

Task

Say whether the following is true or false and support your answer by a proof: For any integer n , the number $n^2 + n + 1$ is odd.

Solution

Task is equivalent to proving/disproving the following theorem:

Theorem. $\forall n \in \mathbb{Z}, n \geq 0 : (2 \nmid (n^2 + n + 1)) \wedge (2 \nmid ((-n)^2 + (-n) + 1))$.

Proof. By induction.

Initial step ($n = 0$): $(2 \nmid (0^2 + 0 + 1)) \wedge (2 \nmid ((-0)^2 + (-0) + 1))$
 $= (2 \nmid 1) \wedge (2 \nmid 1)$ - this is true.

Induction step: Assume $(2 \nmid (n^2 + n + 1)) \wedge (2 \nmid ((-n)^2 + (-n) + 1))$.

Then for $n + 1$:

$(2 \nmid ((n + 1)^2 + (n + 1) + 1)) \wedge (2 \nmid (-(n + 1))^2 + (-(n + 1)) + 1)$
 $= (2 \nmid ((n^2 + n + 1) + 2(n + 1))) \wedge (2 \nmid (n^2 + n + 1))$
 $= 2 \nmid ((n^2 + n + 1) + 2(n + 1))$ (by induction hypothesis $2 \nmid (n^2 + n + 1)$).

Since, by induction hypothesis, $2 \nmid (n^2 + n + 1)$, then $n^2 + n + 1 = 2k + 1$ for some $k \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Then we have $2 \nmid ((n^2 + n + 1) + 2(n + 1))$

$= 2 \nmid (2k + 1 + 2(n + 1))$

$= 2 \nmid (2(k + n + 1) + 1)$

(define $l = k + n + 1 \in \mathbb{Z}$)

$= 2 \nmid (2l + 1)$, where $l = k + n + 1 \in \mathbb{Z}$ - this is clearly true.

Hence, by principle of induction,

$\forall n \in \mathbb{Z}, n \geq 0 : (2 \nmid (n^2 + n + 1)) \wedge (2 \nmid ((-n)^2 + (-n) + 1))$,

which constitutes the proof of original claim. □