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Ms Sue Jepson  
Headteacher  
Barnes Primary School  
Cross Street  
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London  
SW13 0QQ

Dear Ms Jepson

### **Subject inspection of Barnes Primary School**

Following my visit to your school on 5 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**

French is taught in all classes from early years to Year 6. Pupils in key stage 2 have a weekly 30-minute lesson with a native French speaker. The teacher is relatively new in role and is very well supported by the curriculum leader who plans and oversees the French curriculum.

Pupils get off to a very positive start in their French learning. In early years and key stage 1, where languages are not a compulsory part of the curriculum, pupils learn French as part of their everyday routines. Children in Reception, for example, know numbers and days of the week. They are used to their teachers giving them classroom instructions in French. This continues as pupils move up through the school. They understand familiar language which has been embedded in their long-term memory.

Class teachers and teaching assistants are involved in French lessons. They support pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and assist the French teacher. Staff make an effort to use the language to pupils outside of French sessions. This helps pupils to see it as a meaningful form of communication. A very small number of pupils with SEND do not have French lessons. Leaders have decided that these pupils benefit more from time spent in other activities, such as social and behaviour support. This means that these pupils do not have an equal opportunity to access language learning at this point in time.

The curriculum is designed around different topics. There is no particular order to when these topics are covered. The topics centre around the acquisition of vocabulary and phrases. Lessons are very structured and pupils have frequent chances to revise previous learning before moving on. Pupils can recall a lot of vocabulary as a result. Pupils learn aspects of grammar incidentally, according to the topic. For example, Year 5 pupils understood the use of 'à' and how it changes with some definite articles. They could explain the concept of masculine and feminine words. However, pupils do not have a clear understanding of basic grammatical features such as pronouns other than 'je', the connection between French words for 'the' and 'a', and high-frequency verbs. This limits their ability to build sentences independently and hinders their understanding of patterns in the language.

Leaders want their pupils to be able to converse in French and enjoy language learning. They have succeeded in this. Pupils told me how much they enjoyed their language lessons. They love the games and fun activities. Pupils can conduct short, rehearsed conversations in French. For example, Year 3 pupils participated in structured role plays to talk about their appearance. There are many examples of pupils performing and presenting in French. These include pupils narrating French films shown at the local cinema and the annual competition to read in a different language. Songs are an integral part of French lessons. Teachers model accurate pronunciation and point out specific rules. Pupils know how the sound of words is different to their spelling, such as silent letters and vowel sounds. At times they forget to apply these rules when looking at unfamiliar words.

Pupils predominantly practise vocabulary and develop their understanding by listening to spoken French. Pupils are generally confident in their spoken French. They can understand and use increasingly complex sentences to describe people, places and things. In key stage 1, pupils have weekly French assemblies. They listen and read along to French stories, and take part with real enthusiasm. However, pupils have very limited opportunities to develop their written French. This is not a regular part of their learning. In this respect, the curriculum does not match the requirements of the national curriculum. Leaders have plans to address this.

## **Evidence**

I met with you and the deputy headteacher to discuss languages in the school curriculum. I also met with the curriculum leader for languages and the specialist

French teacher. I visited lessons in Year 3 and Year 5. I met with groups of pupils from Years 3, 5 and 6 and reviewed their work. I did a learning walk to see how the early years and some key stage 1 classes promote language learning. I met with pupils from the key stage 1 French club. I observed a French key stage 1 assembly. I evaluated documentation provided by the school, including curriculum maps, vocabulary lists, 'knowledge organisers', videos of pupils speaking and performing in French, the school improvement plan with regard to languages and examples of previous French lessons.

### **Context**

The school is a larger than average-sized primary school. Currently there are 504 pupils on roll. The majority of pupils come from a White British background. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average, as is the number of pupils entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils included on the register for special educational needs is below average. The number of pupils with education, health and care plans is above average. There are currently no staff vacancies.

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

Yours sincerely

Jude Wilson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**