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Mrs P Lynch  
Headteacher  
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Primary School  
Piccadilly  
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Dear Mrs Lynch

### **Ofsted 2010–11 subject survey inspection programme: modern languages**

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 12 November 2010 to look at work in modern languages.

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 without their consent.

The evidence used to inform the judgements included: interviews with staff and pupils; scrutiny of relevant documentation; analysis of pupils' work; and observation of three lessons.

### **Achievement in languages**

- Pupils across Key Stage 2 show an ability and willingness to answer simple questions in French. They participate willingly in pair work and group work where activities provide suitable challenge for all abilities. Their pronunciation is sometimes inaccurate.
- Motivated by the desire to communicate with a partner school in France, pupils can express simple personal information in written French. A focus on deciphering meaning means they cope well when hearing or seeing new language for the first time.
- Pupils enjoy learning languages and could give some reasons why it is useful for them to do so. The aspects they enjoy most are the games and activities which encourage them to guess the meaning of new language.
- They have a good understanding of the culture of France and know the names of other countries where French is spoken.

## **Quality of teaching in languages**

- Teachers use well their skills as good primary practitioners. Lessons are well-planned with a range of different activities and high-quality resources to engage and interest the pupils.
- Occasionally, the pace of the learning drops when too much time is spent on analysing grammatical structures before pupils have been given enough opportunities to practise the new phrases. This also exposes gaps in teachers' subject knowledge, which is underdeveloped.
- Although sound spelling links are exploited well, teachers do not always provide a wide enough range of repetition tasks.
- Teachers use French for simple classroom commands and to praise pupils' success.
- Teaching assistants, some with skills in French, support the learning well.
- Interactive whiteboards are used well by both teachers and pupils, but there are limited opportunities for pupils to use computers to improve their learning.
- Teachers use assessment to ensure that they build on prior learning. Pupils' performance is being tracked in years 5 and 6 but this is a fairly recent development.

## **Quality of the curriculum in languages**

- All pupils in Years 3 to 6 have at least 60 minutes of French each week. In Year 6, the teaching of other subjects in French is enjoyed greatly by pupils and contributes well to their development.
- Medium term planning in the scheme of work is linked to the Key Stage 2 framework and based on a commercial course.
- A strong feature is the support for the development of intercultural awareness and the school places a strong emphasis on internationalism, having achieved the intermediate level International Schools Award and being well on the way to full accreditation.
- There are strong and highly productive links with a French school. Creativity is supported well through a project where children take home an 'Asterix' soft toy and write a diary for him. This will be shared with the French school and compared with the diary they are writing of 'Robin Hood'. Video conferencing is being set up and an exchange of video recordings of pupils supports their linguistic and cultural development well.

## **Effectiveness of leadership and management in languages**

- You and other leaders in the school are highly supportive of language teaching and, as a result, good progress has been made in introducing and developing modern languages in the curriculum.
- Planning has ensured that French has been introduced across Key Stage 2 and delivered by class teachers. The measured approach to introduction has

given the school time to ensure the structures and resources are in place and this gives you good capacity to improve further.

- Links with parents are developing with a newsletter planned to share language achievements with them.
- The coordinator is enthusiastic and committed to developing languages. There is a willingness to seek and act on external support when their subject knowledge is less strong.
- The modern languages policy is good with clearly expressed aims for developing the vision for French in the school. The development plan highlights appropriate needs but does not include details about the development of subject knowledge and modern languages methodology.
- Monitoring is good and thorough. Book and lesson planning are already being checked and lesson observations have been programmed into the whole-school monitoring programme this year.

**Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:**

- ensuring that teachers provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to become confident with new phrases and structures through adequate repetition and consolidation work before they are asked to use them productively
- increasing opportunities for pupils to use computers to develop their language skills
- exploring further opportunities to strengthen teachers' subject knowledge.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop languages in the 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. Except in the case of academies, a copy of this letter is also being sent to your local authority.

Yours sincerely

**Elaine Taylor**  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**