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Mrs Sarah Remmers
Acting headteacher
Greenfield Primary School
Hill Street
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Dear Mrs Remmers

No formal designation inspection of Greenfield 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.

This inspection was conducted under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 and in accordance with Ofsted's published procedures for inspecting schools with no formal designation. The inspection was carried out because Her Majesty's Chief Inspector wished to understand the quality of a single curriculum subject, modern foreign languages (MFL), provided by outstanding primary schools. These inspections are to develop Ofsted's understanding of good practice in the primary curriculum.

Main findings

Senior leaders place a high priority on the learning of French in school. This is reflected in their policy and curriculum statement of intent.

The school has a long-standing link with a local secondary school, which used to have language-college status. Greenfield benefited from the primary outreach programme, which involved a secondary MFL specialist teaching French in the school. Greenfield now pay for a half day a week for a specialist teacher of French from the secondary school. This enhances transition when pupils leave Year 6 and continue studying MFL in Year 7 at the secondary school. The teacher also coordinates the French curriculum in conjunction with the headteacher.

Senior leaders monitor the work of the external subject teacher closely. The link governor for MFL is a well-qualified language specialist. Although new to the role, she is already actively engaged in evaluating the effectiveness of the provision and

reporting to senior leaders and other governors. Consequently, leaders and governors are aware of the strengths and areas for development in the subject.

MFL is prominent on the timetable so that it is taught every week in key stage 2. Teaching of French in Years 5 and 6 alternates every half-term. Leaders have not yet considered the impact of alternating French teaching between Year 5 and Year 6 every half-term.

The curriculum is planned sequentially to help pupils learn and remember more and apply their previous learning to new topics. In number, for example, pupils build their knowledge of number from one to 10 in Years 3 and 4. They learn 10 to 20 in Year 5 and 21 to 31 in Year 6. Higher- and middle-attaining pupils could count confidently with the inspector, including those in Year 6 who had not studied French since half-term. However, low-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 could not attempt any counting. Despite this, they had moved to learning higher numbers in Years 5 and 6 before they were secure in counting one to 10.

The school is highly inclusive. It ensures that all pupils in key stage two participate in French lessons regularly. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Where necessary, the curriculum is adapted to provide greater access to work.

Curriculum planning is closely aligned with the National Curriculum programme of study in key stage 2. This includes the ability to 'write phrases from memory and adapt these to create new sentences, to express ideas clearly'. The school's curriculum planning also states that in writing, pupils will progress from words and familiar phrases in Year 3 to writing a short paragraph in Year 6. Older pupils, including low-attaining pupils and those with SEND, demonstrate writing skills that range from single words to extended paragraphs. Pupils in Year 5, including those who were low attaining or with SEND, were able to write recognisable words with some accuracy. Pupils in Year 6, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with SEND, could write in full sentences.

Leaders say they do not place as much emphasis on writing as listening, speaking and reading. Their rationale was that they did not want pupils to lose their enthusiasm and motivation for the language if they struggled with writing. This was reflected in planning documents, including the curriculum rationale statement, where writing was omitted. Written work is completed on mini whiteboards, and is then erased, or on paper which the pupils take home. Pupils spoken to said they do not do much writing in lessons.

The school's information about the French curriculum on their website does not include any detail of what pupils will learn in each year group, as required by the DfE. It simply states that pupils in Years 3 to 6 will learn French.

Phonics is integrated as part of teaching French reading. Pupils start by hearing

sounds, then sounding them out to build up words and then writing them. Pupils do not have books to read that match the letters and sounds they know. Instead text extracts are incorporated into lessons for pupils to read. This supports them well with their reading.

Class teachers stay in lessons to observe the specialist teaching French. This supports their own understanding of the subject and knowledge of how to teach a modern foreign language. Teachers feel confident that they could now teach French themselves. However, to date, class teachers have not had any practical experience of teaching a lesson or part of a lesson themselves. Leaders have already started to consider succession planning and have identified a potential MFL leader from within their own staff.

Although French is the only language taught in school, there is a strong culture of respect for those pupils who can speak another language at home. The teaching of French has also raised the profile of other languages that pupils know. Pupils appreciate how much their languages are valued. Pupils said they enjoy learning French, and this was evident in the lesson visited.

Leaders' consideration of how assessment can be used to track pupils' progress in French over time is at an early stage of development. Currently, the French teacher retains much of the information on pupils' achievement and does not record this for leaders to track. Pupils spoken to could not say how they were doing in French, other than from their end of term comments, which 'sometimes refer to French'. Leaders acknowledged that the comments in reports and the judgements on attainment are not based on any assessment evidence.

Links between French and other subjects are underdeveloped. The school's MFL policy states that pupils will research other French-speaking countries and learn about French customs and traditions in other subjects. Pupils spoken to could not say where French is spoken in the wider world beyond France. There were a few instances of links with French in other subjects, such as songs in music and in a Year 6 English text set in Paris, but overall this was limited. Pupils had enjoyed wider enrichment experiences such as 'mardi gras' and croissant tasting. They said that teachers sometimes take the register in French.

Evidence

During my visit, I looked at your curriculum provision for French. I met with you and your two acting deputy headteachers. I met the specialist French teacher from a local secondary school, who teaches French one morning a week. She coordinates the subject in conjunction with you and teaches French throughout key stage two. I visited one Year 5 lesson, jointly with you, and looked at records of lesson visits conducted by leaders. I spoke to a group of pupils. I met three class teachers from Years 3 to 6. I met the link governor for MFL, who took up the role in September 2019. I looked at the school's MFL policy, curriculum rationale statement, and

examples of curriculum planning, including in French. I also looked at information about the MFL curriculum on the school's website.

Context

The headteacher and both deputy headteacher roles are acting until the end of the Autumn term 2019. Substantive appointments have been made for the new year. The number of pupils on roll is 280, which is in line with the national average for primary schools. Just over 80% of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very low, as is the percentage entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils eligible for SEND support is very high at over 25%. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is slightly above average. The level of mobility is very low. There are no full-time vacant teacher posts in the school.

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

Yours sincerely

Mark Sims

Her Majesty's Inspector