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Dear Miss McGinty

Subject inspection of Larmenier and Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

Following my visit to your school on 12 February 2020, 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. The focus of the visit was languages.

Main findings

A school leader who is also a subject specialist plans and delivers French lessons to all pupils in key stage 2. The leader has secure subject knowledge and expertise in teaching languages. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are fully included. The curriculum covers the requirements of the national curriculum for languages.

Pupils enjoy their French lessons. They see languages as an important part of their learning. Pupils particularly enjoy using their French in a practical way, such as conducting a class survey. They are keen to participate in lessons and are confident in their spoken French. Pupils' pronunciation is variable, although staff highlight sound-spelling links. Leaders plan to develop this further.

Leaders have thought out and planned what pupils will learn from one year to the next. Lessons are sequenced logically to build on what has been learned before. For example, Year 5 pupils used their prior learning about where places are to help them to create weather forecasts about different parts of the country. The curriculum has been designed so that each lesson has a specific purpose towards clearly defined end points. Each area of learning has been broken down into small steps.

Leaders carefully select which vocabulary and grammar are taught. They want to develop pupils' understanding of sentence structure and how the language works. This underpins much of the curriculum. Pupils learn single words, then use these in increasingly complex sentences, applying grammar correctly. They refer to their notes and texts that staff have modelled for them. Pupils are adept at forming sentences, both orally and written, using structures and vocabulary from recent lessons. Year 4 pupils, for example, could describe what sports they liked, using different verbs and connectives. However, pupils struggle to recall some of what they have learned from previous years. French lessons are 'blocked' with other subjects. This means that each class has a weekly lesson across one-and-a-half or two terms, which results in long gaps between pupils' French lessons. Year 6, for example, have not yet studied French this academic year.

Leaders are ambitious in their French curriculum. They want pupils to be increasingly independent language learners. Pupils are aware of concepts such as the gender of nouns, adjectival agreement and subject pronouns. Year 3 pupils, for example, adapted sentences about themselves to talking about someone else. Pupils can use bilingual dictionaries to look up new words. At times, the subject content is too ambitious, and pupils have not grasped key learning before moving on. Pupils have some gaps in their knowledge and misconceptions as a result.

The school has a high number of French native speakers. Leaders ensure that these pupils are suitably stretched according to their level and needs. Most native speakers work with a French tutor before or after school. Working with the tutor, leaders personalise pupils' class learning to tie in with the extra-curricular tutoring. These pupils are also involved in class activities and like to support their fellow classmates in French.

Pupils have a range of opportunities to learn about different languages. Pupils in Year 5 are offered the chance to study Latin, working with students from the neighbouring St Paul's Girls' School. Each year, all pupils from Year 6 go on a pilgrimage to Assisi, where they are immersed in Italian language and culture. The annual International Day celebrates the diversity of cultures and languages within the school community.

Evidence

I met with you and the curriculum leader for languages. I visited French lessons in Years 3, 4 and 5. I met with groups of pupils from the lessons visited in Years 4 and 5 and reviewed their work. I also held a discussion with a group of Year 6 pupils. I evaluated the detailed curriculum plans for French.

Context

The school is a larger than average-sized primary school. Currently, there are 440 pupils on roll. A high proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is below average. The proportion of pupils on the SEND register is below average, although the number of pupils with an education, health and care plan is higher than average.

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

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson

Her Majesty's Inspector