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Mrs T Sergides
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Sergides

Ofsted 2011–12 good practice survey: primary mathematics

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of your staff and pupils, during my visit on 9 June 2011 to look at your work in mathematics, with a particular focus on arithmetic.

The visit provided valuable information which will contribute to our national evaluation and reporting as well as wider dissemination of good practice. Published reports are likely to list the names of the contributing institutions but individual institutions will not be identified in the main text without their consent.

Evidence was gathered through: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documents; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of five lessons.

Features of good practice

- Pupils make outstanding progress throughout the school from starting points that are often below average. Pupils' achievement is outstanding. Not only are their results in national Key Stage 2 tests above average, but pupils of all ages become budding mathematicians. Their understanding of concepts and numerical structure enables them to reason and make connections; for example, Year 3 pupils could explain why $45+27$ is 20 greater than $35+17$, and Year 6 pupils used their answer to 248×25 to evaluate 24.8×25 .
- Pupils of all ages show initiative when working independently and with their peers on a wide range of problems. While they are generally accurate in their work, pupils have the confidence to debate and learn from mistakes and alternative solutions.
- Pupils enjoy mathematics: lessons often buzz with excitement, for example as groups of pupils in Year 3 worked together on creating different numerical expressions with the value of 20. They used the concept of

inverse very well, for instance in using $20 \times 2 = 40$ to obtain $40 \div 2 = 20$. They are keen to explain their thinking and listen well to each other and their teacher.

- Outstanding teaching underpins pupils' high-quality learning. Teachers' planning is skilful in providing opportunities for learning to develop along multiple avenues. Teachers' explanations emphasise key points and model accurate use of mathematical vocabulary. Questioning probes and follows-up pupils' thinking and, coupled with well-chosen practical resources and meaningful activities, secures pupils' understanding. Lessons move seamlessly from one phase to the next with not a minute wasted. Teachers provide pupils with very good opportunities to use and apply mathematics, although greater emphasis could be placed on developing explicitly pupils' use of mathematical language, for example about patterns and generalisations.
- The mathematics curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 is enriched and deepened through the Cognitive Acceleration in Mathematics Education (CAME) and 'Let's Think' lessons. Year 6 pupils, for example, used a range of practical resources to investigate the relationship between the diameter and the circumference of circles. The teacher listened to and built on pupils' ideas in ways that enabled pupils to learn very effectively for themselves.
- Close teamwork between senior leaders, staff, pupils and their families, and a shared ambition for the development and achievement of every pupil in the school are hallmarks of the school's exceptional ethos. Your outstanding leadership and management reflect strategic insight. Rigorous approaches bring coherence to data analysis, monitoring, evaluation and development planning. Like you, staff are reflective and those who hold responsibilities for mathematics show openness to new ideas and developments; for example, looking at how mathematics might be the focus of the next 'writer-in-residence' project with the pupils.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- exploiting opportunities to develop pupils' use of the language of 'using and applying mathematics'.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop mathematics at Grafton Primary School.

As I explained previously, a copy of this letter will be published on the Ofsted website. It may be used to inform decisions about any future inspection. A copy of this letter will be sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

Jane Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector