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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T 0300 123 1231
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Jane Chambers
Headteacher
Orrell Lamberhead Green Academy
Kershaw Street
Orrell
Wigan
Lancashire
WN5 0AW

Dear Mrs Chambers

No formal designation inspection of Orrell Lamberhead Green Academy

Following my visit to your school on 3 March 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 subject in focus was languages.

Main findings

You have decided to develop curriculum plans for those subjects other than English and mathematics over a three-year period. During the last academic year, you focused on the curriculum in history, geography and science. This academic year you are concentrating on art and music, among some other subjects. You plan to focus on refining the languages curriculum next academic year. You told me that you want the curriculum to be of the highest quality. Therefore, you have made the strategic decision not to focus on too many subjects at once.

Current curriculum plans in Spanish are logical and planned well. They support teachers effectively in knowing what content to deliver and in what order. Leaders have designed curriculum plans so that teachers introduce the differences between English and Spanish sounds systematically. Plans prescribe the vocabulary that

pupils are to be taught. Leaders have designed the curriculum so that teachers introduce simple grammatical concepts gradually.

While the Spanish curriculum has been designed well, pupils' experience of Spanish has been affected negatively by staffing changes. These changes have meant that pupils' learning in Spanish has been interrupted. Their knowledge in Spanish has not been developed systematically over time. In 2017/2018 all pupils at key stage 2 restarted Spanish from scratch. Last year Spanish was not taught in school. This year all pupils started Spanish from scratch again in September. This has been stopped due to staffing pressures. This has had an impact on all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Although curriculum plans are well sequenced, teachers do not follow these plans closely enough. During my visit I noted that some of the Spanish that pupils were being exposed to was incorrect. Teachers have a sound understanding of how pupils' learning builds over time in Spanish. However, this logical approach was not evident in pupils' work or in lesson visits. You are yet to focus on training for staff in this subject. You intend to focus on this when you develop the languages curriculum next year.

Pupils do not know and remember enough Spanish because it has not been taught regularly and systematically in the past. Pupils know some simple vocabulary. They can respond to a few simple questions and answer exchanges. However, pupils are not able to produce simple sentences independently with confidence or accuracy. They have not been exposed to a Spanish curriculum that is as ambitious as the national curriculum. You plan to develop the languages curriculum as part of your school-improvement cycle.

You know how important it is for pupils to learn a language. You want pupils to benefit from learning about other cultures. You also want pupils to develop as rounded individuals, ready for the next stage of their education. Pupils in Year 6 value an annual residential trip to France. During this trip, they visit the First and Second World War battlefields and historic monuments. As part of this visit, you teach pupils some simple French vocabulary. They use this to practise buying items at the French market.

Evidence

I met with you to discuss the importance of languages in the school's curriculum. I met with the assistant headteacher and a subject specialist who delivers Spanish. I visited a Year 3 Spanish lesson. I looked at the work produced by pupils. I also considered the 'floor book' for Spanish.

I spoke with two groups of pupils about their learning in Spanish. This included some pupils from the lesson that I visited. I evaluated the Spanish curriculum plans. I spoke with teachers to discuss the curriculum.

Context

Orrell Lamberhead Green Academy is a larger-than-average primary school. There are currently 443 pupils on roll. The proportion of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including pupils with education, health and care plans, is above the national average.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the board of trustees, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Wigan. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Michael Wardle
Her Majesty's Inspector