

Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

T 08456 404040  
F 020 7421 6855  
www.ofsted.gov.uk



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Mrs J Chambers  
Headteacher  
Willaston C of E Primary School  
Neston Road  
Willaston  
Cheshire  
CH64 2TN

Dear Mrs Chambers

Ofsted 2007-08 subject survey inspection programme: mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and co-operation, and that of your staff, during my visit on 20 June 2008 to look at work in mathematics.

As outlined in our initial letter, as well as looking at key areas of the subject, the visit had a particular focus on the effectiveness of the school's approaches to improving the quality of teaching and learning 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 learners, scrutiny of relevant documentation, analysis of pupils' work and observation of four lessons.

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

Achievement and standards

Achievement in mathematics is outstanding and standards are well above average.

- Children's mathematical development on entry is above that typical of children age 3 to 4 years. They make good progress in the Reception class because they are encouraged to talk and work things out for themselves under well-directed guidance from the staff.
- Standards are well above average in Years 2 and 6. The proportions of pupils exceeding the levels expected for their age are consistently well above the national average in both key stages. Pupils are developing good

analytical skills because teachers give them scope to learn through trial and error and through testing out their ideas on other pupils.

- Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds achieve very well in Years 1 to 6 because the school is proactive in determining their exact needs and providing for them. The focus groups that operate alongside classes in Key Stage 2 are innovative and productive. Through them, all pupils have the opportunity at regular intervals to work separately, in small groups, on aspects that they either find difficult or which present higher levels of challenge.
- Pupils enjoy solving problems in mathematics. This aspect of the work is integral to planning in all year groups. It fires pupils' enthusiasm and contributes significantly to their independence and growth in self-confidence when applying mathematical skills.

### Quality of teaching and learning of mathematics

The quality of teaching and learning of mathematics is good.

- Teaching is consistently good, some is outstanding. Teachers' ability to inspire pupils is a contributory factor to pupils' inquisitiveness in seeking answers to problems and in looking for explanations arising from statistical data.
- Teachers have high expectations. These are transmitted to pupils, who respond well with a determination to meet, and, if possible, exceed the targets set for them.
- Information from assessment is used purposefully and productively to identify where extra support is needed and to inform pupils of what they need to do to improve further.

### Quality of the mathematics curriculum

The quality of the mathematics curriculum is outstanding.

- The curriculum is creative and all-embracing. It is designed extremely well to diffuse learning across subject boundaries. Pupils' understanding that 'mathematics is everywhere' engages them in well-focused discussions about the ways that the subject influences every aspect of their own and the nation's life.
- A wide variety of high quality resources, including technology, supports pupils' independent approach to learning. Pupils use resources purposefully, for example, as seen in the Year 6 lesson in which pupils worked on a competitive project set for schools by the House of Commons.
- Pupils respond very well to challenge from teachers and from their peers. Parents are heavily involved in the school's work. They support well the workshops set up for them to learn about strategies used in the teaching of mathematics. This results ultimately in greater involvement in their children's learning.

### Leadership and management of mathematics

The leadership and management of mathematics are outstanding.

- Success in mathematics is rooted in strong leadership of the subject and high expectations.
- The subject leader works 'hands on'. Her knowledge and understanding of the school's work in mathematics is instrumental in ensuring continuity and steady progression across all age groups.
- Team work and collaboration between staff are highly effective in stimulating the sharing of good practice and in sustaining the high level of pupils' achievement.

Subject issue: the effectiveness of the school's approaches to improving the quality of teaching and learning in mathematics

- A significant feature of professional development is open and self-critical evaluation by all staff of what works well and where more training is needed; for example, pupils' current enjoyment of problem solving is the direct result of a concerted input to tackle teachers' earlier identification of it as a weaker area of learning.
- Teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics is secure and used well. Teachers delve deep into discussion in response to pupils' questions. The school ensures that teachers and teaching assistants have a good understanding of the latest developments in the subject and that they are used effectively. As a result, pupils are keen to relate their work in school to everyday life in the wider community.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed

There are no significant areas for improvement. The challenge is to sustain the current level of achievement for all pupils.

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

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

Yours sincerely

June Tracey  
Additional Inspector