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20 December 2019

Mr Matthew Ball  
Headteacher  
Bishop Gilpin Church of England Primary School  
Lake Road  
Wimbledon  
SW19 7EP

Dear Mr Ball

### **Subject inspection of Bishop Gilpin Church of England Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 10 December 2019, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to confirm the inspection findings. The findings do not change the overall effectiveness judgement of outstanding from the last section 5 inspection.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for a no formal designation inspection of schools. The inspection was carried out to enable Her Majesty's Chief Inspector to better understand the quality of education in specific subjects provided by outstanding primary schools.

### **Main findings**

Leaders ensure that sufficient time is given to meet the aims of the national curriculum in modern foreign languages (MFL). A specialist French teacher delivers lessons to each class in Years 1 to 6. Pupils in key stage 2 have one hour of French per week. The specialist teacher is responsible for planning and delivering the curriculum, which matches the requirements of the national curriculum. Leaders have set out what they want pupils to learn over time and how pupils make progress through the curriculum. They are in the process of reviewing the MFL curriculum with a local secondary school to help prepare pupils for key stage 3.

The curriculum is designed so that pupils have sequences of lessons on each topic that they cover in depth. For example, Year 3 had a sequence of lessons on describing people, using adjectives and their agreement with nouns, using the third person with some verbs and relevant vocabulary. This culminated in pupils using what they had learned to produce written and oral descriptions. Pupils revisit this knowledge in later years. They are able to do more and remember more because they are already familiar with certain content, such as adjectives.

Leaders ensure that speaking, listening, reading and writing skills are incorporated into the curriculum. Writing is particularly strong. Pupils progress beyond writing individual words to sentences and paragraphs. They can link sentences and express opinions. However, pupils do not have enough opportunities to present their spoken French to a range of audiences. They do not learn the phonics of the language. Songs and rhymes help pupils to understand the sounds and patterns of the language but pupils' pronunciation is inconsistent.

Pupils understand some basic grammar, such as genders and plurals. Verbs are introduced from Year 3 and pupils use familiar verbs in the first and third persons. In Year 6, they learn to conjugate regular '-er' verbs. However, pupils struggle to remember and use high-frequency verbs as they have not been embedded in their memories. Often, these verbs are taught as pieces of vocabulary rather than the building blocks of the language.

The vocabulary taught is chosen to give pupils what leaders consider the essential knowledge for key stage 3. From a young age, pupils learn words such as greetings, numbers and colours. Some topics are selected to overlap with pupils' learning in other subjects. For example, older pupils learned about a volcanic eruption in French when they were in Year 4. However, pupils cannot remember any of the vocabulary they learned from this. When pupils have learned words that can be used in different situations, they can remember much more, such as weather vocabulary to describe the water cycle in Year 6.

All pupils do not have equal access to the MFL curriculum. A number of key stage 2 pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) have missed all or part of their French lessons this term to attend intervention sessions. For other pupils with SEND, work is not adapted sufficiently to meet their needs, and they struggle with tasks. The school also has a number of pupils who speak French or have some experience of the language. They do the same work as everyone else and often get bored, although their written work is often weak.

## **Evidence**

I met with you and the subject leader who is the sole teacher of MFL in the school. I visited lessons in Year 1 and Year 3. I met with groups of pupils from Years 3, 5 and 6. I reviewed a sample of pupils' French work from all year groups in key stage 2. I evaluated documentation provided by the school, including progression maps, curriculum overviews, medium-term plans and the MFL action plan.

## **Context**

The school is larger than the average-sized primary school, with 464 pupils currently on roll. Nearly half of all pupils are from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above average. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average, as is the proportion

of pupils included in the register of special educational needs. The school has an above-average level of mobility of pupils. The school is fully staffed.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Merton. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson

**Her Majesty's Inspector**