

Observation Feedback Report

Worfield Endowed CE Primary School: Year 4 Maths

Topic: 6 Times Table

About the school

Worfield Endowed CE Primary School serves rural communities in the south west of Shropshire. The school is a one form entry Primary school of 220 pupils. It has a new EYFS unit with a morning group of Nursery pupils integrated with Reception class as an extension to a fairly new build block for classes in years one to three. Year four are in a temporary building 30 yards away, while classes for year five and six, together with the school hall and offices are accommodated in a grade 2 listed building of Shropshire sandstone. There are extensive grounds, flanked by a small river and a forest school facility. The school is securely good and part of a three school Federation. The Christian ethos has enabled the Executive Headteacher to build on existing good practice, develop high quality teaching and an invaluable team of Teaching Assistants to create excellent class teaching teams in all years.

Class context: Lisa and the Teaching Assistant Sylvie work excellently together to meet the needs of the pupils in consolidating their 6 times tables with differentiated resources to achieve the learning outcomes, while Sylvie is always ready to record learning assessments during the lesson. The main lesson part emphasises the putting of the skills in to a real life learning, problem solving situation. Lisa is a specialist Maths teacher and embraces the latest national strategies into the follow up time with pupils who were having difficulty, using Sylvie to take a small group later in the day to consolidate while it's still fresh! The classroom is a temporary semi-detached building away from the main school.

Observation feedback

The observations below are collated directly from the video evidence only. They do not replicate what an observer might record during an observation but seek to explore and evaluate the learning and the factors contributing to it.

Teacher introduction

The introduction explains the context where both procedural and conceptual understanding of tables are being sought, and applied to money problems in a real life situation. As the task is extendable to all ability groups we will particularly look for evidence of all pupils being extended and challenged.

Teaching

- After counting in 6's the concept of multiplication is explored using pegboards to demonstrate 6×4 set in the context of eggs in egg boxes. Pupils seem to manage this comfortably.
- Mental strategies for the multiplication of larger numbers are explored, e.g. 96×6 and modelled before pupils are set challenges.
- At the end of the lesson a further example of calculation is completed by two pupils whilst the others are encouraged to work out the answer as well. This gives some additional practice and leads to assessment of their understanding.

Exploring the children's learning

- Pupils can count in 6's although are hesitant over some numbers. Their confidence appears to be consolidating.
- They can make 6×4 on pegboards in an array and seem to understand this reasonably securely.
- Nearly all appear to be able to identify a HTU number visually from resources that are held up.
- Pupils talk willingly together about their maths to share ideas and understanding.
- They seem to be able to complete their 6 x facts at reasonable speed in a differentiated grid activity. Around half of the children indicate that they have improved their score from previous performance.
- When given money multiplication problems the pupils responding to teacher questions have a good grasp of the skills required.
- Overall it is not clear, without talking with pupils as to how much progress they are making in the lesson. Their knowledge and understanding seems quite secure at the beginning of the lesson. At the end of year 4 the national Curriculum requires them to know and apply all their tables to 12×12 . Given their exploration of the 6 x table in April they still seem to have some way to go to achieve this, but do not demonstrate a lack of understanding of multiplication in principle.
- Pupils have other mental strategies to apply to bigger numbers as well as those provided by the teacher.
- When set multiplication challenges with money they choose whether to use mental or grid strategies and seem able to get on confidently.

Overall pupils apply themselves very well, work hard and share their ideas willingly. Many appear to know their 6 x table already and can use mental strategies for multiplication and the grid method after being reminded of it. Without talking with pupil during the lesson it is hard to see what progress middle and higher achieving children are making.

Exploring the practice observed

The purpose of observation is to open a dialogue about learning in the lesson, across the sequence of lessons and how it can be further developed to maximise progress.

To this end a number of questions could be followed up from this lesson observation to explore learning and to inform next steps.

- How challenging was the work on repeating the 6 x table for many children? Which aspects of it needed consolidation or extension and for which pupils?
- If pupils already know the grid method, how would you measure their learning and what other strategies would you use to ensure they make progress in your context. What were they learning in the lesson? Which pupils needed practice or extension with the grid method as opposed to moving on to a more efficient written method?
- If you were intending to consolidate the conceptual understanding of multiplication, how will you assess whether this is achieved?
- To what extent were all pupils challenged by the money problems?

The dialogue created by such questions should inform further planning and the evaluation of progress at the end of the sequence of lessons.