the school's systems for AfL on pupil's achievement and personal development is also good.

- The majority of pupils arrive at the school with skills well below those expected for their age. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils achieve standards

in line with the national average in mathematics. This represents good progress, including for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities.

- Pupils behave well and enjoy their mathematics. There are keen to learn and respond very well to support and praise.

### Quality of teaching and learning in mathematics

The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good. The impact of the school's system for AfL on teaching and learning is good.

- In lessons, good and some outstanding aspects of teaching were observed.
- Effective oral work develops pupils' mental strategies and extends their subject vocabulary. Teachers' clear explanations develop pupils' reasoning and ability to solve problems. Their open-ended questions enable pupils to explain and expand their thinking.
- The school balances a clear focus on improving standards in English and mathematics with the determination to develop high quality teaching and learning across all subjects.

### Quality of curriculum

The quality of the mathematics curriculum is good. The impact of the school's systems for AfL on the curriculum is also good.

- The school's curriculum is broad and varied: pupils have many opportunities to experience a wide range of enrichment activities. Teachers' lesson plans ensure appropriate breadth: all aspects of mathematics are covered and pupils are assessed in each aspect using units from the revised PNS frameworks.
- Practical tasks, games and investigative inquiry underpin pupils understanding and enjoyment of mathematics.
- Resources are well organised but staff are unaware of the many supportive external materials available.

### Leadership and management

Leadership and management of mathematics are good. The effectiveness of leadership and management of PNS is also good.

- Your leadership underpins the positive ethos and direction of the school. Senior leaders are innovative and creative and there is a strong commitment to inclusion. The school has a core of very experienced staff who have received high quality training. Strategic leadership has ensured that this training is disseminated well to support other colleagues in the school.

- The senior leadership team drive improvements in mathematics by conducting thorough audits of pupils' and teachers' needs, monitoring pupils' progress, sampling pupils' workbooks and evaluating training.
- Teaching assistants were observed to support pupils very effectively; however, senior leaders acknowledge this practice is variable.

### Assessment for learning

The impact of the school's systems for AfL overall is good.

- Senior leaders are committed to regular, accurate assessments which drive daily plans and meet pupils' needs well.
- There are diverse, appropriate and engaging methods for setting targets which impact positively on pupils' progress.
- Marking is supportive and regular but does not always identify the pupils' next steps in learning.

### Inclusion

The impact of the school's systems for AfL on inclusion is good.

- Regular assessment of pupils informs differentiated activities and tasks.
- Intervention strategies are modified to cater for the needs of individuals and this enables them to make good progress.
- Pupils not working at national curriculum levels make good progress because their work is planned and assessed using the P-scales.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, included:

- ensuring marking identifies the next steps in learning for pupils
- engaging teaching assistants fully in supporting pupils' enjoyment and learning.

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

Kekshan Salaria  
Her Majesty's Inspector