

Aviation House
125 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

T 0300 123 1231
F 020 7421 6855
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



20 May 2011

Mr I Whittaker
Headteacher
West Kingsdown C of E VC Primary School
Fawkham Road
West Kingsdown
Sevenoaks
TN15 6JP

Dear Mr Whittaker

Ofsted 2011–12 subject survey inspection programme: modern languages (ML)

Thank you for your hospitality and cooperation, and that of the staff and pupils, during my visit on 10 May 2011 to look at work in ML.

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 four lessons.

Achievement in ML

- Pupils are interested in learning a foreign language and display commitment which secures average attainment and satisfactory learning and progress.
- Some pupils are able to express themselves in the spoken language by using simple phrases or individual words. The emphasis on the spoken language means that there is less evidence of the written language, but where there was evidence, some of this was very well presented.
- Pupils displayed some knowledge and understanding of European French culture. They were less confident in talking about culture in other French-speaking countries around the world.

Quality of teaching in ML

- Teaching secures expected progress. French is taught by a team of teachers who are non-specialists, but who are keen to develop their own

subject knowledge. Because of this, the use of the target language is restricted.

- Pupils enjoy learning French and the teaching engages the vast majority.
- Teachers plan lessons which concentrate largely on speaking and listening and they make good use of available resources, particularly of interactive whiteboards.
- Opportunities for pupils to assess their progress are available and teachers discuss the progress of their classes with each other, but a formal system for recording attainment and progress is not in place.
- Marking is regular but opportunities are missed for telling pupils how to improve the quality of their work.
- Lessons generally deliver one common task to the class rather than different tasks which are devised to meet the needs of individual pupils.

Quality of the curriculum in ML

- The curriculum in Key Stage 2 allows for 20 minutes of French each week. The school uses a course which ensures progression and which covers the Key Stage 2 framework in ML.
- Pupils appreciate the cross-curricular cultural provision. They spoke enthusiastically about the French theme days and the French aspect included in the school nativity play. They are able to relate the learning of French to the real world and some linked the learning of a language to gaining more meaningful employment.

Effectiveness of leadership and management in ML

- Senior leaders and members of the governing body support the provision of ML and have facilitated the professional development of teachers through relevant training.
- The subject leader has written an ML policy and an action plan but it is too early to assess their impact. Monitoring systems which feature in the action plan are not yet embedded. The subject leader is keen to develop ML in the school and knows what has to be done to achieve this. There are plans to extend the teaching to 30 minutes in order to secure Bronze level accreditation from the local authority.

Areas for improvement, which we discussed, include:

- implementing a systematic programme of lesson observations
- making marking more informative
- planning lessons which better meet the needs of groups of pupils by planning specific tasks which meet their needs
- ensuring self-evaluation processes are sharply focused and success criteria are measurable.

I hope that these observations are useful as you continue to develop ML 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

John Daniell
Her Majesty's Inspector